

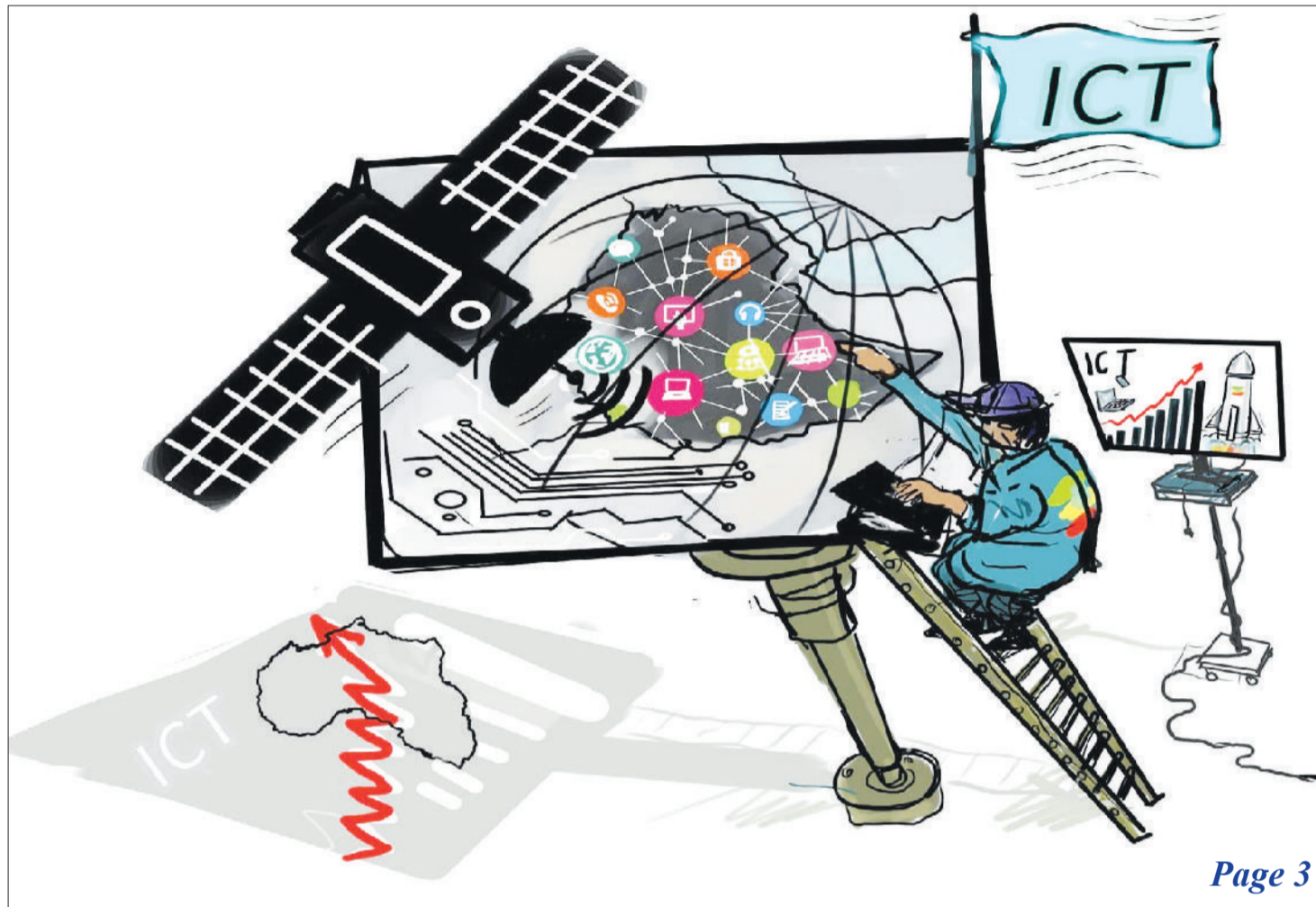


The Ethiopian Herald

Vol. LXXIX No 073 4 December 2022 - Hidar 25, 2015

Sunday Edition

Price Birr 10.00



IGF 2022 puts forward proposals to enhance connectivity

• Participants laud Ethiopia's hospitality

BY HAILE DEMEKE

ADDIS ABABA - The 17th edition of annual Internet Governance Forum (IGF) hosted by the government of Ethiopia was concluded successfully on Friday outlining way forwards to further enhance connectivity across the world.

Ethiopia's Innovation and Technology State Minister Huria Ali said on the occasion that connecting all people and safeguarding human rights, enhancing internet connectivity and access, avoiding internet fragmentation, governing data, protecting privacy, enabling safety and security, addressing advanced technologies including artificial intelligence are crucial for future digital world.

See IGF 2022 ... page 4



DERBA MIDROC CEMENT

OUR PRODUCTS

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

We give Door To Door Service

Call Us at 8688 or

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

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

Visit Oromia
Land of Diverse Beauty

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

Oromia Tourism Commission
www.visitoromia.org

AGI CONSTRUCTING THE FUTURE AFRICA
Abyssinia Group of Industries

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

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



Diaspora augments support to IDPs, rehabilitation efforts

Page 4

SME's can serve as backbone for the growing economy

Page 6

Genuine unity in diversity!

Page 9



Some foreign presses churning out lies about Ethiopia yet

Page 4

News



Photo: Ashenafi Gudeta

Habtamu Itefa (PhD. Eng.)

MoWE to make six million people drinking water beneficiaries

BY MISGANAW ASNAKE

ADDIS ABABA - Ministry of Water and Energy (MoWE) has been working on providing Six million people at national level with safe drinking water in this budget year.

MoWE Habtamu Itefa (PhD. Eng.) told The Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) that in the first quarter of this year, nearly 500,000 people have secured access to safe drinking water.

The coverage of safe drinking water is improving in the country and the number of people who had the access to safe drinking water over the last budget year was 5 million at national level, he said.

He said: “MoWE will achieve this plan easily because last year 5 million people were able to get access to clean water even if there were various challenges including the conflicts in the North Ethiopia.”

In spite of challenges the nation has encountered over the past four years, Ethiopia has made a significant progress in expanding of access to clean drinking water, he added.

He further stated that MoWE along with a number of development partners is working hard to better achieve the plan this is year because the country’s peace has been restored and this helps drill water projects in the nation to progress in a very good manner, and donors can also move easily to properly discharge their respective responsibilities.

“The drilling of clean drinking water projects, which is under construction, is done by MoWE itself, states and donor organizations have also assisted it to tackle serious problems. Focusing on drought affected areas and a dry place of the nation is prioritized. Sanitation and hygiene of people are improving,” he said.

He also said that the nation will continue working with stakeholders to ensure the access of water supply and achieve targets for safe drinking water millennium development goals.

Ethiopia’s achievement in realizing this goal also fosters sustainable development goals, he added.

Ministry foresees Premier’s initiative to animal productivity

BY MENGESHA AMARE

ADDIS ABABA - Due emphasis has been given to exploit Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed’s (PhD) *Yelemat Tirufat* initiative to drive Ethiopia’s immense livestock potential to food self-sufficiency and to larger economic benefits, Ministry of Agriculture said.

Speaking to local media, Agriculture State Minister Fikru Regassa (PhD) said that the *Yelemat Tirufat* is a national program peculiarly focused on promoting poultry, apiculture and dairy production in the country.

As to him, the program is a locally devised scheme with a view to ensuring food-self-sufficiency, substituting animal products importation via producing locally with the required quality, creating jobs for a number of citizens using animal properties, promoting export of animal products to other countries of the world.

Though Ethiopia has been graciously gifted with animal wealth and possesses a number of beasts which can provide the society with a range of benefits, the



Fikru Regassa (PhD)

country could hardly garner benefits it deserves so far. This trend has to be altered well using a combined effort.

“For example, only 1.5 liters of milk a day on average is garnered, on the contrary other countries can produce a manifold of ours. However, we can gain from 10 to 15 liters of milk a day by improving cow species and fulfilling all the required aspects as well as focusing



Asrat Terra (PhD)

on quality instead of lauding a number game,” the state minister added.

Ethiopian Animal Development Institute Director General, Asrat Terra (PhD) said on his part that as Ethiopia has possessed numerous untapped resources such as dairy production, poultry development and apiculture production, a coordinated effort needs to be entertained to make the country beneficiary out of the program.



Centre working on creating 100,000 jobs for youth

BY TSEGAYE TILAHUN

BAHIR DAR - The International Centre of Insect Physiological and Ecology (icipe) in collaboration with Mastercard Foundation has been exerting efforts to create jobs for 100,000 youth in honey and silk value chains.

This was noted on Friday during Honey and Bee Products Festival and a Learning Summit to promote beekeeping, unite beekeepers across the country, exchange experience and facilitate market linkages or value chains.

The More Young Entrepreneurs in Silk

and Honey (MOYESH) project has been implementing in the Amhara, Oromia and Southern Nations, Nationalities Peoples (SNNP) states.

In his opening speech at the festival, MOYESH Programme Coordinator Workineh Ayalew (PhD) said that icipe has been working to alleviate youth underemployment via honey and silk value chains.

MOYESH Programme has been providing technology, training and other supports to increase honey productivity and boost income of organized youths.

Regional MOYESH Director Meklit

Asefa for her part said that over the three, a total of 944 government staff woreda and zonal experts are certified to be master trainer and advisory for organized youth enterprises.

As to her, over 107 million Birr cost of inputs and other resources distributed to organized youths that engaging in honey and silk sector. In the stated period, youths generated over 93 million Birr income.

Furthermore, youth business enterprises have transformed into cooperatives.

The project is operational in fifteen woredas in the country, it was learnt.

The Ethiopian Herald

Established in 1943

Published daily except Mondays
By The Ethiopian Press Agency



General Manager

Tel. 011-126-42-22

Fax. 251-011-156-98-62

Advertisement and Dist.
Department

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

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

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

Deputy Editors-in-Chief:

Alem Hailu

Elizabeth Mengistu

Zekarias Woldemariam

Desta Geberehiwot

Daniel Beyene

Website: www.press.et

email: ethiopianherald@press.et

Fb/ /Ethiopian Press Agency/
The Ethiopian Herald

Editorial

Out growing the short end of the IGF stick

The 17th Internet Governance Forum (IGF) was virtually held in Addis Ababa. The forum that brought together various international bodies was one where ideas for policy inputs were cross-fertilized. In light of this, it has showcased that a country could rise up to accomplishing a lofty task undaunted by formidable and ceaseless hurdles. The event has created a favorable moment. It has slammed the attempts to tarnish the image of the country with a smear campaign. Creating a ripe moment it as well has enabled the country consolidate its diplomacy and portray the commendable task it accomplished.

The Government Communication Service's statement is in the same wavelength. The fact that the country has ashamed naysayers and circumvented challenges proving its capability to host such an international forum affords a source of pride. It exhibited Ethiopia has an identity founded on bedrock apart from being a country that emerges atop barricades that close it in. Parallely, as the forum is one where different countries cross-pollinate experiences it has created an occasion for those engaged in the information and telecommunication sector and job creators a venue of communication.

PM Abiy Ahmed on the opening session of the forum dilated on the works Ethiopia has been doing in the internet, science & technology and artificial intelligence sectors. He also reflected on the paramount significance of the sector for the prosperity of the world with a special focus on Africa.

Ethiopia's technology and digital transformation path is aligned with one of the five minor agendas of the 17th IGF. As it is known Ethiopia has zeroed in on science & technology, and Artificial intelligence. Thanks to this disposition it has relied on IT since it has been beset by COVID-19 and other artificial problems. Following

the works it done to upgrade its internet connectivity taking in to account its population size conspicuous changes are crystalizing. Accordingly, the Internet outreach in the country that stood at 19 million in 2025 has shot up to 30 million in 2030. Aside from the outreach service, stepping up internet speed Ethiopia has put in place a 4GB network in crowded towns and 5GB network in big towns. Knowing full well the paramount significance of internet in the quality of education 2,300 schools across the nation are rendered beneficiaries of the much-needed internet services.

Simultaneously, in its pursuit to embrace integrated digital economy to set the national digital strategy in motion, it has brought forth institutions of research and development that operate in concert with the artificial intelligence unit and it has introduced a science and technology museum that facilitates creative researches in the IT sector as well.

This being the case such forum foregrounds Ethiopia's thrust forward on top of drawing tangible and practical points. Hence the sector's significance goes without saying.

Things were not bed of roses when Ethiopia was accomplishing the lofty task. Following the improvement in the quality and outreach services there were tendencies of using the boons of the internet technology to bad ends—disinformation & misinformation—especially during the conflict in the northern part of the country. Surmounting such challenges erected on its way the country will surge ahead setting an example to other countries too.

Internet governance helps to thwart time, resource and space barriers. It promotes accountability, transparency and boosts the acquisition of knowledge. Hence, its promotion in developing countries begs for added attention. Africa therefore must not remain in the short end of the information stick.

Opinion

IGAD region deserves sustainable peace, development, integration

BY DARGIE KAHSAY

Conflict, drought, instability and disaster-induced displacement of people remain top agendas of the 48th Inter Governmental Authority on Development's (IGAD) Council of Ministers session, which concluded on 30 November 2022 in Khartoum, Sudan. On its communiqué issued following the conclusion of the session, IGAD noted that the political and security situation in Somalia, South Sudan and Sudan was discussed at the session and welcomed the permanent cessation of hostilities agreement in Ethiopia.

According to the communiqué, climate change, conflict and disaster induced displacement continues to exacerbate the scale of disasters that the IGAD region experiences. Though located at the strategic region of the world which can benefit the region to development and prosperity, the Horn of Africa is known for its turmoil politics in history. Its location becomes a curse than a blessing for the region.

In recent years, the region's peace and stability shows progresses and developments as Somalia established functional central government, South Sudan warring factions come to the table and Sudan holds comparably smooth political transition. The political crisis in these countries, especially in South Sudan and Somalia affects the regional

stability during the past years. The recent developments in Ethiopian internal politics also affect the regional security. In addition to political instability, climate driven drought affects the region that mounted the crises of in region.

Though the region is experiencing progresses and developments in maintaining peace and stability, still, the Horn of Africa is struggling from vicious circles of wars, conflicts, droughts and disasters. The regional organization, IGAD and its partners are also remaining busy to extinguish new crises and to mediate new warring factions. In every annual session and reports of IGAD, there are hot crises and new disasters that need timely solutions that have the capacity to divert the regional organization's resource and attentions to the new issues than focusing on investing on economic development and sustainable stability.

Due to the emergence of new political crisis and other disasters, IGAD focuses on restoring peace, mediation warring actors and humanitarian responses. This status quo must come to end and the IGAD region has to turn its face to harmony, peace, development, integration and cooperation. The vicious circle of instability, conflict, drought and other disasters must end and it is possible if the political actors of each country and the regional actors decide to make the region peaceful and secure. External actors have

their hands in disturbing the stability and peace of the region, but the involvement of external actors is due to the internal actors. Without any inviting actor or cause, it is impossible for external actor to disturb the region or even a single country in the region.

It is possible to conclude that the disturbing factors and actors of the region are internal, the external factors and actors are exacerbating using the developments in the region. Unlike other regions of the world, world's super powers are watching this region 24/7. Surprisingly, to the opposite, this region is the most turbulent region of the world, thanks to the evil actors. This makes the region to struggle with vicious instabilities, poverty, droughts. But, if the regional actors decide to solve the regional problem, the solution is within the region.

In the first place, IGAD should be strengthened to make it a major regional actor in solving the regional problems. Secondly, every country in the region should decide to transform its political system and must exit from the old political fashion. The political mentality of the region must be transformed and investing on conspiracy should phase-out. The region needs cooperation and every country in the region needs democracy, peace and development to end the status quo.

The region should use its strategic location for its development and it only needs commitment, decision and strategy of the political actors. Normalizing conflicts, disasters and droughts must end in the Horn region.

The people of the Horn of Africa region deserve peace, democracy, development and harmony. If capitalized well, its strategic location can help the region to transform to prosperity and development. The region has full capacity and potential to sustain development and prosperity. Peace and development must be securitized in every country and in very region.

Instability is the major problem of the region and securitizing peace is the solution for each country in the region. There should be no compromise or excuse for war or conflict in the region. The head of all problems in the region is absence of sustainable peace and maintaining peace and security would solve the problems and would help the region to turn its face to economic development, democracy and regional integration. Conflict and crises must not be normalized and should never become the major agenda of the region for the future.

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

News

University to hold scholars discussion forum

BY MESERET BEHAILU

ADDIS ABABA - Scholars discussion forum called "The Role of Scholars to Ethiopian Excellence" will be held as of tomorrow in a bid to bring about sustainable peace and development in the country using scholars untapped knowledge, so disclosed Kotebe University of Education (KUoE).

Briefing Journalists recently the KUoE President Berhan Meskel Tena (PhD) said that the KUoE has organized scholars discussion forum in collaboration with Addis Ababa Science and Technology University aiming at identifying the root causes of the country and directing the relevant solution.

As to the President, Ethiopian scholars have not been contributing good enough role in the country's overall development during the past many years. Due to this, Ethiopia has been facing various challenges.

Talking about some countries' experiences, he said that particularly countries like Yemen and Syria have destroyed their sovereignty due to the scholars' less contribution in the area.

The president, therefore, pointed out that the main purpose of the forum is bringing together scholars from various sectors in a single



Photo: Gebabo Gebre

umbrella to carry out fruitful discussion about the country's matter and ensure sustainable peace.

He also stated that the discussion will play decisive role in improving the country's economic, political, social issues are going to be discussed widely. The forum is as well used as a basement in realizing the future discussion which will be prepared in the rest of the country.

Berhanemekel called up on each scholar to contribute his/her effort to realize county's sustainable peace and prosperity.

Addis Ababa Science and Technology University President Derjie Engeda (PhD) on his part noted that a number of scholars from higher academic institutions, different sectors, and research institutions across the country will take part in the forum to discuss the national issues and interests.

In the course of forum, two research papers will be presented and opened to discussions in the various issues of the country at Haile Grand Resort, Addis Ababa. About 300 scholars will engage in the discussions, it was learnt.

IGF 2022...

Similarly efforts to address cyber security problem must center around the people and its impact on livelihood. The government needs to be transparent and accountable, she said.

Meanwhile, the participants of the forum have praised Ethiopian hospitality. The participants have expressed their appreciation and gratitude for the government of Ethiopia and concerning stakeholders for warmly welcomed and the hospitality given to them.

In his closing remark Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia Demeke Mekonnen said that Friday marks the successful completion of the 17th edition annual UN IGF and Ethiopia is greatly honored to host this global forum.

Ethiopia is working on digital economy and ideas raised at the forum needs to be implemented on the ground so as to bring the desired outcome, he said.

Ethiopia has been working on poverty reduction and building digital economy despite

challenges. The country has been working aggressively to ensure inclusive growth and build digital economy despite the conflict.

"We are in the course of diligently implementing the peace deal and providing humanitarian emergency relief and services to the conflict affected areas of the country. Despite the challenges we never relented from fighting poverty."

He recalled that IGF has been conducted for the past 17 years as a major platform for nurturing a common understanding of internet governance and additional responsibility is expected from the IGF.

Acting Executive Secretary, ECA Antonio Pedro said that each year as IGF convenes new ideas are born, new partnership forged, and alliances strengthened. "During the last days we have seen committed engagement from participants around the world highlighting current global concern on digital sovereignty, misinformation, affordability, internet shutdowns, freedom of expression, and others."

Participants highlighted that IGF should put tangible proposals for shaping global norms

or impacting national level regulations. Partnership with all stakeholders should be at the foundation of digital transformation.

Speaking to *The Ethiopian Herald Newspaper* Father of Internet Vinton Gray Cerf said that: "It is my first time to be in Ethiopia and the hospitality is marvelous."

Praising Ethiopia's preparations and hospitality for the 17th IGF he said that: "I am really admired by what I saw in Ethiopia in the last couple of days and definitely I will be back to Ethiopia to visit different historical places in the country."

"I hope the people at the leadership position, policy makers, government; media needs to work more on in providing safer and secured internet connectivity." He advised the people to use internet responsibly and contribute their share to the development. The 17th global IGF summit was held in Ethiopia, from November 28 to December 2, 2022.

During the 17th edition of IGF 2022, about 5,000 participants across the world took part and over 300 sessions on various issues had been conducted, it was learnt.



Some foreign presses churning out lies about Ethiopia yet

BY ESSEYE MENGISTE

ADDIS ABABA - Some Western government corporate presses are busy at churning out lies after lies about Ethiopia instead of supporting swift implementation of the peace deal between the Ethiopian government and TPLF, said a Black Agenda Report Contributing Editor.

Speak to international media, the Black Agenda Report Contributing Editor Ann Garrison said that some Western presses are not hoping for the success of the peace deal as they have been busy instigating chaos via disseminating fake news.

Some foreign interest group are undermining the peace agreement coming up with lame excuses and false accusations, she said adding that these individuals have been viewed Africa as a place to steal from and a place to dump.

As to Ann Garrison, in the large sense the way to think about Africa is attempt to control the Horn of Africa which is for one on all kinds of strategic waterways like straight in the Straits of Hormuz. It is an attempt to maintain to pursue and maintain full spectrum dominance.

In her final message, she called on the U.S government to reinstate Ethiopia's AGOA status. "It is one of the worst things to cancel Ethiopia's trade preference. This is something called the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA). It allows African countries to well manufactures, manufacturers who are manufacturing in Africa to see come over here a little bit to import to the U.S. without tariffs so it canceled that a lot of manufacturers left."

Diaspora augments support to IDPs, rehabilitation efforts

BY BETELHEM BEDLU

ADDIS ABABA - Following the peace accord, the members of Ethiopian Diaspora Community have contributed over five million USD, so disclosed the Ethiopian Diaspora Service.

Ethiopian Diaspora Service Director-General Mohammed Edris told the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) that Of the five million USD, 2.3million USD have been already put into the government's coffer where the remaining is still at the hands of the embassies.

As to him, the Diaspora community has also sent medical equipment worth of 12 million USD.

The Diaspora has also been making contribution through civic society organizations using various platforms, said the Director-General.

Over the course of the conflict seasons, the Diaspora has donated over 1.6 billion Birr for Internally Displaced People (IDPs) and rehabilitation activities, he said.

"Bureaucratic red tape and loopholes in legal frameworks are still the major bottlenecks for the Diaspora."

By the same token, he stressed that the Diaspora community is undertaking several activities to realize the peace deal. One of such efforts is sensitizing the community the need and essential benefits of the peace accord making use the available communication channels.

Besides, it is putting tremendous effort in advocating the implementation of the peace deal by putting pressure on those who were active in ending the war through various means.

"They are putting enormous pressure on the international community through various ways to realize the implementation of the peace accord."

Meanwhile, activities are underway to create a common ground between those who have different political background, stand as well as views, to better serve their country despite their ideological differences, he noted.

Following the peace deal, over 21 Diaspora groups have issued statement to advocate the

International community to support the peace accord. Prior to that, 17 advocacy groups have also released statements which were delivered to 1,200 international institutions, officials and prominent people.

So far, about 300 discussions were held in various Diaspora groups that are aimed at prioritizing national interest issues.

He further emphasized that the participation of the Diaspora community should lay in a sustainable foundation where they help nation in achieving its development goals that are envisioned to get people out of poverty.

As a result, he urged the Diaspora community to continue engagement in trade, investment, knowledge and technology transfer spheres.

Opinion

Ensuring food security, nation's next destination

BY DANIEL ALEMAYEHU

Visiting the museums of its past, Ethiopia had been considered as a sign of poverty and hunger by most countries of the world. Even this time, people misconceive Ethiopia as one of the poorest countries in the world.

Of course, it is not to completely deny the reality. The issue is, however, the government and the people of Ethiopia have been working together on making the nation a better place for its citizens. In this regard, the government has indeed taken tangible measures to address the challenges. Reputable international financial institutions as well have given due recognition to the improvements be it in terms of GDP or per capita income.

In the early days of the reform, the nation has been going through challenges along with positive changes. The incumbent has taken various decisions to change the overall progress of the nation to make the country the beacon of prosperity. From those decisions, due focus is given to making the nation deal with the question of ensuring food security.

It is important to remember that the whole world is in a big trouble regarding the economy. With inside and outside challenges, most nations in the world are experiencing major price inflation due to the pandemic and the Russia-Ukraine war. Those challenges knocked with harder fists, especially the face of the developing countries. In this case, Ethiopia is one of them. The war in the northern part of the country and other unwarranted international pressures made the nation to be in a tough situation concerning defending its people and sovereignty.

It is obvious that if there is a war, the nation's economy will be harmed. Due to the conflict in the north, the government and the people of Ethiopia are facing numerous pressures. To make things even worse, the nation was suspended from the AGOA agreement, and some international organizations that joined the fray had refrained from supporting the country. The crux of the matter is that there are some interest groups that bent on arm-twisting the government into fulfill their ill-intended wishes but in vain.

On the other part, the incumbent has not waited for another party to rescue it from those challenges; rather it has taken bold decisions on the economy and made the



nation stand on its feet. The question of food security becomes the priority of the government. In the present climate, the Government of Ethiopia has given due attention to the untapped resources that the nation is blessed with. Though the nation's economy is dependent on agriculture, it is believed, by most people, that the nation has not used its natural resources to curb the challenges.

According to various Reports, Ethiopia spends billions of dollars to import edible items including wheat products, and the incumbent has been working on ways to substitute the imported wheat with local production. Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (Ph.D.) initiated the summer wheat production coupled it with irrigation. This initiative has brought its results in a short period. From the results scored, the nation even plans to export wheat to the world market. This achievement has not been registered easily; rather, the government and stakeholders have worked tirelessly and with commitment to make it happen.

Having a brief stay with the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA), Agriculture Minister Umer Hussien mentioned ideas related to achievements in agriculture. The minister said that, "all we must see is the lesson we draw from it." It is true that the nation has surely learned a lot about how to survive under so many undue pressures. He also stated that the government has been working closely with the sector to achieve the expected goals. Hence, the incumbent has shown its commitment to the leadership, and the community has also shown its readiness to stand with the government. The agriculture sector has also enjoyed incentives such as tax-free

import of equipment and a-15 billion birr subsidy.

Apart from wheat production, the government has been working on other agricultural products by maximizing production. The Premier noted the production of rice, maize, and coffee has shown better progress like the wheat. Besides, those actions have been supported by other initiatives such as irrigated-farming and green legacy.

With tireless actions and committed leadership, Ethiopia is registering tangible results in a number of sectors such as agriculture. Such accomplishments will take the country to its goal of ensuring food security. The Agriculture minister has disclosed the already registered achievements.

Umer further disclosed that in the last budget year, "we planned to cultivate 336 million quintals of major seeds, and we have achieved 90 percent of our goal". It should be taken into account that there were areas affected by the conflict coupled with other challenges like shortage of fertilizer. "We are working on products that have a direct impact on inflation." In addition, the nation has generated more than one billion USD from coffee products. Such accomplishments are also registered in other crops. Further, the government is working on crops such as sesame, maize, and rice by expanding the best experiences to almost all parts of the country.

He further pointed out that the nation plans to yield better amounts of crops so that the nation will have the chance to export 2.5 metric tons of wheat products

to the market. The figure is expected to be the surplus production. As the nation is rich in livestock, Umer noted, the sector is also the focus area for the government.

These and yet another development feats are expected to take Ethiopia to the destination of ensuring food security shortly as planned in the nation's 10-year development plan. From the registered achievements, the country has the potential to march forward to prosperity.

All the accomplished figures are in store due to the fact that the government and stakeholders have unlocked the country's full potentials. The incumbent has not got life easier when it comes to power, but it has taken major decisions to curb those hurdles and put the nation on the right track. The economy is also proved to be resilient and has the capacity to hold on challenges and unjust pressures.

The essences of living under one's umbrella and standing on one's own feet have been the core elements of the government. The nation is trying to fight its war against poverty and external pressures. The nation will take whichever path to brush off the misleading picture of the country and restore its face in the face of the world. In the nearest possible time, the nation ensures its food security with its local production so that there will be ways to reduce imported products. Ethiopia will continue showing its potential to the wider global community and pushing forward to make itself the beacon of prosperity.

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

Business & Economy

SME's can serve as back bone for the growing economy

BY ABEBE WOLDEGIORGIS

The task of reviving the economy which was hit by COVID 19 and war in the last two years should not be left to the government, the involvement of the private sector is essential. To support the effort, BEHAQ multimedia Private Limited Company and Primer Investment Consultancy PLC launched a project which lasts for five years aiming to support 500 small and medium size enterprises through creating market opportunities in Africa and all over the world.

The enterprises engaged in producing leather, traditional and modern garments, wood and metal products, construction inputs, hand craft, poultry and related activities. Such practice manifests how private sectors support each other with cost sharing which would have been the burden of the government.

According to the Primer Investment Consults Manager Melaku Kinfegebreal, to select the enterprise various methods are employed and among others through getting information from local based quality assurance institution, observing with physical contact where they are located within 170 kilo meters radius of Addis Ababa and scrutinizing through agents, clients and networks from far places where the enterprises are working.

The enterprises products are also identified based on their quality and the demand and potential in penetrating local and foreign markets.

As to Melaku, the project mainly focuses on what the enterprises do in the future.

It is assumed that, they have their own capacity and potential and the project's role is supporting them to stand by their own, to enhance their capital amount, employment capacity and broad value chain.

The project intends to find market, financial support, facilitate loan and getting machinery in the form of lease.

Andualem Sisay is the manager of BEHAQ multimedia. As to him, the project will be implemented over the coming five years from 2022-2026 GC with a total investment of 3.4 million USD as per the partnership agreement the two companies signed. The selection of the first 500 SMEs engaged in producing high quality products has been carried out jointly by the two companies. The two companies will also jointly work in forging partnerships with the relevant and potential partners from both the private sector and non-private actors. Ethiopian SMEs involved in production of high quality and competitive products will benefit and get exposure to the experience of foreign companies in this regard.

Exploring the enterprises internal capacity and unleashing their potential is the major theme of the project. The public sector to some extent engaged in such practices but not in its full capacity because the government is pre occupied by various burning issues such as restoring peace and stability in various parts of the country, calming insurgents and regulating

commodity price, downing inflation and implementing the peace agreement signed with TPLF.

Before the implementation of the project, assessment was conducted with regard to the shortcomings of the enterprises.

Among others, the strength and weakness of their internal structure, their operational system, whether they need additional man power, market opportunities, finance, getting consultancy service or not. Moreover, accessing loan from banks through collateral was evaluated.

By taking in to account these all issues, the project will provide assistance.

Most selected enterprises utilizes locally obtained raw materials as input and best performers have the chance to advance their business and tap the local market opportunities but the main objective of the project is promoting export. In such a way enhancing the nation foreign currency earning capacity and create forward and back ward linkage with other sectors will be realized.

As it is known, export products will face fierce competition with other products relatively produced with better technology in the international market and unless the local enterprises produced standardized products winning the game might be hard.

Asked how far the local industries are prepared themselves for this competition, Melaku told that, one of the objectives of the project is encouraging them to produce quality products. For example, if there is a demand for leather product in the USA market, the product must be produced and exported based on the standard requested in that country. But currently the shortage of capital hampers the industries not to unleash their potential to produce as per the quality required. If they obtain investment from foreign companies and secure money in equity can improve the quality of the products and supply their products both to local and foreign markets.

On the other hand, if there are enterprises specialized in leather products locally will be invited to train others so that the beginners can cop up the required standard.

Exporting of the products to the outside market conducted based on the international agreements that Ethiopia is committed to be abided such as "African Trade Agreement" and COMESSA. But currently the priority agenda is developing confidence on the other countries market.

They have raw materials used as inputs and technology and if they get skill from well experienced enterprises can penetrate the both local and outside markets.

If an enterprise unable to export its products by its own capacity due to shortage of capital, the project assists to export through coordinating with other enterprises and the products can be packed and loaded with one container up to its market destiny.

It is believed that, local enterprises engaged in leather producing have the capacity to

compete in other countries where there are no companies which produce leather.

As to Andualem, BEHAQ will also be in charge of distribution of hardcopy branding materials including "the Ethiopian Products Catalog 2022: promising 500 SMEs Looking for Markets, and Investors".

Following the massive global (365 days) digital marketing campaign, Premier Investment Consults PLC will be in charge of handling all the email, telephone and other social media communications with the interested major dealers, supermarkets, and investors, among others. Premier will also facilitate sending product samples, arranging factory visits and conducting studies, like asset valuation, and other documents required for establishment of joint ventures between SMEs and interested investors

There are sponsors who support the efforts and producers will not be requested to pay when their products are cataloged. But the cost of cataloging is very expensive and the project works as much as possible to realize its objectives. To date, with the support of sponsors thousands of copies of catalogues are printed and illustrated in public organizations, hotels and other public areas locally.

As to Melaku, the very challenge of the project is shortage of capital and as mentioned above without the support of sponsors cataloging the products was not realized and still they need more support in terms of finance and consulting.

The task of the digital cataloging is advertising the products to foreign customers. It also has sample pictures and when the products are preferred by customers the quality status will be certified.

The products will be advertised through various digital media's and the investor's data also kept by the project. So far foreign investors showed interest to purchase the products but the small scale enterprises products amount may not be satisfy their demand. There fore, the project planned to combine many enterprises in one so that scale upping the volume of the product will be possible.

Ethiopia is the most populous country in Africa in which 70 percent of it is below the age of 35 and this indicates that providing education and training to the youth must be a priority agenda. Equally important is creating job opportunity for the burgeoning unemployed and to that end small and medium size of enterprises can play pivotal role. In the city and many urban centers SMES are so far could employ hundreds of thousands. But as compared to the job demand they should increase their employing capacity. But currently many enterprises are facing various challenges and among others space for expanding their production activities, market connection and access to finance. The SMES have a potential to penetrate foreign markets which is a gear to garner foreign currency. Therefore, the government together with other stake holders should strive to tackle their problems and move forward.



Most selected enterprises utilizes locally obtained raw materials as input and best performers have the chance to advance their business and tap the local market opportunities but the main objective of the project is promoting export. In such a way enhancing the nation foreign currency earning capacity and create forward and back ward linkage with other sectors will be realized

Planet Earth



Mount Choke

Green Legacy Initiative lessons and experience should be shared and expanded to the broader region

BY EPHREM ANDARGACHEW

Ethiopia has been striving to curb its greenhouse gas emissions by planting tree seedlings. The country is vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and the unpredictability of climate variability. Since the country is not a developed nation, its capacity to mitigate the negative effect of climate change has been constrained by limited livelihood options for the majority of the population, inadequate ability to withstand or absorb disasters, and the prevailing biophysical shocks it faces.

To address these challenges, there is a need for stronger climate change mitigation and adaptation initiative across the country. Among others, Green Legacy Initiative, which has been implemented since 2019, is worth mentioning. The main aim of the initiative is to build a green and climate-resilient economy.

The initiative is also imperative to reverse climate change impacts and environmental degradation that contributed to flooding, soil erosion, deforestation, and biodiversity loss. Moreover, it uses to combat the negative impact of climate change, drought, and desertification.

The initiative aimed to plant 20 billion tree seedlings from 2019 to 2022. Nonetheless, the country has achieved this by planting 25 billion tree seedlings which increase the forest coverage of the country. The initiative, apart

from combating the negative effects of climate change, encourages people to plant fruit trees which supports ensuring food security and nutrition. It has been contributing to ensuring economic development and food security.

Indeed, climate change is a global and continental problem that requires collaborative and cross-border cooperation and responses. Hence, the green legacy initiative needs to be recognized by the international community and many environmental actors who want to duplicate the initiative and its objectives.

Taking the initiative as a stepping stone to a better future for Ethiopia, UNDP, on September 2022, explained its plan to share the Green Legacy Initiative achievements and experiences with about 10 countries. The initiative helps the Pan-African agenda since it sets the pace in combating climate change and fostering community resilience. Apart from fighting the negative effect of climate change, the initiative is important to strengthen regional cooperation.

South African Institute of International Affairs (SAIIA) Governance Resources Program Head Alex Benkenstein told local media that Ethiopia's Green Legacy Initiative is a good practice to combat the effects of climate change. Its lessons and experiences should be shared and expanded to the broader region.

To share lessons from the good practices

and expand them in other parts of the continent, it is important that civil societies and other regional institutions concerned with the issue of climate change do more tasks, he added.

Ethiopia, in its Green Legacy Initiative, has been conducting not only massive tree seedlings plantation campaigns but provided tree saplings to neighboring countries to combat the chronic effects of climate change both in the country and in the region in a collaborative way, he stated.

Ethiopian Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Demeke Mekonen noted that Ethiopia has been working on the Green Legacy Initiative and the advancement of renewable energy in the country. The ongoing efforts of the Green legacy initiative and the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) have demonstrated the commitment of Ethiopia to building a green economy and mitigating the negative effect of climate change.

On her part, the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Program, Inger Andersen praised Ethiopia for its commendable efforts to realize a green economy. Besides, the UN will support the efforts of Ethiopia to encourage the development of renewable energy sources.

In fact, Ethiopia has gone long way in implementing both regional and international environmental agreements

to mitigate the negative effect of climate change. This commitment should not be only acknowledged but requires support from all parties.

The advancement of renewable energy and the initiative requires support from bilateral and multilateral development partners. Because supporting the Initiative has an enormous advantage for national, regional, and international adaptation and mitigation of the harmful effects of climate change, biodiversity preservation, combating desertification, ensuring green development, guaranteeing food security, and achieving the SDGs, according to Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Demeke.

Ethiopian Ministry of Foreign Affairs State Minister Tesfaye Yilma said concerted efforts are needed to mitigate or tackle the growing climate-induced migration. Fostering common understanding as well as designing adaptive strategies and jointly implementing the strategies are of paramount contribution to addressing the challenge.

In this regard, Ethiopia is taking concrete steps to mitigate the impact of climate change on sustainable development, the state minister noted, adding that the country's designed climate-resilient green economy strategy aims at addressing the challenges relating to climate change while pursuing sustainable economic growth. This can be copied by other countries as a model to combat the negative effect of climate change.

Art & Culture

Blood Cleanse Not Blood

(A Short Story)

BY ALEM HAILU G/KRISTOS

After grappling with a heavy chapter on Abstract Algebra at the Science Faculty Library of Addis Ababa University, when fatigue set in, and when I began to get famished, I decided to head to a dormitory, I and a classmate share.

Back in the dorm, putting my notepad for jotting odds and ends in a drawer, as usual prodding my dorm mate Jegnaw, who after class, taking of his shoes, likes to flop on bed before lunch, I said,

“Get up man! Let us go to the dining hall and queue up.”

But that day as opposed to his tendency of happily jumping down from the upper echelon of our double deck bed, he said,

“Please leave me alone! I am not in a mood to dine! Go yourself!”

And covering it with his hands, he once more buried his face in a pillow.

As he was not willing to tell me what was wrong with him, I could but go to the dining hall alone.

Putting aside the bread normally students in the campus are served with spaghetti at lunch, and buying a soft drink from a shop by the university’s back gate, I once more nagged him to get and eat lunch and tell me the secret for his unaccountable chagrin.

It took me a few minutes of persuasion and soft words before he gave in.

Devouring the bread with the soft drink he painfully uttered,

“I am going to withdraw and go back to Merabete, my home town!”

“What for? Have you gone off your rocker! We are due to graduate this semester, what is it that makes you decide so?” I posed a question mark bearing face.

He simply gave me a rolled up letter he shoved into his chest pocket.

It was from his father’s friends. It goes like this.

Dear Jegnaw, Greetings!

How are you doing?

I hope everything is well with you. Praise the Lord, here we all are fine!

After my greetings, as a close friend of your father, I feel I would be failing in my duty, if I tarry in informing you that your uncle, who took to the forest after shading a farmer’s blood, is severely injured by a bullet presumably fired by the brother of the deceased. Your uncle has turned a cabbage. A count down on his days has started.

Your father, private Taye Zenaw, fulminating by the unfolding, which he took an affront to his dignity, has just taken to the forest vowing he will take

even, despite my wisdom packed words that ‘Blood Cleanses Not Blood!’

As you know, your dad is on the wrong side of sixty. Though there is no doubt he is a daredevil, and while young, as was the dictates of the time, had demonstrated his valor shooting a lion, and as such he is revered by residents of our town, he is no more agile...And he could easily turn a soft target to another vengeance.

The same is true with me.

This is therefore to inform you that you need urgently come to a nearby town and join us in seeking a peaceful means of resolving the problem.

As you know, as vestiges of the old custom, here some loiter carrying a rifle even when plowing. To be on the safe side, up on your arrival at the nearby town, send a messenger, we will welcome and accompany you home and discuss on what ought to be done.

Merigeta Tele Kibatu

Perusing the letter I felt pity for Jegnaw, who found himself cornered.

“Why don’t you report the case to police? The police together with religious leaders could settle the problem,” I tried to advise.

“You just read my mind. That is exactly what I am going to do,” he replied after a minute’s pause.

“How was the bloodshed started? Why did your uncle shoot the farmer?” I couldn’t hide my curiosity.

“Often when a niece of my uncle’s wife pick a fight with her husband, she used to run away from home and get sheltered at my uncle’s house till her husband sends elders, who broker peace. My uncle and his wife rarely quarrel, for my uncle adores her. And his wife, who took note of the peevishness of her husband, prone to unfounded jealousy, always tries her best to avoid any action intentional or otherwise that could in his eyes’ erode her devotion to him. All in all, it was a blissful life they were leading happily bringing up their five-year old daughter. According to their division of labour, tending cattle and growing vegetables on the backyard of their house, making dung from the cattle manure, fetching water and firewood and preparing food, were routines that devolved on her shoulder.

But my uncle used to spend most of his time on the farm, a ten minutes walking distance from their hut. Yet unlike other farmers it was dining at home that rendered him pleasure. At lunch break, after they together devoured the roasted pea, she normally prepares for lunch, drinking coffee, once more they engage in their respective responsibilities.

Famished, once my uncle got home early from the farm yard. As opposed to the normal way of things, he couldn’t find his wife home as before. When he headed

to the backyard he got his little daughter chewing a sugarcane and asked her

“Where is mom?”

“I don’t know,” she shook the sugarcane left.

Mistrustful when he headed to the barn, to his shock he saw a man heaped on his wife on a pile of hays. On the spur of the moment, following the dictates of his impulse, he opened fire. A bullet pierced the man’s back while another his head.

At a loss what the heal happened, shaking off the man from whose two deadly pores blood was oozing out, jumping to her feet, the woman beneath the man, his sister-in-law but in his wife’s attire, dashing past ran into a nearby forest.

After seconds of shock and oblivion, when my uncle realized he had made a homicide, he quickly checked the impulse of the man he shot and found out the departure of the man’s soul to hell.

To efface any possible clue about the blunder, he ran back home and began to look for a hoe for burying the body in the barn.

Hearing about the bang, his wife, who was out to fetch water from a nearby spring, for theirs had run dry, came home half running half walking.

From afar when she saw her husband rushing into their barn with a hoe at hand, putting down the pot of water she carried on her back, she headed to the barn.

“What happened? I heard a bang! Are you alright?” she checked him all over.

Her husband, mortified like one who just received a verdict of a capital punishment in a court, with one hand on his head, with a pointed finger drawing her attention to the body on the pile of hay said

“I killed a man”

“Why?”

“Who is he?” she stared at him.

“I found him making love to your cursed sister there! It never crossed my mind, she could be the one he was making love to, and as she wore your dress, I mistook her for you. I got jealous, and blind as I turn when I get in such mood, I fired two bullets. When I shot the man, your sister got up and ran away. It was when I saw her face I realized I made a mistake,” he said.

“That rabbit, I shouldn’t have given her my dress. You see when I noticed her dress was soiled with mud, as usual reclining by tree shades with innumerable paramours, I lent her mine till she washes hers.”

“This was one of her undercover lover, the cause of a matrimonial discord between her and her husband. He deserves another shooting. Now hurry up we ought pile up a heap of hays on his grave,” she kicked his body.

“Make sure also no one comes by. If you are asked about the bang say chieftains abound in the dense forest and valleys. Find and tell your sister to remain tight lipped on the matter,” he added.

The disappearance of the victim, his relation with the sister of my uncle’s wife, the bang heard that day and the foul smell around the barn told on the secrete of my uncle.

Saying adieus, washed with the tears of his wife, he took to the forest for fear relatives of the deceased would shoot him. He spent a two years period of seclusion deep in the forest and valleys isolated from, his wife, children, and relatives, but tragically now shot, he is on his death bed.

You see, occasionally, before the break of dawn he had made a habit of visiting his wife and children. Calculating for a favorable occasion for a tie, the deceased’s brother shot him. That is why my father took to the forest to indulge in a vicious cycle of bloodshed, for some society members there still cherishes the outmoded belief blood cleanses blood.

If a man fails to erase blood with blood, he will be ostracized and ridiculed with folkloric songs and witty remarks. His wife too could not stand the tongue lashing of women that gather at community taps. Being dubbed cowardice in our society is a kiss of death. That is why my father, revered a hero there, took the retaliatory measure as an affront to his dignity.

“Police, the elderly and religious fathers must handle the case.

I will mobilize fellow graduating class students and solicit money for you to go to the nearby town to discuss on the peaceful settlement of the case. I think Merabete is not that far from here.” I put my hands on his shoulder as a sign of solidarity.

He said “Thank you!”

I reflected life itself sometimes proves an Abstract Algebra

Unpredictable

SENAIT G/HIOWOT

Life’s too short and unpredictable

Although people worry which is unreasonable

God defines our ways in life

It is not up to us on how we survive

People try to control all things

And they create a mess

It is not our mandate to govern laws of nature

But it is up to us to nurture

What is given to be of pleasure

Society

Genuine unity in diversity!

BY LEULSEGED WORKU

Nations Nationalities Peoples' Day which is celebrated every year on December 8th (Hidar 29) is a sign of unity and togetherness among Ethiopians. Due to the constitutional guarantee, the day has a special place for all Ethiopians—from minority to majority. However, this does not mean that the day was equally appreciated by all Ethiopians and the constitutional rights were respected.

For known or unknown reasons, the day was marked for several years to fulfill the political desire of individuals in power or those groups who need to satisfy their power greed under the pretext of diversity by neglecting all constitutional right of the people.

The motto "Unity in Diversity" had been exercised wrongly and the day (Hidar 29) was marked consequently as agenda diversion mechanism. In its true sense, the meaning of unity in diversity was not practiced fully among the majority. The worst, it was used to propagate differences instead of togetherness and; common values that bind Ethiopians together.

As some scholars put it, unity is not about oneness; rather it is preserving ones' uniqueness and accepting the cultural aspects of others' and enjoying the fruits of diversity.

In an exclusive interview with the EPA, politician Andargachew Tsige said that Ethiopian diversity should not be used as a weapon to jeopardize our unity; instead, it should be used as the source of our greatness.



According to him, Ethiopianism is a notion that brings us together into a center to defeat our enemies. For this very reason, Ethiopian sentiment we displayed in various battlefields should also be repeated in other areas to defeat our historic enemy-hunger and to bring about sustaining peace.

Andargachew emphasized that unity is not uniformity in everything. Being Ethiopian is not having a similar religion or language. An attempt to bring similarity under the banner of unity had never been achieved in Ethiopia. It is unity in diversity that saved the nation and sustained the existing Ethiopia. Using our diversity as a fuel, we should capitalize on what we have in hand on other economic sectors as well.

Obviously, Nations Nationalities and Peoples' Day has a special place in Ethiopia for various reasons. Since the day has contributed a lot in creating one political

and economic community, it has become an engine to boost tolerance, tourism and investment in the host regions. The Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Day affirms the necessity of respect for the fundamental rights of individuals and of the nations and nationalities of the country, as well as the development of the country's various cultures and religions.

As it is indicated by UNESCO, the day provides a vital and important demonstration of the strong commitment and respect of the Federal Government and of its peoples for all the Nations, Nationalities and Peoples of Ethiopia, and of their individual cultures, territories and modes of life. It also underlines the fact that Ethiopia has been and still is the common home for all. The Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia ensures the human and democratic rights of all the Nations, Nationalities and Peoples

of Ethiopia without exception, and it has granted equality and mutual cooperation to them all.

Indeed, having proper balance between unity and diversity are the assets of Ethiopia. As a land of multiculturalism and sustained by tolerance, our diversity should be utilized as a tool to bring about economic transformation and sustainable peace. The recent political climate that prevails in Ethiopia is witnessing the real meaning of unity in diversity that values prosperity. As a land of diverse culture and a country where several ethnic groups live in harmony, respecting others' interest is the foundation for unified Ethiopia and a seal that testifies its renaissance.

In this regard, the coming Hidar 29 will be marked colorfully by ensuring equality, diversity and unity; of course in a manner taking lesson from previous years flaws.

Ethiopia is among those African countries with a large number of ethnic diversity and language differences. This diversity has been the source of their unity rather than differences for centuries.

Instead of being source of conflict, it has been an element that brings people with diverse cultural identity into a single podium and glue that attaches them to coexist peacefully, to share their cultural experiences. However, this does not mean that there were no times when cultural differences were not used as a tool to stir unity. Due to the harmonious relation of the mass and century old culture of tolerance among Ethiopians, all differences were alleviated peacefully, and the nation has sustained till this day.

School feeding towards lessening parents' burden; benefitting students

BY MENGISTEAB TESHOME

It is crystal clear and scientifically proven that sufficient and well-balanced nutritional intake is crucial in early childhood and is linked in several ways to children's physical and mental development, cognitive performance, school attainment.

In cognizant of the benefits, nations around the world have been applying nutritional interventions including school feeding program in a bid to enhance the human capital development. Since the past few years, Ethiopia has also been implementing school feeding program with the aim to increase students' enrollment in the school, cut down dropouts and reducing absenteeism among school children thereby enhancing their academic performance and generating well-educated, competitive students; not only nationally but also globally.

Currently, the program is benefitting hundreds of thousands of school children and their respective families, especially those with low incomes. A month ago, the Addis Ababa School Feeding Program has received an international recognition at the 8th Milan Urban Food Policy Pact (MUFPP) Global Forum held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil for its outstanding practice, beating 133 cities in the world and making the capital Addis Ababa the first ever city in Africa to



win the award.

Truly speaking, the program is of paramount importance in terms of lessening the socioeconomic burden of students, parents and the school community. This is truly proved by parents, students and those in charge of the program

Temesegn Takele, is a father of two girls who are junior students at Menelik II Kindergarten and Primary School. According to him, the program has benefited those parents in poor economic conditions. "The high cost of living is impacting my way of life. While the prices of items are increasing every day, I am facing challenges in feeding my own children. For this reason, the school feeding program launched by the City Administration is a great relief. Thanks

to the program, our burden is now eased. Currently, I just send them with hope and courage without a lunchbox."

The Addis Ababa City Administration deserves recognition at the international level for its commitment for the reason the program shouldered the burden of a number of households and created jobs for fellow citizens. The program made schools the place where children dream for the best and equip themselves with the required skills and knowledge without worrying about their breakfast and lunch. Michael Yisma and Yishak Addis, six graders, are students of Atse Naod Primary School. When approached by this journalist, they did not hide their excitement about the school feeding program. "We came to school

with full energy to attend our class without thinking about the food issue."

Michael further noted that before the program was put in place, he used to carry a lunchbox, and sometimes he leave it for various reasons, but now no worries and frustration, he is comfortable because the program lets him enjoy his food in the school, "Many students were coming along with empty lunchboxes, but now everyone is equal, and we are enjoying it." Both said that "The variety of menu the school feeding program supplies and the service is good."

It is clear that today's school children are tomorrow's leaders, scientists, professionals and future parents. Therefore, they need to be nourished properly because sufficient intake of dietary foods and drinks can help them grow healthy; improve their cognitive development, their critical thinking skill and innovative capabilities. The general truth states that if and only if a child is nourished well, he/she can grow well, healthy physically and mentally. Thus making sure that children are supplied with the appropriate diet at the desired level and time pays back. If children are well-fed and got proper diet, they become healthy, not exposed to hunger, and they can attend their class attentively because it gives them the energy to attend class properly.

Law & Politics

From cessation of hostilities to lasting peace

BY SOLOMON WASSIHUN

It has been a month since we heard the least expected joyous news from South Africa about the signing of the CoHA, the permanent Cessation of Hostilities Agreement, which halted the two years of bloody conflict in northern Ethiopia. Thanks to the AU, the guns have been silenced for over a month without any disruption. Both negotiating parties have so far fully complied with the commitments they made in the peace agreement and have continued their engagement in a series of dialogues to advance the implementation of the Pretoria Peace Agreement.

The permanent ceasefire agreement, which has been in place for a month, has changed the lives of millions of people in war-affected areas in several ways. These changes were unthinkable a week before the peace agreement was signed in Pretoria early last month, on November 2.

All humanitarian corridors to northern Ethiopia, particularly to the Tigray region, are now open. Food, medicines, fuel, and other supplies are being channeled to war-affected communities through the four corridors and airlift via terminals in Mekelle and Shire. This is undoubtedly the most intensive and effective humanitarian relief effort since the conflict began two years ago.

As mentioned earlier, in addition to the road transport, humanitarian supplies are being airlifted to the war-affected areas. Various international aid agencies such as World Food Program, WFP, the Red Cross, and Save the Children have announced the dispatch of huge quantity of humanitarian supplies by air to the war-affected regions. The huge scale of humanitarian operations was said to be the first of their kind since the third round of the conflict broke out last August.

Companies providing basic services including banking, telecom, and power are resuming delivery of services in several towns in the war-affected areas. Even towns and villages in Tigray, Amhara, and Afar regions are lighting up for the first time since the war started back in 2020.

IDPs that have been sheltering in makeshift camps far away from their villages are now returning home. Militias who left their loved ones to join the war are holding down their guns and returning to their civilian life and reuniting with their families. It is harvest season now, farmers are returning to their fields to join their co-workers.

North Wollo zone is one of the war-affected areas that saw the most severe devastation and humanitarian crisis during the conflict, since it has been the scene of several rounds of heavy fighting. Now, with the advent of the cessation of hostilities agreement, schools in this area are beginning to open their doors to their pupils. Children, the most vulnerable victims of war for the first time entered their schoolyards to meet their teachers.

The students could not wait until they manage to get exercise books and pencils, and the classrooms get fully furnished. Like wise, the teachers could not wait until they get enough chalk and teaching materials. These schools that were ransacked during the war are now opened just out of sheer determination to return life to normalcy and make the most out of the fragile peace sprouting in their locality. Civic societies and philanthropists have a lot of room to play in filling the resource gaps in rehabilitation of communities in the war affected areas.

Last week, one of the holiest days in the Ethiopian Orthodox Church calendar, St Mary's day, also called the Hidar Zion, has been colorfully celebrated in northern Ethiopia, in the ancient city of Axum [considered by the faithful as the most sacred Ethiopian city], at the Church of Our Lady Mary of Zion, a stone's throw away from the incredible world heritage site of Axum Obelisks. It was celebrated with such a huge mass congregation for the first time since the war started 2 years ago. The vibrant celebration of Hedar Tsion with a massive influx of pilgrims to Axum is a significant indicator of the beginning of the return of life to normalcy in that part of the Tigray region, which is under the control of the federal government. The peaceful event also signifies the peace deal has begun making tangible positive impacts on the lives of the people of Tigray.

Currently, the peace process is in the middle of a critical stage where negotiating parties are dissecting the details of the Pretoria agreement and the Nairobi declaration to ensure smooth implementation of the peace deal. We expect that sticking points in the peace deal may take several rounds of discussion and a longer time than previously assumed. The lagging behind the set schedule of the implementation plan should not be considered a sign of an impending stalemate, as some pessimist critics might thought. As a noted peace researcher puts it, peace processes ebb and flow and are rarely linear. It is a process that requires stakeholders to be tenacious, optimistic, and patient.

One thing that guarantees the inevitable success of the peace process is the huge popular support it garnered from the majority of Ethiopians across the political spectrum on both sides of the war. Political parties, citizens residing in various regions, and Ethiopian diaspora in different corners of the world have expressed their solidarity in their support for the peace process.

The peace process may lag behind schedule for unforeseen reasons and for impediments posed by those who try to derail the process in pursuit of their hidden agenda. Nevertheless, slowly but surely, it would certainly reach its goal to bring lasting peace to northern Ethiopia. Any plan that wins the backing of the masses would surely succeed, no matter how long it delays, and how hard challenges it faces.

In particular, the fact that the peace deal is welcomed by the overwhelming majority of the people of Tigray is proof of the high probability of success of the peace deal. One of the leading politicians from the Tigray region, Nebyu Seul, recently made a strong statement attaching great importance to the peace deal and its significance as a precursor for positive change and lasting peace in the Tigray region.

"The peace deal is a great achievement. It is an opportunity for our nation to leave behind difficult times and for our people to be redeemed. It could also be considered as an introduction to a civilized mechanism that could resolve long-standing political disputes and historical grudges. All of us need to contribute our share to enable the Cessation of Hostilities agreement brings lasting peace," he said.

The international community is another force that is making considerable effort to ensure the success of the peace process. The UN Chief arrived in Addis a few days ago and held talks with Ethiopian authorities. Mr. Guterres reportedly reiterated his full support for the full implementation of the AU-brokered Cessation of Hostilities Agreement, CoHA, that envisages shoring up a negotiated settlement and lasting peace in northern Ethiopia. He stressed that the entire UN system would provide humanitarian support to all those in need.

"Peace is never easy, but peace is always necessary... The United Nations will continue working with the AU to deliver the peace, prosperity, and climate justice that the people of Africa deserve. We discussed how our organizations are working to ensure peace across the [African] continent" said the UN Chief.



The international community is another force that is making considerable effort to ensure the success of the peace process. The UN Chief arrived in Addis a few days ago and held talks with Ethiopian authorities. Mr. Guterres reportedly reiterated his full support for the full implementation of the AU-brokered Cessation of Hostilities Agreement, CoHA, that envisages shoring up a negotiated settlement and lasting peace in northern Ethiopia. He stressed that the entire UN system would provide humanitarian support to all those in need



Ephrem Endale
Contributor

Between you & me

And the winner is...

Well I'm sorry to say it that many people around here didn't cheer on the youngish US soccer team. Not that people had any dark spots for these promising young people. They sure are full of promises. In any normal time football lovers would have applauded them for the promises they hold. Not this time around. I have yet to come with someone who cheered them on during their game with the Iranian team. No need to come the root of the problem which made compatriots turn their backs on that team. History isn't that old!

But something we should admit is that we, too, were caught the snare of politics which is giving sport a bad, really band face. If 'normal' was the case as it should have been we at least should have applauded teams despite whichever country they represent. Because it is not about political rivalry and however the political elite of the 'other country' might be acting the doors should have been locked to prevent their prejudices from contaminating the one peaceful sector where people meet in the spirit of brotherhood whatever their political differences, even enmity, might be. That's what they are trying to rob us.

You know, sport venues should be places of peace and tranquility; places where parents take their kids because they know they are places where the best of humanity is expected to be displayed; places where all the racism, hatred,... evils of the world should have no place. Things unfortunately are not looking that bright these days looking that good. A very unwelcome and unwanted 'guest' is creeping into that most beautiful of sports and in the vilest of ways; Politics! Some sections are trying to dump their prejudices on the sport.

You know why politics these days is becoming so unpleasant? Politicians are not doing their jobs and serve the people they are supposed

to serve; should have stayed where they belonged in their offices, in their chambers a in their cocktail venues or whatever. Keep your hands off soccer!

Little by little football matches are becoming not only about display of skills and talents but also about politics. They are trying to make football games and results political statements. It is not about the so-called 'global' politicians most of whom appear to thrive through chaos. The sad part is even innocent football fans are being sucked into the belly of hate, arrogance, ego and of course, the vilest of sins, racism. And politics doesn't differentiate and always loves putting everyone of 'the other side' in the same basket.

Take the run-up to the US-Iran 'showdown' (They made it sound it was nothing but a showdown!) was as interesting as the game itself. All kinds of nonsense flew from those same places where surplus nonsense is manufactured every minute and spewed to all corners of the world; nonsense and analysis which fly in the face of the very ultimate goal of the sport... peace and brotherhood! That is what the conspiracy-free real world community wants and expects from sports game.

Someone telling me that there were even some across the Atlantic saying that playing with Iran would be going soft on them. Going soft about what! Of course, about that nuclear thing and all that, what else! What the hell does that mean? I mean there are respected places where they deal with such issues. Does politics have to pluck its nose so deep into what is expected to be free of poetical motivation or bias? And what solution were they proposing! Boycott! Yes, if current global politics isn't weird, nothing is.

By the way speaking about the sport itself

many players would have done justice to themselves than the sport if they give as much attention to developing their skills as they gave to the tattoos covering their bodies. I mean they should have known by now that if they don't have the skills to show believe me and no one would care a hoot about their tattoos. You know what I think... some have so many tattoos on almost every square inch of their body they must be at loggerheads with the Creator complaining why He gave human beings so few body parts. Ha! I mean they seem to have run out of empty space for more of those mostly tattoos.

A player who takes off his shirt for no reason at all is showing off. That's it! He wanted his tattoos to be witnessed. Sometimes you don't blame who mess up their team's opportunities; I mean with so much tattoo mess over their body no wonder that their nerves started acting in a queer way.

One media wrote that Christian Public put his body for sacrifice while scoring that goal! Scary; very scary indeed! In the first place he did what any forward would have done in his position. Slide for the inviting ball. But of course the goalie was coming out to prevent the goal from happening. And that their bodies clashed was the result. It is not sacrifices people expect from so football matches but skills. If you guys start taking such moves as sacrifices maybe you're watching the wrong sport.

You can't help going through media reaction mostly it hasn't at all nice. They talked more about protests in Iran than the actual game. It was as if they loved off-the-pitch chaos than on-the-field performances. The headlines are about US beating Iran as they should rightly be. But the body of the news is about protests in Iran which for all practical purposes should have been left for the Iranians to solve. They

don't seem to be interested about the sport; but about the politics that they want to come with it.

Look Qatar World Cup has all the signs that the next World Cup will have a hell lot of problems as politics pushes away into the host beautiful and peaceful of statements. After the game the Iranians were very sad. It was heartwarming to see US players approaching and consoling them. Thumbs-up! That's what sports competitions are about. That is what events like TT the FIFA World Cup or the Olympics are all about; peace and brotherhood. It's only when politics tries to claim the seat at the head of the table things began going off track. In the final analysis a football game is a football game! One team winning any other team proves nothing more than maybe it played better or other circumstances helped it. After the ninety minutes every side is expected to call it a day!

After the glittering opening ceremony media outlets claimed all those in the stadium cheering were paid. Really! What about all the cheering crowds in other world cups! You can't miss the arrogance behind such claims as we don't remember such claims being made previously.

One thing is very sure; that a tiny, though insanely rich, nation could put up such display seems to have rattled racially-driven nerves an arrogance of those same circles who never tire belittling others and claiming the ultimate throne (if there ever is one) for themselves. But then, though it's highly unlikely and absurd it is better to pay cheering crowds to bring the smiles to a world which craves for real smiles that paying and arming groups to destabilize their nations and create chaos. "The Devil Never Sleeps" as Andrei Codrescu would tell you.

And the winner is.....

With apology to the Euphrates!

He was supposed to be one 'surviving member' of that species under threat of being pushed under the rug, or ,even worse, extinction... the nice and the humble-hearted species. You don't hear much of it these days. You know, the sort of person one would enjoy to be with anytime anywhere; the type of guy you enjoyed being with because he makes the hopeless, Armageddon sort of scenarios as easy as child play. I mean the guy who leads you to browse articles about self-destruction but about self-preservation and perseverance giving one confidence of sailing against the waves however Biblical they might be. How we crave for such wonderful creations of nature!

Of course even the few remaining can't escape the conspiracy theories against them as this has become a world which refuses to take them for what they actually are is always cooking up some ulterior motives for their humbleness and philanthropic spirit!

"The guy is playacting. He's not as nice as he pretends to be!" Do you hear any concrete examples to support the claims? No; and mostly never!

"Ok can you tell me any concrete event or

something like that which makes you arrive at such a conclusion?"

"But you don't need examples!"

"Sorry, what's wrong with asking for something to make me believe what you say?"

"I'm telling you there is no need of examples. It is written all over his forehead. Have you ever looked at his face as closely as you give your ears to every word he says?"

"Never thought of that and never had the reason to. But, you must probably have heard the proverb that you don't judge a book by its cover!"

"In his case you do! To tell you the truth I never liked the guy!"

He should have told me that a little earlier. I might have saved some breath! Now you've seen nothing wrong about this guy. And you probably have known him for most of three decades. In fact he has become humbler by the day. But it doesn't mean the fellow would never change! Changing one's behavior and having concealed it for decades aren't even the two sides of a coin.

Suddenly, something comes knocking his

doors and the guy ceases being himself. I mean the 'himself' you knew. Well, as far as we're concerned what he publicly displayed was what he is and there was no way we could go down any 'conspiracy theory' lane. But then most of the time there is something really serious to force him into such a complete turnaround. When it happens you the innocent aren't taken of guard. That's what happened to a fellow we know a few months back.

"You don't seem well, is anything wrong?"

"Yes, something is wrong."

One thing about this guy is that he never holds back anything he wants to say. It is right out of the box and in your face. The usual us would have responded to the "...is anything wrong?" question with those weak words, "Oh no. nothing is wrong." It's only later we come out with the truth. So this guy goes on; "I hope you know so and so?" Yes he knows the lady. She has been the guy's office mate for no less than a decade. And she is one hell of a wonderful woman who saves you from losing hope in all humanity.

"Yes I do. What happened to her?"

"Well that lady has become a completely different person."

"What do you mean?"

"She stopped talking to the whole staff."

"You mean including you..."

"I mean including me. Isn't that some news!"

Her being the humblest of the fair sex it indeed is news. No one knows what has got into the lady. But the man tells our guy she seems to be amidst some serious problems. She has changed to the point where she has even started wearing that face of contempt to all around her.

However, what really is sad is those of us who spin all kinds of conspiracy theories on the good and innocent trying taking the life out of their well-regarded names. These days we hear so much of such stories we need to ear old-time prophecies and commercially spun predictions needn't dry out for us to suspect the diminishing if not the end might indeed be coming to certain things; things like the simplest humility and good-heartedness.

All this with apology to the Euphrates! Oh yes; we'll be watching it!