



The Ethiopian Herald

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Gov't pleas to media to bolster investigative journalism

• Training on investigative journalism kicks off

BY STAFF REPORTER

ADDIS ABABA - Media practitioners need to join hands with relevant stakeholders to intensify the fight against corruption, said Government Communication Service (GCS) Minister at a two-day training session the Ethiopian Press Agency organized in cooperation with partners.

Opening the session, GCS Minister Legesse Tulu(PhD) stressed that corruption has already reached a level of being a national threat to the country.

“Corruption compounded by terrorism and extremism poses a serious challenge to the country. Unless the media and other pertinent bodies support the current crackdown against corruption, the menace

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Photo - Samuel Tesfaye

Legesse Tulu(PhD)

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It takes a big heart to shape little minds

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Ethiopian secures 281mIn USD loan

BY ESSEYE MENGISTE

ADDIS ABABA- The Export-Import Bank of the United States (EXIM) has approved 281 million USD loan to Ethiopian Airlines Group to acquire new Boeing aircrafts and cargo airplanes.

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AU monitoring team establishment puts CoHA in full force

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News

Relief deliveries continue to conflict-affected areas: report

BY MISGANAW ASNAKE

ADDIS ABABA—The joint report of the Ethiopian government and humanitarian partners stated that, some 2,214 trucks with food supplies and 250 trucks with non-food supplies reached conflict-affected areas in North Ethiopia since mid-November.

Food and non-food lifesavings supplies as well as fuel and cash continue being transported to Tigray in four corridors through Amhara and Afar states.

Nearly 90,000 MT of food and 8,600 non-food supplies have reached Tigray between November 15 to December 23, as to the joint report.

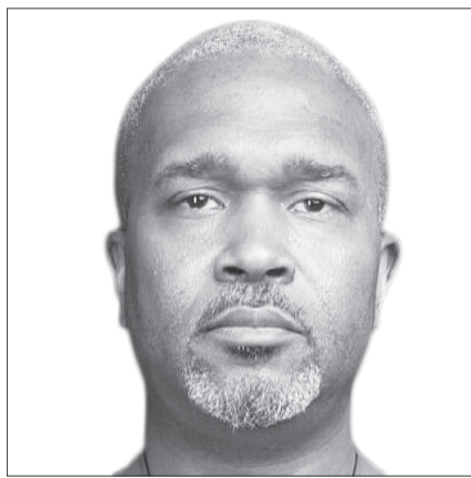
Aircrafts also continue transporting some 18 MT of nutrition and 14 MT of health commodities transported to Mekelle and Shire, and some 446 MT of agricultural supplies have also reached to the area.

The report further said that total operational cash transported to Tigray so far 798,050, 495 Birr, 780,755 fuel liters delivered and 28 partners supplied during the reporting period.

“The humanitarian aid passes through the corridors of Kombolcha, Gondar and Semera and the cash delivery (money) went through Mekelle and Shire airports.”

The report was compiled by government of Ethiopian Disaster Risk Management Commission, Logistics Cluster and UNOCHA humanitarians’ partner, and it covers the period from 15 November to 23 December.

The report also noted that the government and partners are working to scale up the distribution of humanitarian assistance. The next update is due on December 29, it was learnt.



Some int’l media heavily distort covering Africa: Jemal Countess

BY TSEGAYE TILAHUN

ADDIS ABABA – Most of the time, the truth and what is happening on the ground in Africa is heavily distorted by international media, Photojournalist and Photographer said.

Photojournalist and Photographer Jemal Countess told local media that in some cases international media have no respect for Africa. They are just covering it using Africa as a stepping stone in their career. Leaders claim free press, they don’t honor it or don’t invite it in reality. It is a type of tough cookie.

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Ministry mobilizes community on illegal human trafficking

BY TAMERU REGASA

HOSAENA - Ministry of Women and Social Affairs in collaboration with various national and international organizations have mobilized community against illegal human trafficking here in the presence of senior government officials including Deputy Prime Minister.

In his key note speech on the occasion Foreign Minister and Deputy Prime Minister Demeke Mekonen said that though human trafficking is worldwide problem, Ethiopia has been suffering more from this illegal activity.

He noted that government has created a lot of conducive environments to send its citizens to abroad for jobs to reduce illegal human trafficking.

Demeke indicated that government has been working to control illegal human trafficking through giving especial emphasis to it. However, it could not achieve the required outcomes because of different hindering factors.

Hadiya and Kembeta zones are among the areas that human trafficking is high. This is why this mobilization event is hosted at Hosaena (capital city of Hadiya zone).

Women and Social Affairs Minister Ergoge



Tesfaye (PhD) on her part said that, government has been working to tackle human trafficking through allotting huge amount of budget and creating different legal frameworks and structures.

She said that, as strengthening legal oversees facilitation for job creation is crucial to tackle this illegal act the country has signed Memorandum of Understanding with different countries to send professional and non professional workers to abroad in legal

way.

Sharing the above ideas Birhanu Abera, representative of Ministry of Labor and Skills, said that government has been operating taking the issue of job creation as a national agenda to create ample jobs for its citizens in and abroad adding that at this Ethiopian fiscal year the ministry planned to create jobs for 3.7 millions of people annually. He said that as Ethiopia is blessed with different resources government of the country can create a lot of jobs, if it uses the resources.

Gada Bank commences services

BY HAILE DEMEKE

ADDIS ABABA— Gada Bank S.C has officially joined the banking industry with 552 million Birr paid capital yesterday in compliance with the guidelines of the National Bank of Ethiopia (NBE).

Speaking at the launching ceremony Gada Bank CEO Wolde Bultu said that, the Bank is established with the paid capital of 552 million Birr will continue providing quality service and strengthen its international competitiveness by introducing new systems.

He further stated that, the bank has started operations with a paid-up capital of 552 million Birr by over 28,000 shareholders adding that that the Bank has commenced services to its customers with 30 branches.

He also announced that, Gada Bank has entered the banking industry with 1.1 billion unpaid capitals and the Bank will contribute greatly to the country’s economy.

NBE governor Yinager Dessie (PhD) said that, joining of Gada bank is to the financial sector will add another input to the financial industry and is expected to boost private sector’s financial accessibility.

As the economy of the country is based on agriculture the bank is expected to support the farmers in lending money both to support the economy and change the livelihoods of the society. The financial accessibility is crucial in economy and Gada Bank is also expected to address financial accessibility coupled with the application of latest technologies. Saving is the main thing to support the



Photo- Gebabo Gebre

banking sector and urged the people to save money and benefit themselves.

Oromia State Chief Administrator Shimelis Abdisa said that, the Gada bank needs to be lived up to its name and has double

responsibility in both supporting the economy of the country.

The launching ceremony was held in the Gada Bank’s own building near Gotera area, in capital Addis Ababa.

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The Ethiopian Herald

Editorial

Gov't is committed to provide adequate aids regardless of futile disinformation

Unlike the prevalence of rampant disinformation, Ethiopia has been demonstrating relentless commitment in turning the Pretoria Peace Deal into realities to ensure lasting peace in the country and beyond. It crystal clear that even before the war, for the sake of peace, the government of Ethiopia was taking measures that demand extra miles to handle recurrent disagreements in a peaceful manner. Likewise, following the peace agreement at Pretoria, South Africa, the government has been carrying out several activities that would accelerate restoration, rehabilitation and sustainable peace across the country and in the Horn. Persuasively, some groups are also demanding to see similar commitment from the other side so that the peace deal will be bearing the intended fruits.

Opportunely, following the permanent cessation of hostilities, the Ethiopian government has been resuming basic services like telecom, electricity, banking and the like. Besides these, along with other humanitarian partners, it has been providing aids to meet the basic and urgent needs of the people in Tigray. For instance, more than 63,800 metric tons of food, more than 4000 metric tons of health, shelter, education, protection as well as water sanitation and hygiene supplies were transported by 1,600 trucks.

Moreover, it is fortunate to see the progressive the implementation of the permanent cessation of hostilities agreement. The recent meeting of the Senior Commanders of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and the Tigray People's Liberation Front in Nairobi has confirmed the positive development in the course of implementing the peace deal. In connection to this, the African Union has also stated that Term of Reference of the Joint Monitoring, Verification and Compliance Mechanism has been finalized besides discussing ways implementing the Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) process. All these and others are the clearest indications that Ethiopian government and the peace loving partners are accomplishing

their responsibilities effectively to turn the Pretoria peace agreement into realities and lasting peace.

On the contrary, some groups are struggling to develop false narrations that seem to be against the reality on the ground. It seems that they are ignorant of the relentless commitment the Ethiopian government has been demonstrating to ensure peace. The tendency of these groups, from the inception, is pursue destructive remarks that maximize their perverted benefits on the expenses of the people loving civilians. No matter how the government along with its humanitarian partners accomplishes worthy deeds, these groups could not accommodate in their thinking as well as reporting; instead, they involve themselves in misinforming the international community to impede the ongoing humanitarian aids.

Responsibly, Ethiopia is at its best in turning the Pretoria peace agreement into action. This is, indeed, its highest responsibility to ensure peace across the country and beyond. Hence, the government has been very busy in restoring the basic and key services in the Tigray state. Restoration of social infrastructures electricity, telecom and bank is swiftly taking place since the agreement. And together with its humanitarian partners, it has unceasingly been transporting aids to reach the needy. Truly, these developments are surely indisputable as the beneficiaries are witnessing them.

Thus, the international community ought to discern the authentic information from the fabrications that are intended to hinder the implementation of the peace deal. As the government has continued facilitating ways for the provision of humanitarian aids besides availing foods and medicine for the needy, the humanitarian agencies should also sustain their supports so that the lasting peace will soon be a reality. Above all, the unyielding commitment of the government that has played significant roles to ensure recent praiseworthy development will never be overlooked by current futile disinformation.

Opinion

Malicious Agenda setting on Ethiopia as a weapon against reform programs

BY SOLOMON DIBABA

The modern theory of agenda setting recognizes three sets of agenda setting which includes political policy agenda setting, media agenda building and public agenda setting. Political policy agenda is either framed by governments and the political parties which assume power in shaping and reshaping the political programs of economic development, governance and labyrinth of policy and strategy frameworks which is mostly developed in the context of a popular ideological framework set by governments and political parties. Compared to other polices, political policy agenda is more lasting and stable compared to other forms of agenda setting.

A number of factors influence media agenda setting, including the influence of opposition parties with their alternative agenda and priorities as well as the use of media by ruling parties to influence public consciousness on general and specific public issues. On the other hand media outlets set agenda in their quest to influence or build up a certain type and level of social consciousness and social psychology. The technological innovations on IT has created a global ground for social media systems to challenge and at times overpower the mainstream media in influencing public needs, interests, attitudes and value systems.

Public agenda is usually interrelated with felt needs and interests of the public which is closely linked to their daily life and promotion of their livelihood. Public agenda is also influenced by the political agenda of ruling or opposition parties which compete to draw the public towards their perceived political interests. Requests for infrastructure facilities, social services like health, education and cultural self-assertion may be recognized as major elements of public agenda setting.

The political ideology pursued by governments heavily influence the content and form of both media and public agenda as the dominant mode of social consciousness in any country. Liberal and neo-liberal ideologies focus on agenda that wishes to uphold the perceived economic, political and individual interests of citizens pertaining to human rights, free enterprise economy and the legal rights of each individual and not necessarily the entire population.

Over the last four years and more particularly in the advent of the war in the northern part of the country, the local and international social media outlets generated and fabricated hundreds of seemingly real and apparently half-baked agendas almost dwarfing both the local and international media outlets. Social media also brewed a sub-culture of hatred, bad mouth and ethnic based polarized propaganda that caused riots

and untold destabilization in the country.

Hurdling insults on the leadership of the country and creating agendas geared towards discrediting the efforts underway by the government were used in combination with newly fabricated false news with no adequate and reliable sources.

Agenda setting was used by self-appointed activists to cause mistrust between the government and the electorate in an attempt to ferment a social-psychology of fear regarding the future of the country and the fallouts in the political system in Ethiopia

The issues related to GERD, the need for amending the constitution, squabbling in and among various religious institutions, fomenting ethnic violence through ethnic based narrow and chauvinistic nationalism, the green legacy initiative and the challenges connected to completion of mega projects in the country were all used to create agendas from within and without.

Even some leaders of religious institutions have started to create new agendas related to doctrinal arguments among their believers and followers in a bid to blow up the religious respect and tolerance for which Ethiopia is well known across the world.

Rumor mongering, speculative politics, unemployment and other social pitfalls in the country have helped the so called activists to create agendas on which they

hope the people of Ethiopia would be preoccupied. These days, everyone with a cellphone at hand with access too social media is competing to become a "well known politician and a seasoned activist". Some media outlets are using the prefixes like "politician", "activist", "a renowned legal expert" affixed to their names in trying to show that their agendas are well placed and that their arguments are rather authentic and solid.

Here it is very important to discern the difference between agenda setting and any form of advocacy. Advocacy starts with clear issue and is not manipulative. The issue and targets of advocacy are focused and specific like for instance advocating against FGM, EM, violence against girls and women, rights of disabled persons etc. In advocacy positive language are used and no space for insults, name calling or misrepresentation. Any advocacy issue tailors proper message to the proper language and is not based on emotional agitation. Advocacy agendas appeal to the audience interests in a pragmatic manner. It correctly enumerates the advocacy issue or

See *Malicious Agenda ... Page 7*

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

News

Church calls on stakeholders to help swift CoHA implementation

BY MESERET BEHAILU & ASHENAFI ANIMUT

ADDIS ABABA—The Bishops' Conference of the Ethiopian Catholic Church has called on all stakeholders to support the implementation of the Cessation of Hostility Agreement (CoHA) signed between the Ethiopian government and the TPLF apart from combating corruption.

During the course the 54th discussion of the Bishops' Conference of the Ethiopian Catholic Church, the Church said that the stakeholders should work on implementing the CoHA, enhancing humanitarian provision, and exerting tirelessly effort on fighting corruption.

Likewise, the Church has expressed its readiness to support and strengthen the humanitarian provision in the war and drought affected areas whilst it aggressively fight against the death of citizens, displacement, and looted property in some part of the country so far. However, the church believes that any dispute should be solved through discussion rather than



using revenge and force as an alternative solution.

On the occasion, the Representative of Pope Francis and the ambassador to Ethiopia, Djibouti and Somalia, His Grace Bishop Antoine Camilleri attended the event and his grace expressed of best wish

to end the conflict and ensure lasting peace across Ethiopia.

By the same token, the statement underlined that the government and the stakeholders to put efforts in solving the high cost of living, which is the main serious cause of increasing unemployment.

Some int'l..

The people who are covering Africa have no connection with the continent. Due to this, most of the time, the truth and what is happening on the ground in Africa is heavily distorted by international media.

African media is not accessible with very rigid protocol in international summits, meetings, forums and others. Some of the meetings and interactions of actual heads of the state are closed press or very limited. Most of the time, the press is outside covering, he said.

However, the international wire services like BBC, France 24, Washington Post, New York Times and others have been feeding the world. The breaking news comes from these media.

As to Photojournalist, their primary presence is the focus of many people who are there covering that event. "We didn't get into the U.S.-Africa Leaders Summit stage as the global protocol and others prioritize major wires."

Everybody has a love-hate relationship with the international media especially when it comes to Africa because the truth and what is happening on the ground in the continent heavily distorted a lot of times, he pointed out.

Ethiopian secures...

In its recent statement, EXIM Bank, "The money will finance the export of several Boeing 737 MAX 8 aircraft to the group. The Bank guaranteed the 281 million USD loan from the Private Export Funding Corporation (PEFCO).

The bank, moreover, stated that the transaction will create 1,600 American jobs across Washington, Indiana, and North Carolina.

"The first of this fleet were delivered in September 2022 and the remaining aircrafts are expected to be delivered by the end of March 2023."

The approval of the guarantees came despite anti peace elements' opposition, it was learnt.

And recently Ethiopian Airlines has been named the "Best Airline in Africa 2022" at the Global Travelers Tested Reader Survey Awards, one of the most prestigious honors in the world of travel. It was a winner of the Global Travelers Tested Reader Survey awards, honoring the best in the world of travel.

The U.S. Embassy in Addis Ababa in its tweeter page said that, the partnership between Export-Import Bank and Ethiopian Airlines is another example of American and Ethiopian cooperation for shared prosperity.

AU monitoring team establishment puts CoHA in full force

BY MENGESHA AMARE

ADDIS ABABA—The establishment of AU monitoring and verification Team would definitely put the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement (CoHA) into action from now on, so said an expert.

Iona University Lecturer in New York, Derese Getachew (PhD) told a local media that the team is so helpful to verify and monitor the full implementation of CoHA and to close loopholes for not upholding the deal.

He, moreover, said that the team of African experts would be of invaluable entity as it would closely follow up the practical



Derese Getachew (PhD)

actions of the signatories as per the CoHA.

He said: "The team will make sure that

the invalidity of some excuses for not implementing the CoHA. As this team can easily closely follow up the situation, it can be said that, the CoHA is now being translated into practical actions."

It is also cited that, the African Union Monitoring Team is going to arrive at Mekelle soon. The recent Nairobi talk needs to be well judged and the peace deal has got a supervisory body to be translated into actions. The team of African experts would be accountable to the high panel led by Obasanjo and joint committee.

It is also stated that, the two agreeing bodies discussed the gaps on which they have not yet agreed upon so far.

Gov't pleas...

would make Ethiopia weak and fragile."

Media and journalists should coordinate works with the government as well as other relevant entities to expose corrupt officials and other actors pulling their resources together, he added.

Explaining the mandates of the recently established National Anti-Corruption Committee, Ministry of Justice State Minister Fekadu Tsega said corruption has continued to be a grave threat particularly these days.

"The reform government was taking harsh measures on corrupt individuals until the process had been slowed down due to the advent of COVID-19 and the northern conflict."

Now a national committee established for

this purpose has attached high emphasis to the tasks of fighting corruption and corrupt practices prioritizing cases, Fekadu said, explaining that 'case priority' is already green lighted in the domestic and international laws.

Hence, among others, the culprits' authority and the impact of the theft are among the factors for prioritizing the cases, according to him.

The media basically needs to aware the society that the fight against corruption is a complex process and cannot be an overnight effort. It also clear that suspects are presumed innocent until proven guilty by court.

Automating work practices and adopting technologies are of critical importance to make the effort sustainable.

For his part, Public Procurement and Property Administration Agency Director

General Haji Ibsa said procurement is one of the susceptible areas of government practices. In this regard, the recently launched Electronic Government Procurement (e-GP) is in place to overcome the problem.

The e-GP is piloted on nine government organizations. According to him, six of them have shown a remarkable success. "We're doing studies to increase the number of government organizations that implement e-GP.

The scheme has numerous advantages, he said, adding that first and foremost it helps to ensure transparency in the practice of government procurement. It also saves substantial amount of money, increases efficiency and effectiveness, facilitates real-time follow ups, among others. "The media in particular can access data regarding procurement without any fuss."

Initially, there were a little more than 100 businesses registered into the e-GP. Now their number shot up to 6,000. "We have a plan to include around 30,000 businesses into the scheme in 2-5 years."

Media practitioners who took part in the training as well urged the government to give protection for journalists that involve in investigative works.

Recall that the government established a seven-member National Anti-Corruption Committee as a major crackdown against corruption. The committee comprising information security and intelligence chiefs as well as minister of justice is tasked with identifying corrupt officials and actors and making them face justice based on a study already conducted.

Participants drawn from democratic institutions, FDRE parliament, public and private media are taking part in the training session.

Opinion

Economic insecurity, unfair wealth distribution: head of snake for turmoil

BY LAKACHEW ATINAFU

“Every history is the power struggle between the rich and the poor.”

Karl Marx

Poverty, high cost of living, exaggerated fear of tomorrow, the incorporation of land in constitution as it is the sole source of resource, and extreme movement of some entities giving upper hand to their ethnicity in all aspects and revealing biased stance towards others; somehow appeared to be fundamental factors of the overall complication in the country.

In the concurrent situations of Ethiopia, the bid to scramble resource is escalating as there is no authentic bond that binds the diverse nation together and there is no fertile ground for individuals to compete in every corridor of the country for circumstances.

Indeed, the new administration in its infancy state tried to correct mistakes that were done yesterday and traveled remarkable distant. However, it has been incumbent upon both internal and external pressures.

Here it is important to bear in mind to categorize complication of the country in two-short and long term demanding problems for some need a more long time span while others should be addressed as soon as possible before they become hazard of the nation.

The Ethiopian constitution in one hand grant a more stretched right for ethnic group the right to self-determination up to succession and individuals on the other hand opt to entered political venture and armed struggle to solve their problem in a system the time demands.

The unfair distribution of resources would be no doubt the birth of conflicts and chaos as human being sometimes opts towards the irregular way to meet his needs and wants.

Before pulling the trigger against offenders, essential might be first to investigate nature, magnitude the fundamental cause of the chores and who the head of the snake is.

Selecting a friend and identifying an enemy along with establishing robust diplomatic ties with strategic partners would also be of paramount significance.

Though there seemed to be there is so much discrepancy between the quest for identity and class conflict but the identity quest revealed to be claiming the right to possess power and resource among groups belong to similar ethno lingual and psychological makeup.

For this reason, states men, the public, political parties and countries all over the world should work towards poverty reduction and equitable resource

distribution and facilitation of the expansion of infrastructure so that the heterogynous Ethiopians are able to exchange their heterogynous commodities.

Here it is imperative to raise sets of question how to react to the scenario and conduct situational analysis contextualizing the context of Ethiopia and fundamental changes of circumstances.

Most of all what is the underlying ticking bomb that make one raise his hand against his brother, what kind of resources and manpower to be mobilized? Is leadership functional even to the lowest level? Who are traders of conflict internally and abroad? What is expected of investors in creating job for the teaming youth?

As the ever increasing rate of unemployment, some groups sensitize the jobless youngsters narrating touchy stories and denigrations. As it is natural, person who think off being oppressed and hard of living is prone to emotion and hysteria so that nothing terminates him/ her to devastate.

Moreover, recently, driven by neocolonialism mentality, the western world still remained to not refrain from their stubborn stance and yearning the fragmentation of Ethiopia and establish impotent states from its debris. Yet the neo colonialists wanted to sustain their colonial legacy and revenge Ethiopia taking advantage of the ethnic and religious diversity.

Ethiopia has never attacked other countries instead intended itself to help and give hands at times of emergencies. Believing that the world should adhere to the principles of justice, Ethiopia developed a culture of submitting complaints to the international council.

Be it as it may, however, the country is surrounded by enemies, but it has not been playing its card well in inventing weapons to defend it. Hence, rather than lamenting the naked truth, it is better to devise mechanisms and sound economic modality taking every challenges as an opportunity.

Hence, the international organizations that Ethiopia is part ever since their inception should focus on the poverty reduction effort and back development rather than inciting conflict and instigating turmoil under the pre text of religion and ethnicity.

Ethiopia has everything but the utilization of ample resource remained in question and leads fraternity to bloodshed conflict.

Empirics show that Ethiopia has great agricultural potential because of its vast areas of fertile land, diverse climate, generally adequate rainfall, and large labor pool.

Ethiopia is the world's third-largest Arabica coffee producer and the greatest

producer of coffee in Africa as of 2022, with a production that has slowly increased from 6 million to over 8.15 million bags in the past ten years. The coffee seedling that was recently planted and grew for five to ten years is now producing.

Beside coffee, sesame is another export potential for Ethiopia a lucrative agriculture practice that can generate staggering foreign currency for the nation.

According to findings of a study almost a year before, Ethiopia has the largest livestock population in Africa, with 65 million cattle, 40 million sheep, 51 million goats, 8 million camels and 49 million chickens in 2020 (Central Statistics Agency, CSA, 2020a).

This is an ample opportunity to be exploited and employ many youngsters and the whole citizenry and the right track to transcend the country to the realm of success and stability.

In recent times, the Government of Ethiopia has left no stone unturned to satisfy its demands regarding wheat productions.

Coupled with stakeholders, the government has been working on promoting the expansion of wheat and other agricultural products by supporting farmers to be aware of the advantages and providing the necessary equipment.

In addition to wheat production, Ethiopia, at this time, has also scored better in rice, avocado, maize, and other cereals productions. The government is working tirelessly on the advancement of mechanized farming to upscale the quality and quantity of agricultural productions.

In a previous report, having stayed with a local media, State Minister of Agriculture, Meles Mekonnen (PhD) explained, wheat production is cost-effective for Ethiopia.

Therefore, in 2022/23, regions have selected 2.8 million hectares of land for wheat production, and 2.6 million hectares of land is covered by wheat seeds. In addition, around 1.6 million hectares of land out of 2.6 million is selected for intensive wheat cluster production.

“We are also expecting more arable lands in Bale and other places. We will give special attention for cotton production in some parts of the country especially in Afar,” the state minister added.

Meles said: “In 2022/23, local consumption is estimated around 97 million quintals. Again, we plan to produce more than 107 million quintals of wheat. This means, we will have extra product around 10 million quintals of wheat. We can export and generate around 390 million USD.

In order to achieve our goals, we need to be committed. We must work on the market system. We need to fight the challenges and misdeeds observed in the market.”

Furthermore, for years the Ethiopian government has been constructing Industrial parks nationwide. The effort had employed substantial number of jobless and the government is urged to expand more and find ways to return back to AGOA.

The role of the government in motivating investors and liberalized some state owned institution is also applauded effort that can be taken as instance of bright hope in reducing unemployment.

Ethiopia has abundant natural resources, such as Gold, copper, potash, platinum, and natural gas lie beneath the surface of the earth in this part of the world.

The Precambrian crystalline basement of Ethiopia is of particular interest because of the fact that it contains almost all known mineral commodities of the country (both metallic and industrial minerals and rocks), notably gold, platinum, rare metals, nickel, copper, iron, chromium, kaolin, feldspar, clay, asbestos, ...

Beyond these, the country is the source of aquatic wealth and doubly is said to be water tower of east Africa, the hydro power development is on the driving signal and Ethiopia has abundant renewable energy resources and has the potential to generate over 60,000 megawatts (MW) of electric power from hydroelectric, wind, solar and geothermal sources as to documents.

The Ethiopian government has strived to meet needs of the citizen formulating policies envisaging the manufacturing sector as the driving force of the economy no matter the public preference to engage on the service sector causes a lag on the aspired goal.

Thus such factor can also be catalyst of turmoil as the service sector is concentrated in urban areas and could not absorb rural unemployment. Consequently, states men should formulate a well-articulated and inclusive policy.

Before to tracing where our economy gauges, essential it could be what we want from our economy. Beyond producing self sufficient amount, our development has to focusing on sustaining the country and handing over better country for the posterity.

Most notably, what is demanded from the economy is the betterment of the public and consolidation of the country. To change the general objective into practice, paving the way for individuals who want eat bread upon their sweat is a must. In precise terms, there is a need to undergo institutional reform to create enabling environment for visionary citizens and there by avoid turmoil every here and there.

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

Business & Economy

Restoring infrastructure, rehabilitating displaced people in war-torn areas-issues of concern

BY LAKACHEW ATINAFU

Beyond fatalities and physical injuries like amputation of limbs and injuries left victims for age long disability, psycho-trauma, war has another legacy that cripples economy, devastates infrastructure facilities, and distracts social institution.

The aftermath is not easy to re-erect situation to the clock back. Most of all the destruction of infrastructure demands staggering amount of foreign currency and time span.

The case is double or triple burden for developing nations like Ethiopia where infrastructure development is crawling. Damages on electricity, road and telecommunications are hazards for conflict areas and it is not an easy task for governments to restore them.

Right after the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement (CoHA) between the Federal democratic Republic of Ethiopia and Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), Public Utility services are being resumed.

Following the Pretoria's Peace Agreement, the government of Ethiopia has lunched extensive rehabilitation program to swiftly provide service delivery for war victim areas. In doing so, there are progresses in rebuilding infrastructure facilities and banking services.

Electrification, road, flight, banking and telecom services have been resumed for the north fellow brothers amid challenges that need due concern in a time of high cost of living and unjustified quest of irregular groups that traded their soul to belly.

The government has been putting into practice its responsibilities enacting in the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement.

According to Government Communication Service (GCS), the reconstruction of damaged infrastructure in Tigray is already in a full swing.

The GCS State Minister, Selamawit kassa, briefed journalists on the current affairs of the country a week before indicated that 85 percent of the war-damaged power transmission towers have been maintained and trial activities are being done.

Eight main power stations including the Mekelle power station have been connected with the national power grid so it allows 57 towns and districts to regain power.

The rest 15 percent of war-damaged transmitters will be maintained and gone operational within the next two months, she noted.

Telecom service in several towns has also been restored. The restoration process of telecom service is being implemented in parallel with power restoration. Accordingly, 65 telecom stations have been fixed and have become functional, she said.

As to the State Minister, bank service in some towns has been resumed and about 24 bank branches of Commercial Bank of Ethiopia are going to finalize preparations



to restart service.

“Basic and large bridges have been reconstructed. And, four hospitals as well as eight health stations are now serving people having carried out swift reconstruction by the government; moreover, 2,200 health professionals who were out of the job because of the war have also been enrolled to return to work.”

By the same token, the Ethiopian Electricity Utility has announced that electricity has been restored to 50 cities whose electricity infrastructure has been damaged due to the war in the northern part of the country.

It has also been said that 2.8 billion Birr has been damaged in the sector due to the war.

Melaku Taye, Director of Corporate Communications of Ethiopian Electricity Utility, told the Ethiopian Press Agency; “Due to the war in the northern part of the country, there has been a lot of damage to the electricity infrastructure.”

The institution is working hard to provide electricity to the society by rebuilding the destroyed infrastructure and rebuilding the most damaged ones.

He said that through the repairs and renovations carried out so far, more than 50 cities in the Tigray region, including cities in the bordering areas of Amhara and Afar region, have been able to get electricity.

The director pointed out that the damage to the electricity infrastructure was high. According to the study; the amount of direct damage to the electricity infrastructure is about 2.8 billion Birr.

Stating significant damage to transformers, he said that since the infrastructure was in the war zone and had been out of service for

a long time, it is necessary to check every single thing, so this work is currently being done.

Melaku said that in connection with the recent peace agreement reached between the government and TPLF, the Ethiopian Electricity Utility has formed an independent technical team at the corporate level and a closely coordinated management team in Afar, Shire, Adwa and Axum lines.

He stated that in a short period of time, electricity infrastructure in many cities is being restored. He pointed out that since recently, cities such as Adwa, Axum and Wukro Mariam have received electricity services that were cut off, and the damage to the line from Shire to Adwa has been repaired and the community is currently getting regular service.

He said that further efforts are being made to strengthen this to provide services to other remaining cities. According to Melaku; the reconstruction of electrical infrastructure is being done in unfavorable landscapes and under unfriendly air condition. Workers are doing tedious and tiring work, including carrying heavy goods for long kilometers in areas that are not suitable for vehicles.

Thus, they are completing the work that could take a long time in a short period of time. Stating that the damage done from Shire to Shiraro is so great that it is no less than doing it like a new one; he explained that the line was being laid as a new one as it could not be repaired and put into operation due to the heavy damage caused by the area.

He added that attention is being paid to ensure that other cities get electricity soon. He appreciated the fact that most of the towns, starting from Mekele, are being

connected to the main electricity line and the community's support for the work.

On the other hand, efforts are underway to rehabilitate internally displaced citizens due to domestic and global circumstances.

Amhara State Disaster Prevention and Food-Security Program Coordination Commission urged stakeholders to exert utmost effort to effectively rehabilitate Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs).

Staying with Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA), Amhara State Disaster Prevention and Food Security Program Coordination Commission Public Relations Head, Eyasu Mesfin, stated that more than 600 thousand displaced people are still in need of support though over 235 thousand displaced people are reinstated to their residence.

As to him, over 850 thousand people were displaced due to Northern conflict and other related factors. Following the cessation of hostilities agreement, over 235 thousand of the displaced citizenry were returned to their home.

According to Eyasu, as more than 600 thousand were displaced from neighboring States particularly from Oromia and Benishangul-Gumuz, stakeholders should act accordingly understanding that rehabilitation is an essential part of universal health coverage along with promotion of good health, prevention of disease, treatment and palliative care.

According to Eyasu, more than 600 thousand citizens have been displaced following the conflict since 2010, and are still in various circuits in the region.

Besides, about 10 thousand displaced from east Wollega Zone due to the chaos occurred there have come to the region, and many have still faced misery, he added.

He mentioned that the region has been in need of aid for 8.7 million IDPs, meanwhile, the first round was approved for 5.3 million citizens and distributed support to more than 5.6 million citizens for 156 woredas in the second round.

The government has provided displaced citizens from Oromia Region East Wollega Zone with some 400 quintals of wheat and other related assistances, he added.

Unless lasting peace is secured, the threat would be the worst, he said adding that government's support of food and non-food items is worth appreciating, and NGO's and the people at large have to exert unreserved effort for lasting peace.

He also pinpointed that despite the candid support of the government and stakeholders, the amount of nutrients ultimately delivered is insufficient.

He further stated that the Ethiopian Red Cross Society and organization for rehabilitation and development in Amhara (ORDA) Ethiopia are showing keen interest to stretch helping hands, and other humanitarian organizations are expected to follow suit to boost the rehabilitation process.

Planet Earth

Sound regulations to save the endangered biodiversity nationwide

BY EPHREM ANDARGACHEW

Human activities affect water bodies which in turn affect the biodiversity of the world. Hence, biodiversity maintenance is considered one of the most important activities for ecosystem service retention. Because the ultimate challenge nowadays is the protection of freshwater biodiversity.

Indeed, water pollution has been a universal challenge for both developed and developing countries. While the quest for water quality is a question for everyone, water conservation and distribution, bad dealing with wastewater resulted in severe problems in many countries, worsening the water crisis all over the world.

Water quality pollution issues are among the major challenges that the world is facing nowadays. Aquatic pollution is considered a great problem facing freshwater and marine environments; it causes negative impacts on human health in addition to other respective organisms.

Pollution affects aquatic species' immune systems either directly or indirectly by altering water quality. There are many sources of aquatic pollutants such as industrial wastes, agriculture runoffs in addition to municipal sewage that is dumped in the river, gradually transferring water to be ineligible for human consumption.

Besides, agricultural wastewater contains many pollutants from herbicides and pesticides that have negative impacts on the river and people using its water. Industrial effluents are highly toxic, including toxic heavy metals that may combine with suspended solids found in domestic wastewater from the muck.



Ethiopia is part and parcel of the world and the cost of water pollution is on the rise which causes losses and reduced biological diversity, and aesthetic, recreational, cultural, and archaeological values. Because the country's water bodies receive considerable amounts of pollutants by way of sewage, industrial and domestic wastewater, and solid waste from land-based activities. They are either released directly to the sea or are conveyed through rivers, lagoons, and estuaries.

Hence, in order to save and protect the water bodies of the country, it is imperative to prepare regulations that protect and conserve river basins and sources of water nationwide. Ethiopian Minister of Water and Energy Dr. Eng. Habtamu Itefa said that guidelines for conserving and developing river basins are in the pipeline since industrial and factory chemicals threaten the biodiversity of the country.

According to him, chemical substances that are released into water bodies and great lakes are polluting and endangering the biodiversity of the nation, and the great lakes and rivers are polluted by the chemical that is released from factories.

The minister further stated that the situation reaches a critical level where the biodiversity of the nation is at stake these days due to the irresponsible move of the riverside development agents. One of the main dangers of this is water hyacinth weed expansion on Lake Tana and the effect is seen on the lake for two years, the same thing is happening at Koka dam and Lake Batu this time.

"The chemical that is released into the river has a huge impact on the nation's biodiversity and institutions have to exert utmost effort to reduce such a daunting risk. Besides, everyone should be conscious of chemicals whether they are released into or are not released into the river." To benefit urban and rural areas

from drinking water, it is better to dig the deepest wells to easily get the water as river basins are not developed properly yet, he explained.

The increased industrialization in urbanization has been reducing the availability of clean water. This as a result becomes a great concern to the aquatic organism, plants, humans, and climate and changes the ecosystem. Therefore, the preservation of water and aquatic resources must be the content of all sectors.

Furthermore, effective wastewater treatment has the tendency of salvaging the water bodies. Integration of environmental policies into the actor firm's core objectives coupled with continuous periodical enlightenment on the present and future consequences of water pollution will greatly assist in conserving the water environment.

Therefore, the ministry has prepared regulations regarding the conservation and development of river basins and sources of water nationwide. "What we are left with is the relevant body's approval. Until then we will do awareness creation. The places where sources of water are located should be given ownership title deeds and need to be ruled by law. The society should protect rivers and lakes from contamination," Habtamu remarked.

Indeed, water pollution may consist of chemicals introduced into the water bodies as a result of various human activities. Any amount of those chemicals pollute the water, regardless of the harm they may pose to human health and the environment. Along with the existing regulation, policies should be in place to ensure and control water pollution at the national level.

Malicious Agenda setting on Ethiopia ...

problem, suggests solutions and reveals the possible positive and inclusive results.

The problem sets in when agenda setting is used for false image building, outright lying and mulling the creation of total public disobedience and rioting and total discord between different ethnic groups in the country.

Negative and manipulative agenda setting is part of the media campaign to lure the public to a destructive mindset in a situation of war or

conflict. This requires a revolution on the use of the social media or any mainstream media for the purpose of peace building and not for broiling a political imbroglio as a push and pull factor in creating a stable social order and peaceful community life.

Agenda setting is useful when political and social dialogues are conducted to spell out the major challenges that prevent the prevalence of social harmony and mutual respect.

In Ethiopia ill intended agenda setting

also surfaces up when the media houses and the public are trapped between real and productive agenda and the agendas from sugar coated media information that seems to sympathize with the interests of the public but in reality attempts to push a foreign interest based agenda under the guise of democracy and human rights.

Agenda setting is also coined when local convinced traitors become subservient to the national interest of a country that wishes to interfere into

the internal affairs of countries like Ethiopia.

The government needs to be encouraged to put in place laws and public regulations that can sustainably be used for longer period of time instead of changing directives that have proved to be ineffective and fallacious. This is important because the government should gain public confidence in its operation and refrain from causing agenda setting for others who wish to see chaos in this country by creating agendas.

Art & Culture

Ethiopian Writers in the Diaspora and Their Works

BY MULUGETA GUDETA

In the olden days, and particularly under the imperial regime, when writers tried to challenge the status quo they used to be sent to remote places as internal exiles. Thus, the famous writer Abe Gubegna was once deported to Mocha a remote and cold place where he led a difficult life in total banishment. Mocha was thus a kind of “Ethiopian Siberia” in the sense that in Russia too, writers were sent to the cold place on earth as punishment. Fyodor Dostoyevsky was among the most famous authors who survived after being sentenced to death in Siberia.

Abe Gubegna was such a committed writer that he was not intimidated by the decisions of the censorship and security authorities who persecuted him constantly and fought to his last days against tyranny, censorship and oppression. Sometimes he went on self-exile and preferred to languish in anonymity rather than compromise his professional integrity and his political beliefs. Abe was also known in foreign literary circles and could have gone abroad to seek asylum. Yet, he decided to stay in his country and do his job whatever difficulties he faced.

The old systems of punishments are now gone and dissident African and Ethiopian writers have the choice between staying in their countries and do their work or go into self-exile for their safety. Writers these days are luckier than their older predecessors in the sense they can either go into exile whenever they feel the going is tough or live in relative safety away from poverty and in an environment that is highly conducive for their work. Given the chance and better opportunities for publishing their works at home most if not all African writer would choose to stay at home.

The great Kenyan writer Ngugi wa Tiongo was forced into exile because he was always persecuted at home and arrested several times whenever he decided to go back home. Under the Arap Moi regime, he was arrested at the airport as soon as he arrived to his country with his wife who was beaten and raped by police, according to reports published at that time. His house was searched and his manuscripts stolen or destroyed. He was then told to leave the country and never return lest he could be killed. Ngugi’s fate is one among many African writers faced and are still facing whenever they raise their voices against tyranny and injustice.

When we come to Ethiopian writers, we find two kinds of Diaspora writers. The first are those who went into exile in the past for many reasons and published their works there. One example is Nega Mezlekia, who immigrated to Canada and published his first autobiographical book entitled “Notes from the Hyena’s Belly”.

“We children lived like the donkey,” Mezlekia remembers, “careful not to wander off the beaten trail and end up in the hyena’s belly.” His memoir sheds light not only on the violence and disorder that beset his native country, but



Nega Mezlekia

on the rich spiritual and cultural life of Ethiopia itself. Throughout, he portrays the careful divisions in dress, language, and culture between the Muslims and Christians of the Ethiopian landscape. Mezlekia also explores the struggle between western European interests and communist influences that caused the collapse of Ethiopia’s social and political structure and that forced him, at age 18, to join a guerrilla army. Through droughts, floods, imprisonment, and killing sprees at the hands of military juntas, Mezlekia survived, eventually immigrating to Canada. In *Notes from the Hyena’s Belly* he bears witness to a time and place that few Westerners have understood.

Others Ethiopian writers in the Diaspora like Dinaw Mengistu who was born in Addis Ababa and went to the US as a child with his immigrant parents. “Ethiopian-American writer Dinaw Mengistu won critical accolades for his 2006 debut novel *The Beautiful Things That Heaven Bears*. Its story chronicles a Washington, D.C., shopkeeper’s struggle to come to terms with his Ethiopian past and current unhappiness in his adopted land, and it features some parallels to the real-life tale of Mengestu’s own family. Critiquing it for the *New York Times Book Review*, Rob Nixon asserted that the first-time author “has written a novel for an age ravaged by the moral and military fallout of cross-cultural incuriosity.... There’s something hugely hopeful about this young writer’s watchful honesty and egalitarian tenderness. This is a great African novel, a great Washington novel and a great American novel.”

Dinaw Mengestu is the author of three novels, all of which were named *New York Times* Notable Books: *All Our Names* (Knopf, 2014), *How To Read the Air* (Riverhead, 2010), and *The Beautiful Things That Heaven Bears* (Riverhead, 2007). A native of Ethiopia who came with his family to the United States at the age of two, Mengestu is also a freelance journalist who has reported about life in Darfur, northern Uganda, and eastern Congo.

His articles and fiction have appeared in the *New York Times*, *New Yorker*, *Harper’s*, *Granta*, *Jane*, and *Rolling Stone*. He is a 2012 MacArthur Fellow and recipient of a Lannan Literary Fellowship for Fiction, National Book Foundation 5 Under 35 Award, *Guardian* First Book Award, and *Los Angeles Times* Book Prize, among



Dinaw Mengistu

other honors. He was also included in *The New Yorker’s* “20 under 40” list in 2010.

In its cover page review of *All Our Names*, the *New York Times Book Review* said “You can’t turn the pages fast enough, and when you’re done, your first impulse is to go back to the beginning and start over . . . While questions of race, ethnicity, and point of origin do crop up repeatedly in Mengestu’s fiction, they are merely his raw materials, the fuel with which he so artfully but never didactically kindles disruptive, disturbing stories exploring the puzzles of identity, place, and human connection.”

Among the celebrated Ethiopian writers in English is also Meaza Mengistu who grew up in the United States and became a major Ethiopian writer writing in English. Meaza’s first novel was about the 1974 Revolution in her country that came following the downfall of the imperial regime. Her first novel is entitled “Beneath the Lion’s Gaze” which, according to the *New York Times Book Review* is, “An important novel, rich in compassion for its anguished characters.”

“This memorable, heartbreaking story opens in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 1974, on the eve of a revolution. Yonas kneels in his mother’s prayer room, pleading to his God for an end to the violence that has wracked his family and country. His father, Hailu, a prominent doctor, has been ordered to report to jail after helping a victim of state-sanctioned torture to die. And Dawit, Hailu’s youngest son, has joined an underground resistance movement a choice that will lead to more upheaval and bloodshed across a ravaged Ethiopia.

Beneath the Lion’s Gaze tells a gripping story of family, of the bonds of love and friendship set in a time and place that has rarely been explored in fiction. It is a story about the lengths human beings will go in pursuit of freedom and the human price of a national revolution. Emotionally gripping, poetic, and indelibly tragic, *Beneath the Lion’s Gaze* is a transcendent and powerful debut.”

Meaza Mengistu’s second novel is entitled “The Shadow King” and was shortlisted for the Booker Prize in 2021. “Maaza Mengistu was almost done writing a novel about the Ethiopian women who fought an occupying Italian army in the 1930s when she found out, by chance, that her own



Meaza Mengistu

great-grandmother had fought in that war.

“I had no idea that I had a woman like that in my family,” she told Nahlah Ayed.

Her great-grandmother “was really one of those that should never have been remembered by history because of the place she was born. And she did this thing that was extraordinary,” said Mengistu.

“It makes me think about the fact that the stories of women [are] told in the spaces of women. They’re told in the kitchens, in the bedrooms, in the places where women gather to talk amongst themselves. And they never make it into the classroom. They don’t make it into textbooks or into libraries.”

There are also lesser known Ethiopian writers in the Diaspora such as Hama Tuma who has published a celebrated anthology of short stories entitled, “The Case of the Socialist Witchdoctor and other stories (short stories; Heinemann, 1993). His other works include *Give Me a Dog’s Life Any Day: African Absurdities II* (essays; Trafford Publishing, 2004), *African Absurdities: Politically Incorrect Articles* (essays; First Publish, 2002), *Of Spades and Ethiopians* (poetry; Free Ethiopian Press, 1991).

According to Wikipedia Encyclopedia, “Hama Tuma was born in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia; Tuma studied Law in Addis Ababa University. He became an advocate for democracy and justice. This has caused him to be banned by three different Ethiopian governments. This situation sharpened his use of satire and he is known as one of Ethiopia’s greatest satirists. He has travelled widely but currently lives in Paris with his wife and daughter. His books have been translated into English, Italian, French, and Hebrew.”

Ethiopian writers in the Diaspora often deal with themes dealing with their country’s past and Ethiopians’ experiences in exile. Given the vastness of Ethiopia’s literary heritages and rich history, what has so far been written is far from covering the various facets of life in Ethiopia as lived by ordinary folks. We can however remain confident that other Diaspora writers will emerge in the future and try to cover what had been overlooked by present day Diaspora writers who have put their country on the map of global literary production and should be highly commended for this.

Society



It takes a big heart to shape little minds

BY LEULSEGED WORKU

Preschool is a place where the future engineers, teachers, doctors, leaders and politicians are made. For this reason, countries are seen giving special attention to preprimary schools with the target to produce the next generation.

As a country that aspires to bring a radical economic, social and political change, Ethiopia has also given special attention to the sector.

Lately, scholars have discussed the limitations of preschool teachers and ways to fill the gaps.

According to Ethiopian School Readiness Initiative Executive Director, Menelik Desta (PhD), most preschool teachers consider their position as a bridge towards their next career instead of giving all their knowledge and time to the children they are assigned to nurture.

Absence of books in mother tongue languages in early school is also a challenge for quality education in the early period. If children are provided with a chance to learn with books that are written in their mother tongue, they would have a better chance of understanding what they are learning, and they would be able to preserve the value systems of their community. Minilik said that, whenever books are prepared for little children, they should include the sociocultural values of that particular society. If not, they will be confused in their future academic life and in their social interaction as well.

Quality education which is given to children at the early stage by considering their local culture and mother tongue has a crucial value in shaping their mind. Learning and teaching process is not all about rehearsing numbers and composing words. Quality education is equipping children with the necessary basic knowledge and nurturing morally responsible citizens who value the sociocultural practices of the country. What is more, quality education is creating



conducive environment for little children at preschool stage to search for knowledge by their own ways; not always in a regular teaching and learning process.

Parental engagement is the other area where Ethiopian School Readiness Initiative is advising to bring about quality education at preschool period. According to Minilik, the more there is parental engagement in preschools, the more the country will have “quality students” and responsible citizens.

Active engagement of parents includes creating favorable environment for their children to have healthy relationships at home as well as in the school. For instance, students who came from conflicting parents tend to be unfocused in their education. This, in turn, will have an adverse effect on their result and future academic life. In this regard, having a healthy relationship between parents and children has a direct impact on the quality of education.

Parental engagement in school also has a positive result on the academic performances of little children. Parents’ engagement in school can be explained in the form of developing a sense of ownership to the school. Whenever parents develop a positive attachment with the school where their children are pursuing their education,

they will directly or indirectly produce industrious citizens that care for themselves as well as for their country.

According to scholars, improving the quality of pre-school teachers is the base for sustainable development. As it was indicated by Menelik, preschool teachers’ enrollment process is the other area of challenge towards poor performance of children in early schools. Most of the time, pre-school teachers consider their position as a transitional place till they get their diploma or degree. For that reason, they are more theoretical than practical. Absence of on job training to pre-school teachers and educators, poor perception of their position are also the other challenges.

Seconding the view of Menelik, Early Child Care Education Center Lecturer at Addis Ababa University, Prof. Belay Tefera, said that preschool teachers education needs due attention in Ethiopia. According to him, quality early childhood education is not only vital for the sake of children or their parents; it also has a vital role for the future of the nation.

He said, whenever we talk about quality education at an early stage, we are talking about quality pre-primary teachers who give their time and interest for the sake of those

little children. In this regard, preschool training should be government’s and other stakeholders’ priority area.

According to Prof. Belay, proper investigation of the curriculum, candidate behavior, the pedagogy training, provision of mental health services to students, attitude and the commitment of teachers and others should be considered in this regard. In most cases, there is a tendency of minimizing the role of pre-school education and educators at preschool level. For this and other reasons, preschool teachers have poor perception towards their responsibilities which in turn affects the academic performance of students in their future academic life.

Concerning the curriculum, Prof. Belay, said that preschool teaching needs to be more practical than theoretical knowledge. In this regard, preschool teachers’ training should be more focused on practical knowledge than theoretical knowledge that has no value to children in preschool. He also said that the curriculum should also give emphasis to local value systems. It should not be a direct replica of the others’ or it should not be a hybrid system. What is more, according to the scholars, the curriculum should also pay special attention to psychology, mental health issues, child care, nutrition and play-based-learning and teaching process.

As a means to bring a radical change, researchers have suggested that teachers’ tendency towards their profession should be interest based rather than considering it as a mere career to earn their daily bread. Their competence and interest should get due attention. As the saying goes “It takes a big heart to shape little minds”, preschool teachers and parents have a dual responsibility in shaping the future of little children. As a means to overcome the aforementioned challenges, active involvements of all stakeholders and parents in the teaching and learning process are vital in filling the gaps witnessed in the preschools and shaping the future engineers, doctors, teachers and politicians of the nation.

Law & Politics

An earnest pledge from horse's mouth to expedite Pretoria peace deal implementation

BY ADDISALEM MULAT

After the signing of the peace agreement, every single thing in the northern part of the country has been returning to normalcy with flying colors. It is widely known that in the wake of the successful completion of the cessation of hostilities agreement between the federal government and TPLF, youths and scholars from the Tigray State have been enunciating their readiness to stand by the side of the incumbent.

It is public knowledge that after the signing of the peace agreement, residents of the Tigray State have been praising the incumbent for smoothing the path of the deliveries of humanitarian assistance and restoring social infrastructure at the earliest possible moment. It is no secret that the federal government has been fulfilling the whole lot required for the people of Tigray according to the agreement.

To everyone's dismay, some entities disappointed by the promising moves of the cessation of hostilities agreement have been sparing no efforts to throw cold water on the efforts of the government and bewildering the wider international community by distorting facts. No matter how hard they tried, all their endeavors ended up going for nothing owing to the concentered efforts of the government and the people of Ethiopia.

If truth be told, in the course of the war that lasted for two years in the northern part of the country, they left no stone unturned to move the country into uncharted waters working in close collaboration with the discredited international media outlets and some internal and external actors.

It is abundantly clear that in the face of the government's continuous efforts to bury the hatchet and ensure peace in every corner of the northern part of the country, some entities have made an effort to become a stumbling block to the positive moves and give a bad name to constructive steps unfolding under Ethiopia's skies.

Notwithstanding the fact that Ethiopia's opponents pulled out all the stops to pay no heed to the positive actions, the wider international community has been commending the positive accomplishments sprouting in the northern part of the country. Dejectedly, some groups that do not want to see a prosperous Ethiopia have been making all possible efforts to mystify the wider international community with fictitious and bogus stories.

In a similar vein, they have been taking part in character assassination and hostile campaigns against the constructive steps mushrooming all over the Northern part of the country. Apart from that some of them have been playing a part in tarnishing the country's image as if the



peace implementation is not heading in the right direction.

On the heels of the peace deal, humanitarian organizations and other bodies have been assisting the progress of humanitarian assistance in the Tigray State. However, as old habits die hard Ethiopia's arch-foes have been making an effort to come up with bull and cock stories and perplex the global community.

Despite the fact that the deliveries of humanitarian assistance and restoration of social infrastructure have continued in the Tigray State, Ethiopia's adversaries have been making a supreme effort to drag through the mud the constructive steps of the federal government.

It is no secret that since the start of the war in the northern part of the country the federal government managed to extend an olive branch in a number of instances aimed at bringing about peace. As things stand at present, following the free flow of humanitarian aid, the incumbent has been receiving a pat on the back many a time and oft from a diverse range of humanitarian organizations and the global community.

Though humanitarian assistance has been entering the Tigray state, some doomsters have been engaging in character assassination against the incumbent's constructive steps. In times gone by in the face of continuous challenges brought about by certain entities, the government was able to go to the ends of the earth to give the green light to unfettered access to humanitarian assistance.

It should be borne in mind that on the heels of the war that broke out in the northern part of the country a wide spectrum of healthcare institutions, health centers, educational institutions, and other social infrastructures have been destroyed. As things stand at present, residents, scholars, and youths have expressed their readiness to stand by the side of the federal government on the subject of the peace implementation.

According to information obtained from

the Ethiopian News Agency Tigrayan scholars and youths have expressed readiness to discharge their responsibilities in order to sustain the peace agreement.

The government of Ethiopia has been making efforts to provide unfettered humanitarian aid to areas affected by the conflict, they said pointing out the activities being carried out to restore and commence telecom, electricity, banks, and other services in these areas.

The participants of the consultation for their part appreciated the government's endeavor to ensure peace and development in the country citing the government's encouraging activities being underway in the Tigray Region to sustain the peace agreement that demonstrates the commitment of the government. "The peace agreement has given hope to the people of Tigray,"

The people of Tigray will no longer shoulder the war, they said urging the people of Tigray region to safeguard its peace by standing with the government. In this sense, they confirmed that they are ready to discharge their role by coordinating the natives of the region and consolidating the achieved peace.

They pointed out that they will work to ensure the development journey that Ethiopia has started by resolving any differences through discussion. They also stated that they will work to take Ethiopia to heights by mobilizing the people so that national reform can be achieved in the Tigray region as well.

It is to be recalled that the government of Ethiopia and TPLF, signatories of the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement (CoHA) in Pretoria, announced that the implementation of the truce is underway in a good manner.

Accordingly, Government Communication Service (GCS), Legesse Tulu stated that the government has been fulfilling its responsibilities for the realization of the peace accord to ensure the equal benefits and unity of the people. Lasting peace comes from inner desire

and our commitment to look inward and heal our wounds. If we are able to look at the bigger picture and hope for the future, then lasting peace can be achieved.

Externalizing and echoing problems that are arising from doubt and fear can never be part of the solution. Accordingly, it is important to take concrete steps and the federal government is fully executing its responsibilities based on the CoHA.

The government is also facilitating humanitarian aid and medical supplies from partners to Tigray through all corridors which are part of the Pretoria Agreement.

Legesse further stressed that, this tangible effort and the desire of the government to implement the CoHA should be replicated by the TPLF side; adding that curtailing the destructive activities of some groups which want to ruin the truce, is something worth considering. Optimism and committed action from every Ethiopian are crucial to establish lasting peace in the country.

It should be recalled that in an interview they gave to local media residents of Aksum, Shire, and Adwa said that the peace agreement has helped them lead a stable life. They stressed that though they deserve assistance to operate their formal economic and other activities to sustain their livelihood, they resume leading their formal livelihood in a stable way following the CoHA.

Applauding the effort of the government for its rehabilitation activity, residents called on all parties in conflict, international and local humanitarian organizations, to work at their maximum potential to bring sustainable peace and rehabilitate Tigray state.

According to the residents, as they were highly affected by the conflict, they want holistic assistance and support to sustain their living in a happy manner; enjoying different social, economic, and other services.

It must not be forgotten that very recently; Children in Mekelle city were able to voice their support for the peace deal signed between the Government of Ethiopia and TPLF. Participating in the peace Carnival hosted in the city, children and youth expressed unreserved support for the deal in a bid to live in a stable environment. They further stated that they have been out of school for two consecutive years because of the conflict. However, currently, they are hoping to resume their education sooner than later.

In the meantime, residents in Adwa town told local media that the government should be thanked for reaching humanitarian provisions when the people are in a difficult situation. Particularly, the absence of a grain mill, electricity, and other related issues made their life more complicated and problematic in the area.



Ephrem Endale
Contributor

Between you & me

Merry X-Mas and a Happy New Year!

From the Coffee Ceremony to the Gursha!

A few days back I was watching a new Amharic music clip, something I rarely do these days. Not that I am any music critic or anything like that. I've to admit being an old school kind of guy many of more recent productions interest me neither in their musical arrangements nor in their messages. I think there were much more socially significant, message-carrying productions in earlier times. By the way, one fact that we usually miss when talking about such things is that the musicians of yesteryears were salaried employees of certain bodies in contrast to many of the musicians of these days. So they can be as creative as they can since they don't have to worry about sales and album reprints. These days it's all about, what else, business! So it seems socially noteworthy productions aren't cash cows in the present music industry. But once in a while something significantly better than much of the musical muddle comes onto the spotlight; but unfortunately the lifespan of such productions appear to be short, too short as the spotlight moves elsewhere.

Anyways I clicked on this clip I was telling you about because of a positive FB comment of a person I highly respect who commended the clip of a male and female duo for bringing back memories of long past ages. I liked it and it got me thinking why in the world we seem to have thrown away all those wonderful social norms.

Political rhetoric these days seem to be dominated by the very people who should have been sanctioned not to come within a continent and an ocean of politics. Yes, politics might be free for all; but certainly not in the manner such sections of society are acting. Such sections are usually based on hatred of and scorn for what they call the other side, and they always try to sow the seeds of hatred and try to throw out the window anything of times passed and replace

them with their own poisonous rhetoric Tired! Really tired of such sections! Thiers are the most brazen of acts of trying to discredit all the good that has been done in the past just for the sake of their political gain and their coffers wherever they are and in whatever way they deem appropriate.

Take the traditional coffee ceremony with all the green grass on the floor, the flavor of the bellowing incense, the aroma of ground coffee which is prepared right under your eyes. The very sound of the coffee being ground is enough to stir long buried memories. We raised such issue a couple of times before. But the clip I'm telling you about really coaxed anyone familiar with the original coffee ceremony and the air of string social bonds that surrounds it.

These days we see 'coffee ceremonies' in flashy restaurants and hotels creeping up all over this city. With scores of flashy cups, eye-catching rugs and all the decorative things no denial they create real spectacle. It might be nice especially to foreigners or those craving for such colorful and festive sort of ambiance. However in traditional coffee ceremonies every bit of action is done for some reason. I can tell you that you wouldn't find much of those for-your-eyes-only-things over there. They are not about creating spectacles but about strengthening social bonds.

Much of the criticism of the old coffee ceremony where usually house wives congregate and pass time is that there is a lot of talk and many pseudo-modern souls see those gatherings as sort of mini-gossip factories and nothing more. That is where the main mistake comes. Talking the gossip the 'insanely civilized' souls of modern days don't have the integrity or moral stranding to accuse past mothers of being gossip mongers. I'll tell you. The same detractors are the very souls who have actually weaponized gossip! The so-called gossip of

the not-so-civilized age were mostly harmless "He said this!" "She did that!" sort of 'gossip' that was nothing more than misplaced small talk. Seldom was 'gossip' as weaponized as it is presently. I'm not claiming there was no vile talk aimed at hurting some innocent people but only that you can't wail about the rabbit while the whole elephant is in the room! Do something about the elephant before dealing with the rabbit!

Then...

"Did you hear?"

"Did I hear what?"

"That. The family of W/o...bought a new sofa set."

"Where did they get the money?" A couple of lines later the small talk ('gossip!') is dead!

Now...

"Did you hear the family of... bought a two hundred-and-fifty grand sofa set?"

"Really!"

"I saw it with my own eyes."

"I'll tell you what we'll do. Her family won't enjoy their new sofa. I'll make sure of that!"

"Why would you do that?"

"I hate those people."

"But they have done you no harm!"

"They don't have to." I can tell you this goes on for a few more miles until agreement is reached about what to do with that family.

By the way even VIPs and bosses gather around the coffee ceremony in hotels and talk over things with their guests black, white or whatever. In fact some seem to take time discussing God knows what. But we don't accuse them of gossip mongering. Ha!

Speaking of that clip take this practice of sending the smaller kids to go around and tell people coffee is ready. Quite a big knock on the door with very tiny hands"

"Who is it?"

"Etiye.... mom says coffee is ready!" and off to the next neighbor. In fact if a lady in whose house the coffee ceremony is being held that day forgets to call one of the usual guests I can tell you she'd be in quite hot waters. Nothing could be more disrespectful!

In the clip I'm telling you about the duo bring memories of the gursha; gursha in the real sense of the word not gursha of bribery. Now we use traditionally use our bare hands to eat almost all of our local food. (Who am I telling this to?) Any way say a lady on that other side scoops up quite a large piece of enjera wraps it around the wot and goes to the person and puts it in their mouths. What could be more intimate! If you think that's small potatoes then you'll really have some homework you should be looking into. The gursha is an expression of the closeness and intimacy and/or respect of both the 'giver' and the 'taker.' No act would be as offensive as declining someone's gursha! They wouldn't be happy. I've to admit that's a position I found myself in more than a few times. For some reason I decline gursha even from close relatives and best friends. Luckily most of them know this and let me off with, "Oh, that's him." But a couple of times years back things got a little bungled up and the host lady whose gursha a few times didn't have any nice words for me. She took my declining as the litmus test of my whole unsocial character! (I can imagine some souls "I never thought this guy was so superstitious! What does he think they'll put in his mouth along with the food!" Your request for forgives at this little mistake accepted. Hmm...)

But all said the gursha is a show of intimacy and in these times of much discord and moral decadence I think the gursha deserves all the cheers it can get!

Now, today being a Sunday how about a gursha to the other person!

Of CVs and Food Types!

Recently a young lady asked me to help her in writing her CV. Having been out of work for a couple of years after a degree in accounting from some private college or university she was about to land some job after looking for all those times. Of course it wasn't much of a job and the pay is chickenfeed as she was nice enough to tell me. But the young lady coming for the humblest of families she has to grab at almost anything that comes her way. After all, these days something, anything is better than nothing.

Now she had already typed her CV the way she deemed was the right way to do it. Of course, her command of the English language leaves much, very much to be desired. This being a very crowded boat there is nothing to be sore about though as there is so much going in this world and to keep pace one needs to work on one's "How do you do?" "I'm very well, thank you!" thing. It actually scares you when those of us supposedly to have been in better place seem to be losing the train at all the stations. Sad, real sad!

The young girl's CV was four and a half pages long typed in single space. Reading it I couldn't help being torn between two things; one is the innocence of the girl who wrote the things she thought might interest her would-be

employers. Second is a recent official report which said forty something percent of college graduates are out of work; this girl was one of them.

So back to her CV and she had put the academic and other basic requirements of most CVs. Then, this being innocence at its best, she had written the types of foods she likes and hates. I didn't want to run into conclusions and went on reading. Oh, she also says she is one of the best cooks. Not the CV is not for any restaurant, hotel or anything like that. It is for a rather insignificant sort of office and she'd be working in finance section if they take her in. She also wrote about what she says were her hobbies and, catch your breath that she'd one day want to go around the world. Three cheers for her! I mean you can call this lady a hundred and one things, but one thing I can tell you she isn't is stupid! No way.

Time to talk to her; I told her that her CV appears a little too long and then asked her why she included the part about the foods she likes and hates. She says there's this relative of hers who she thinks knows about such things and he told her to put that info into her CV.

"Why did he tell you that?"

"He said the food people eat describes the character of the person." And by this 'calculation' the inclusion of the food list doesn't have anything to do with culinary issues. Forget the calories and proteins. It was about her character! I'm not sure I have read any significant literature about the food one eats the reflection of their character. Maybe it is. Maybe your choice of food might land you the best high paying job. But then for the young lady to have taken the information at heart and write almost a full page in her CV is a little too much.

This guy whoever he was also told her to put things she didn't know about as her passions. Her reading habits according to her were "Excellent." One thing I liked about her was that she admitted she wasn't much of a reader when it comes to books. That's the toned down form of saying something like "I hate reading books!" Well, that might be an innocent sin which wouldn't take that much to be passed over. (A year or so back I've heard of this person who was applying for a position in an international organization or something like that. Among his 'hobbies' was that he was an avid fan of golf and he "always watches golf games." He had absolutely no idea of the sport!

He included the part at the advice of some guy who claims to know about anything and everything there's to know about such things. I can tell you currently we've more than our share of that breed. I think that could be one sector we can think of about 'outsourcing'. I'm not joking; with all the things you hear these days from all over the place nothing, and I'm saying that loudly, NOTHING is out of bounds. The fact he doesn't know one hell of a thing about this sport they call golf. Ask me about golf and I can tell you Trump had some golf courses and that the fellow they call Tiger Woods is still crazy rich even after that divorce settlement which washed quite a large chunk of his wealth. By the way the 'golf fan' never got the call he expected.

As to the young lady we cut her CV to a little more than a page and a half and once she submitted it she learned she has been picked out for an interview. About this choice of food giving away your personality I can tell you this. Only one thing decides the types of foods I consume and it is not my behavior; it is my wallet! When my wallet deflates so does my mid-section! When my wallet gains some 'flesh' so does my...well, just a minute; the jury is still out on that!

In Pictures

Ethiopia bolsters modern farming, harvesting!

BY DARGIE KAHSAY

In Ethiopia it is a *Mehere* season, a season which comes after a rainy one *Kiremt* (winter). *Kiremt*, a time when a heavy rain hits, is a crop production season across Ethiopia. During the *Mehere* season, farmers and crop-producers are busy in harvesting the crops. It is a really a busy time for Ethiopian farmers. They work day and night to collect and harvest the crop every farmer has produced. Avery tough task awaits especially a small-sized family.

The traditional way of sowing, weeding, thrashing, winnowing and all together harvesting crops consumes huge energy. It also demands huge manpower. This continues for months. During this season farmers are forced to waste unnecessary energy since they work day-and-night. In addition to wastage of unnecessary energy and labor intensive task, the traditional way of harvesting is exposed to huge post-harvest loss of crops in Ethiopia.

According to studies, annual average post-harvest losses of crops in Ethiopia are around 25 percent. This shows that around a quarter of the produced grain is lost during harvesting, which can affect the productivity of households and even the national agricultural

productivity as well. Hence, the post-harvest crop loss has its own implications in ensuring food and nutrition security especially in the small-holder households.

But, following government's push to modernize the agriculture sector by investing in wheat production both in the rainy season and otherwise, and by expanding irrigation during the summer season, Ethiopia is extensively introducing modern farming as well as harvesting vehicles, that handle tasks ranging from rendering the soil comfy to harvesting. Ethiopia has distributed multipurpose tractors and combiner harvesters as part of its agricultural transformation journey.

The above shots were taken in Bale Zone of Oromia State this week. The farming vehicles are seen in the agricultural field covered by wheat ripe for harvesting. As part of its wheat self-sufficiency initiative with local production, during the past three years, Ethiopia is highly applying cluster farming, which is crucial both for maximizing productivity and suitable for modern harvesting.

The farming vehicles above are harvesting wheat produced by cluster farming in Bale Zone, which is one among agricultural



productive areas in Ethiopia. The whole crop in the field is ready and waiting for harvesting. The vehicles are in full gear to start the wheat produced by cluster farming. This trend shows the oxen-driven and scattered crop harvesting has timed-out. Due to the modern way of harvesting, there are no farmers seen in respective field to collect and harvest their own ripe crop. This is a new trend for Ethiopian agriculture.

Ethiopia plans to export wheat to its neighbors starting from 2023. This comes following the introduction of modern agricultural

farming techniques. The modern agriculture gives due attention to help the small holder farmers in addition to promoting mechanized agriculture. The modern harvesting would support effectuating the country's vision of food self-sufficiency and realizing its vision of exporting wheat, in addition to helping smallholder farmers to save energy and time as well as ward off post-harvest crop wastages. Expanding the modern farming techniques throughout the country would transform Ethiopia's agriculture and the government should continue its efforts in this regard.

Afar continues exploiting its agricultural potential



Afar regional state is located in the Eastern part of Ethiopia. It is among the lowland areas of Ethiopia known for its hot weather. Afar is among the historical places in Ethiopia. It is the home place of Lucy, the ancestor of all human beings. In addition to its historical sites, Afar is replete with precious mines. It is also a rich region in livestock production.

So far, the region has been left behind development activities. Especially, farming was not getting attention in the region. The perception was its weather condition is not suitable for farming, though farming activities were there even if in few areas.

But, thanks to the reform, Afar is becoming a newly agricultural potential area in

Ethiopia. The lowland wheat production initiative through irrigation farming makes Afar among the suitable areas of Ethiopia with huge agricultural potential.

Depicted in the picture above is Afar State President Awol Arba visiting an onion produced in Afar by farmers. During his visit to agricultural fields, Awol reflected agriculture is rapidly growing in Afar.

For him, wheat production is widely expanding in Afar and parallel to that farming of onion, pepper, tomato, cabbage and water melon cultivation is expanding. As the region is developing its agricultural productivity, Awol stated that works are underway to create market linkage for the agricultural products.

Ethiopia is striving to address its food self-sufficiency. To realize its vision, the government gives a priority to transforming the agriculture sector and exploiting untapped potentials in the sector. Maximizing wheat production, developing the culture of urban agriculture and promoting fruit and vegetable investments are among the initiatives extensively employed by the government of Ethiopia.

The initiative of expanding fruits and vegetables, as part of the Green Legacy initiative, proves more productive. Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed is seen in a filed tour on Friday, the farming plot is covered by banana. The banana farm was once an idle Blate River catchment, which is put to use to review the productivity potential of the area when it comes to various fruit and vegetables.



According to PM Abiy the area turned a productive one in various fruit and vegetables being developed by courageous private sector investors, utilizing surface level water. "The productivity of this area is an embodiment of collaboration beyond lines of divisions that need to be emulated nationally," he added.

Lawrence Freeman visited GERD

The American political-economy analyst, Lawrence Freeman, had visited the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD), a flagship Ethiopia's hydropower plant on Monday this week. "I received a tour and briefing at the GERD, a magnificent structure of infrastructure. The people of Ethiopia should be proud of this accomplishment. Ethiopia is already exporting energy to its neighbors, spurring true regional development," Lawrence twitted.

Lawrence is seen giving an interview to ENA on the premise of the dam. In the picture a journalist and Lawrence are seen against the background Blue Nile water overflowing the dam.

Lawrence Freeman told ENA that GERD is a greatest accomplishment in Sub-



Saharan Africa, adding building the dam benefits the African continent. "There is no reason for anybody to complain about this dam," he added. He said he witnessed speedy construction and hoped to see the completion of the dam in the near future. "That would change the Horn of Africa for the better," he noted.