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Ethiopia welcomes accord b/n Sudanese military, civilian political forces

BY STAFF REPORTER

Premier outlines scholars' role in serving Ethiopia's best interests

BY MENGESHA AMARE

ADDIS ABABA- Both the government works with the elites and the elites work with the government for the common good of the country, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) said, calling scholars to contribute share to realize a suitable country for all.

A national forum of scholars was held in Addis Ababa on Monday under the motto of "The Role of Scholars for Ethiopia's Rise."

Speaking on the occasion, the Premier noted that scholars are expected to change the current political glitch according to the tradition and proper way. "By doing this, we have to create a common country where everyone can generate wealth."

"Ethiopia deserves to be a country that we all respect. If we are not all respected, none of us can be respected. Therefore, all of us should have the opportunity to work and prosper. Otherwise, the country cannot

change. Scholars should play their role in this regard."

If the government does not effectively utilize the potential of scholars and scholars do not use the conducive climate created by the government, they could hardly bring about a prosperous nation for generations to come.

Abiy further highlighted that the government is more willing than ever to employ
See Premier ... page 3

ADDIS ABABA - The Government of Ethiopia has welcomed the signing of the Political Framework Agreement in the sisterly country of Sudan between the military and the civilian political forces Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) said.

The agreement is an important step towards forming a civilian government that would lead the country to free and fair national election, according to the statement of MoFA.

"Ethiopia, while fully supports the agreement and its implementation, has a full confidence on the wisdom of the Sudanese military and political forces to lead their country to a democratic transition to the satisfaction of the aspiration of the Sudanese people," the statement added.



Japan to extend 25 mln USD humanitarian assistance to Ethiopia

• ICRC, ERCS deliver 16 convoy of aid to rural Tigray

BY BETELHEM BEDLU

ADDIS ABABA - The Government of Japan disclosed that it will provide a new humanitarian assistance package worth about 25 million USD to Ethiopia through its partnerships with various international organizations.

In a press release sent to *The Ethiopian Herald*,
See Japan to ... page 3

Ethiopia values Russia's unwavering solidarity

• Holds 8th Intergovernmental Commission Meeting

BY TSEGAYE TILAHUN

ADDIS ABABA - Ethiopia has acknowledged Russia's unwavering solidarity and the support the latter showed when it was invaded by foreign aggressors and its territorial integrity and sovereignty has been challenged, Technology and Innovation Minister Belete Molla (PhD) said.

See, Ethiopia ...page 3



Belete Molla (PhD)



Evgeny Petrov

"With untapped potentials, it is hard for Ethiopia to be poor than rich,"
"Melaku Alebel"

Copout in Cairo:
 'They' just don't care

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News

UN marks Int'l Day of Solidarity with Palestine

BY TAMERU REGASA

ADDIS ABABA- The International Day of Solidarity with the Palestine People (IDSPP) was marked yesterday in the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) premises in Addis Ababa in the presence of the diplomatic community.

During the event, UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Ethiopia Catherine Sozi (PhD) said that the world commemorates the IDSPP at a time of diminished hope for peace. "I am deeply saddened by the growing number of Palestinian civilians who have lost their lives in the spiral of violence engulfing in the occupied West Bank. Each casualty fuels fear and yet more violence. I urge all parties to take immediate steps to reduce tensions and break this deadly cycle."

The coordinator added "I commend the donors for their support and urge all to step up and provide predictable and sufficient



funding to enable United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) to fully deliver on its mandate as the agency remains a vital lifeline for Palestine refugees.

Explaining the UN stand on Palestinian cause, she said "we are steadfast in our

commitment to realize the vision of two States; Israel and Palestine living side by side in peace and security, with Jerusalem as the capital of both States."

She called on international community to support the Palestinian people in their quest

to achieve their inalienable rights and build a future of peace, justice, security, and dignity.

International Day of Solidarity with the Palestine People was adopted by the UN on November 29, 1977.

Federation underscores PWDs inclusiveness for comprehensive dev't

BY MESERET BEHAILU

ADDIS ABABA – Federation of Ethiopian Associations of Persons with Disabilities (FEAPWDs) stated that Ethiopia needs to make structural system to ensure the inclusiveness of disabilities for its comprehensive development.

The Association organized Celebration of International Day of Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) in collaboration with the U.S. Embassy in Addis Ababa and Ethiopian Human Rights Commission yesterday under the theme : "Transformative Solutions for Inclusive Development: The Role of Innovation in Fueling an Accessible and Equitable World" aiming at realizing awareness creation among the society.

Speaking at the event, Association Law Expert Mussie Tilahun said that Ethiopia should take serious measure in the accessibility and inclusiveness of the disable persons in all activities of the country.

As to Mussie, over 20 million people have been living with disability whilst 98 percent of them are out of jobs, 90 percent haven't got education opportunity, and 95 percent have been living under poverty line across Ethiopia.

"Lack of awareness among the society, inaccessibility of transportation, lack of education opportunity, among others are the serious factors hindering efforts to meet disabilities' interest so far," he added.

He further said that widening education opportunity, making structural institute, bridging communication gaps, expanding accessibility, creating jobs and making awareness creation on the remains citizens help to bring significant change on the life of disability in the sustainable manner.

Particularly the U.S. Embassy and the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission are helping association's activities and giving serious



attention to Disabilities.

The U.S. Embassy in Addis Ababa Public Affairs Officer, Douglas Johnston on his part said that the main purpose of the event is widening the accessibility and inclusiveness of disable persons in all activities thereby ensuring awareness creation among the various societies. The U.S. has been giving serious attention to the disable persons and being keen for meeting their interests.

Commissioner for Disability Rights and Rights of Older Persons, Rigbe Gebrehawaria on her part said that the commission has been undertaking various activities to ensure the benefit of the disability persons though a lot remain to be done.

She added that many countries like Ethiopia have been losing 5 billion USD a year due to the absences of disability inclusiveness, citing a recent report. Therefore, Ethiopia should involve the disability persons under the business, education, employment, fabrics, and other institutes to bring significant development in the country, she underlined.

It is to be recalled that the Celebration of International Day of Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) is celebrating 31stand 30th times in the international and national level respectively.

Germany vows to extend humanitarian assistance to Ethiopia

BY YESUF ENDRIS

ADDIS ABABA- The government of Germany has not reduced its global humanitarian spending amid the Russia-Ukraine war, instead it has been an important provider of humanitarian assistance to Ethiopia so far, said German government official.

In a press release sent to *The Ethiopian Herald*, the Germany Embassy to Ethiopia has announced that Foreign Office Director General for Crisis Prevention, Stabilization, Peace building and Humanitarian Assistance of Germany, Deike Potzel paid an official visit to Ethiopia recently.

During her visit, she vowed that the Germany government will continue supporting drought and war victim communities in Ethiopia, according to the press release.

The Embassy has also announced that Germany has allocated 82.3 million Euros to Ethiopia in 2022; which makes it the second biggest humanitarian donor.

"The Federal Republic of Germany has provided assistance for many years. Our humanitarian assistance is based on the principle of neutrality and is purely needs-based. We are extending aid to anybody in need regardless of ethnicity or political considerations," the Embassy stated quoting Deike Potzel.

Co-hosting OCHA's launch of the Global Humanitarian Overview (GHO), Potzel noted that global humanitarian needs are reaching new heights this year; another disturbing record that is also the consequence of Russia-Ukraine war, which is adding to food shortages in many countries. Climate change is an additional aggravating factor causing more and more natural disasters, it was stated.

In related news, the Director General, Deike Potzel also visited the Somali state on 30 November.



News

Research indicates 23 percent employees face violence, harassment globally

BY YESUF ENDRIS

ADDIS ABABA- The first global survey conducted on experiences of violence and harassment at work reveals that more than one in five people (almost 23 per cent) in employment have experienced violence and harassment at work.

According to the press release by the International Labour Organization-ILO, the survey conducted by ILO, Lloyd's Register Foundation (LRF) and Gallup jointly proves that 17.9 percent of employed men and women [respondents] had experienced psychological violence and harassment in their working life, and 8.5 percent had faced physical violence and harassment.

The survey also stated that 6.3 percent of respondents reported facing sexual violence and harassment, with women being particularly exposed.

"Young women were twice as likely as young men to have faced sexual violence and

harassment, and migrant women were almost twice as likely as non-migrant women to report sexual violence and harassment," according to the survey.

More than three out of five victims said they had experienced violence and harassment at work multiple times, and for the majority, the most recent incident took place within the last five years.

ILO Assistant Director-General for Governance, Rights and Dialogue, Manuela Tomei also said that. Psychological violence and harassment is the most prevalent across countries and women are particularly exposed to sexual violence and harassment.

"The report tells us about the enormity of task ahead to end violence and harassment in the world of work. I hope it will expedite action on the ground and towards the ratification and implementation of ILO Convention 190," ILO report quoted Manuela Tomei's speech.

Director of Evidence and Insight at Lloyd's Register Foundation, Sarah Cumbers also said that global safety challenges should be

tackled through information since it is critical to have good data to understand the extent of the problem and to identify those most at risk, especially in places where little reliable data may have existed previously."

The report also recommends extending regular collection of robust data on violence and harassment at work, at national, regional and global levels, to inform prevention and remediation laws and mechanisms, policies and programmes, and research and advocacy.

Extending and updating mechanisms, including labour inspection systems, occupational safety and health policies and programmes, increasing awareness about violence and harassment at work, enhancing the capacity of institutions at all levels also have been recommended to defend violence and harassment at work.

The ILO-LRF-Gallup study was based on interviews conducted in 2021 with nearly 75,000 employed individuals aged 15 years or older in 121 countries and territories, as part of the Lloyd's Register Foundation World Risk Poll, *The Ethiopian Herald* learnt.

Premier...

scholarly ideas and utilize the knowledge and expertise of scholars for a common cause- creating a peaceful and prosperous Ethiopia.

"Ethiopia needs scholars who have well understood its problem and are capable of and willing to devise possible solutions to all its problems by conducting a range of community-oriented research."

Scholars are also expected to properly single out what assets, values and communal properties every citizen does have as properly as possible. This is the time scholars can make a difference in translating research findings into practical actions.

Since Ethiopia has not yet effectively employed all its invaluable national wealth, scholars should be well determined and heartily work for the comprehensive development and progress of their nation. The ruling Prosperity Party (PP) is more determined than ever before to help Ethiopia have the right place it deserves.

"As orchestrating futile attempts, antagonistically acting against one another, undermining the value of research leads nowhere, we have to closely discuss ideas and devise lasting solutions to the problems from which the country has been suffering."

Ethiopia and its people do have numerous opportunities to prosper, including tourism from which Africa generated 31 billion USD annually before the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic. Ethiopia's share here is very minimal and scholars have to work hard to make this share meaningful, the Prime Minister remarked.

The discussion forum was attended by scholars drawn from universities across the nation, research institutions and other concerned bodies.

Ethiopia values...

Speaking at the 8th Ethio-Russia Intergovernmental Commission Meeting, the minister highlighted that Ethiopia highly appreciates and all the time remembers Russia's strong position and support, especially during the last two years, in the United Nations Security Council meetings. The Russian Federation is an all-time partner of national needs, particularly in the efforts for maintaining Ethiopia's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Belete further highlighted that the recently signed Cessation of Hostilities Agreement deserves international support. The peace deal will provide opportunities not only for stability, but also economic development.

"Dejazmach Balcha Hospital is a living testimony for the Russian's contribution during Italy's Invasion of Ethiopia. Our shared vision and mutual trust for values of freedom, equality and mutual trust that hold us together,

could serve as a solid foundation for the future cooperation we envision to build a better future for the coming generation."

Ethiopia is now on the right track to achieve its vision of sustainable, green economic growth, and Russian investors need to take part in the former's development endeavors. Ethiopia's potentials in the manufacturing, mining, energy, agriculture and pharmaceutical sectors will also provide ample opportunity for Russian businesses.

Head of the Federal Agency for Mineral Resources of the Russian Federation Evgeny Petrov said for his part that Ethiopia remains one of his country's most important partners in Africa. One of Russia's main tasks is to increase the volume of bilateral trade and diversify it qualitatively. At the end of 2021, the trade turnover amounted to 225 million USD. At the same time, for nine months of this year, the trade turnover decreased by 66.7

percent to 45.1 million USD due to an artificial reduction.

The Russian Federation is ready to share experiences and technologies and organize training for professionals. "It is necessary to focus on the development of trade, investment, financial and banking cooperation. We will also discuss prospects in the field of energy, geology and management of mineral resources and agriculture, information and communication technologies, healthcare and education."

The 8th Ethio-Russia Inter governmental Commission Meeting conferred on economic, scientific, technical and trade cooperation. It was learned on the occasion that the meeting also aims to enhance the bilateral trade, investment, scientific and technical cooperation of the two countries. The deliberation would advance and transform people- to- people relations and the strategic partnership between them.

Japan to extend 25 mln. USD...

Japanese Embassy to Ethiopia stated that the support that is being implemented in the 2022/2023 Fiscal Year is focused on five areas. Accordingly, Japan will provide nearly four million USD to WFP to give lifesaving nutritional treatment to 22,200 children aged 6-59 months and 25,800 pregnant and lactating women in Afar, Amhara and Tigray states.

Similarly, about 1.5 million USD will be delivered to FAO to improve food, nutrition and income security in Amhara and Afar by supporting 6,750 households with diversified crop seeds, vaccinating more than 1.5 million livestock, supporting women groups and rehabilitating vet clinics.

In order to provide protection and basic emergency assistance to more than two million IDPs, refugees, returnees and host

communities affected by conflict and natural disasters in almost all parts of Ethiopia, Japan will offer more than 15 million USD to IOM, UNHCR, UNICEF, OCHA, ICRC and CBPF, according to the press release.

"This assistance is made through provision of emergency shelters, NFIs, health and medical services, water and sanitation facilities and education services."

By the same token, Japan will provide about 1.5 million USD to UNFPA and IPPF. This assistance aims to reach more than 200,000 beneficiaries with SRH/GBV information and services while strengthening local health systems to increase access to SRH/GBV information and services for vulnerable women, girls and youth in conflict affected areas of Amhara, Benishangul-Gumuz, Afar and

Somali states.

In order to minimize the risk of explosive ordinances and to ensure the safe delivery of humanitarian aid in north Ethiopia, Japan will provide two million USD to UNMAS. The project will assess and reduce explosive ordnance contamination, and deliver explosive ordnance risk education to conflict-affected people to mitigate explosive risks.

Japan will also provide 300,000 USD to OHCHR to promote and protect human rights especially in conflict-impacted areas through monitoring, reporting and advocating the human rights situation. Likewise, the donation meant to support various stakeholders to strengthen human rights protection systems, the release remarked.

Meanwhile, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) together with the Ethiopian Red Cross Society (ERCS) has delivered close to 200 tons of humanitarian aid to rural areas of the Tigray State.

ICRC stated in its official twitter page that its 13 convoys as well as three trucks of the ERCS that contained food and medicines including dialysis items as well as insulin donated by the Ethiopian Diabetics Association have reached the rural areas of Tigray.

The ICRC teams are distributing additional medical supplies and food to patients and health workers in various hospitals and primary health centers in Tigray. The distributions of humanitarian supplies that arrived in Shire town in 16 aid trucks have continued in rural areas, it was learned.

Opinion

Taking a bite out of the corruption elephant in the Ethiopian judicial sector

PART TWO

BY ALMARIAM

Hearing before the Judiciary Committee of the House of People's Representatives

It is highly encouraging that the Federal Parliament oversees and monitors the constitutional performance of the Federal Judiciary.

On November 2, 2022, the Judiciary Committee of the House of People's Representatives held a hearing to review progress, issues and challenges in implementation of judicial reform.

The video recording of the hearing is quite informative and educational for those interested in the operation of the judiciary.

In the first part of the video, the hearing covered a broad range of issues including improvements in case management, reduction of delay and efficiency improvements in service delivery at the First Instance High Court, Federal Court and Sharia Court levels.

In the second part of the video the hearing covered issues related to reform outcomes, modernization of operations and services, problems in controlling judicial wrongdoing, ineffectiveness of the judicial council, improvements in opportunities for women on the bench, and transformation of the ethical landscape of the judicial system.

While the hearing videos are long, almost 6 hours, it is mandatory for anyone interested in learning about the judicial sector and helping in its improvements to patiently watch and learn from it.

Unfortunately, since the posting of the video, less than one thousand people have bothered to open it.

How do you eat the elephant sitting in the judicial dining room?

Following my interview on Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation (EBC) on judicial sector reform in Ethiopia in August 2022, I got quite a bit of feedback from people relating to me their experiences in the Ethiopian justice system. Among these were individuals with intimate knowledge of the justice system and diasporans who have had contact with the justice/judicial process, mostly involving civil and regulatory matters.

Anecdotal survey of corruption perception and obstacles to reform implementation in the judicial sector

Based on the feedback I got, I decided to reach out to those in my network to get a sense of their opinions, views and ideas about justice/judicial reform in Ethiopia.

As a result, I had the privilege of talking to a random smattering of current and former Ethiopian officials at various levels, politicians, bureaucrats, judges, prosecutors and members of the private bar in Ethiopia. I also had opportunities to talk to diaspora Ethiopians across professions (doctors, lawyers, faith leaders, businesspersons, young diaspora men and women in the tech sector, etc.)—to tap their perceptions and ideas on the judicial/justice sector reforms and implementation.

My anecdotal conversation about justice/judicial

sector reform was guided by one question: "What does a successful implementation of justice/judicial reform in Ethiopia look like to you?"

I avoided the usual question, "What are your concerns about justice/judicial reform in Ethiopia?" (Unfortunately, many gravitated towards analysis of the problem of corruption than offering solutions.)

Guiding a conversation by talking about concerns usually ends up in ideas that accentuate the negative and why things are likely to fail.

Concerns often reflect negative experiences. There is not a single person, save those involved in corruption, in Ethiopia who does not have deep concerns about corruption.

Everyone from the Prime Minister to the man/woman in the street have concerns. Many are much more than concerned. They are angry, frustrated, bitter, exasperated, outraged and fuming.

Many more are heartbroken, in despair, unable to see the light at the end of the corruption tunnel and resigned to the fact that corruption is, has been and will always be.

I am exerting considerable time and effort in learning about corruption in Ethiopia, particularly in the justice/judicial sectors because I believe I can make a significant contribution by sharing my varied legal experience in the legal field including teaching, research and litigation.

Specifically, I am interested in helping create and sustain homegrown corruption reform under the heading "Ethiopian solutions to Ethiopian corruption problems."

I want to be part of the Ethiopian solution to the Ethiopian corruption problems and invite all diaspora Ethiopians to join in the campaign by sharing their technical expertise, practical experience, and if nothing else, by showing vocal support for the anticorruption campaign currently underway.

Below are synoptic observations from conversations with a variety of sources indicated above.

To be sure, all of my observations reported below are anecdotal and reflect the personal views of the few people I talked to. I have summarized their views in a manner I believe will be intelligible to an English-speaking audience.

I make no claims of undertaking any type of systematic research and analysis on the Ethiopian justice/judicial sector whatsoever.

I have stylized the observations in my own descriptive headlines for the convenience of the reader. Some caveats about the anecdotal observations.

The people I talked to range from those who have personal knowledge of the justice/judicial sectors, read/reviewed the five-year strategic judicial sector reform plan to those whose knowledge is limited to what they have heard in the media or speeches and public statement of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed.

The range of reactions covers the gamut between those who are cynical about reform to those who see hope at the end of the corruption tunnel.

"What does a successful implementation of justice/judicial reform look like to you in Ethiopia?"

[Responses expressing distrust, cynicism implementation will fail]

Don't know but...

I don't know what they are doing to implement justice/judicial reform but whatever they are doing they must start by cleaning house. Corruption is everywhere in government. Just start cleaning randomly until you can see some clean spots. Only then you can start a systematic "de-corruptification" program.

Don't really care because justice is for sale.

I have heard a little bit about the judicial reform in the media. But I don't care because justice is up for sale. That's why I did not bother to read the strategic plan. I don't know where to find the plan even if I wanted to read it. It is a waste of time. It sounds good on paper but who's going to implement it? Justice is merchandized and monetized for sale by crooked brokers (delalalas). You have got to pay if you want to play in the justice system.

"I'll believe that when I see it"/ "I'll be the judge of that!"

I will give the government the benefit of the doubt in trying to reform the system to reduce corruption, but I will believe it when I see it. It is a good start but I am not sure how far it will go. It has been tried before and had no impact on corruption.

Window dressing and public show

Anti-corruption campaigns have been launched before especially when the public complains and those in government see a danger from public complaints. But it lasts only until the public uproar dies down. They will parade a few big fish in public to pretend they are doing something about corruption. They will arrest and say the suspects are being prosecuted. The fact is after a short while, the big fish are quietly released and the prosecution discontinued. That sends a bad message to the public. The rich and well-connected can engage in corruption with impunity and are never held accountable. The ones that remain in jail are the poor and those who are accused of corruption for political purposes.

One of the great disservices of the past has been sensationalizing corruption cases. Whenever there is grumbling about corruption, the [other side] would whip up public frenzy. But not much happens. That has desensitized the public. It has made the public cynical.

No quick fixes.

There are no quick fixes for corruption. We have a 30-year legacy of corruption left over from the TPLF days. There are few things that can be done to shake the foundation of corruption such as arresting and prosecuting some big fish and small ones, but that will not have lasting effect. We should temper our expectations of what can be achieved in the short term and not be overly hopeful or we will be disappointed once more.

[Cautiously, philosophically optimistic because implementation of reform/changes takes a very long time]

A 1000-mile journey begins with the first step.

Better late than never. We have to start somewhere and the government is doing a good job with the anticorruption committee. But there is a long way to go and the road will be long and hard. The real question is who will join the government in the journey. Unless the people join, it will not work. Really, the people have to lead the anticorruption campaign by reporting corruption suspects and giving evidence. When corrupt officials fear the people, then you can effectively deal with corruption. Right now, the people are treated like dirt. Officials generally have no respect for the common people.

Corruption from need and greed

We must understand corruption is not all the same. The rich ones engage in corruption because of greed. They do not know how much is enough. They are never satisfied so they keep stealing from the people. Then there are those who take bribes knowing it is wrong but because they are forced by a higher moral purpose. Yes, moral purpose. Their loved ones may be sick and they do not have the money to get them expensive medical care. So, they take bribes without caring if they are caught or not. They say, "I would rather save my loved one" than see them suffer and die. So, distinguishing between those committing corruption for need and greed must be done carefully. The important thing to keep in mind is for some in public office corruption is a means of survival. It is their only way to personally survive. They are willing to accept the consequences.

Legacy of corruption

We have to be realistic. Corruption has been growing and spreading like weeds for three decades. It has deep roots. Its tentacles reach every part of society and government. We must not underestimate the power of corruption. It is the devil's work. The devil tried to corrupt Christ by offering him wealth and power. It is no different for mere mortals. There are thousands who benefit from the legacy of corruption. They will resist in every way and because they profit from corruption. They survive by maintaining the legacy, so don't underestimate what they can do to fight back to preserve their legacy.

Birth pangs from kleptocracy to democracy

We have to understand that corruption is a manifestation of a deep underlying problem. Ethiopia is transitioning from [the other side's] kleptocracy to a multiparty democracy. The transition is not going to be easy. It is like changing from no accountability to full accountability. That is very difficult to achieve. Many of those committing corruption today are holdovers of the [the other side] kleptocracy. They have always engaged in corruption with impunity, why change now? They do not have a price to pay and it is very profitable for them. That does not mean nothing can be done against them. It requires identifying the main kleptocrats and neutralizing them. I think that is what they are trying to do now.

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

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The Ethiopian Herald

Editorial

Encouraging intellectuals to play their roles in nation-building is wise decision

Last Monday, December 5, 2022, a national consultation forum of scholars was held here in Addis Ababa under the theme “The Role of Scholars in Ethiopia’s Rise!”

The aim of the discussion was centering on ways how academicians can enhance their role in the national efforts of defending a country’s sovereignty and its national interest under any circumstances.

Prime Minister Dr. Abiy Ahmed, who was in attendance at the consultation forum conducted by scholars drawn from all parts of the country, underscored the role intellectuals can play in solving the multifaceted and complex problems Ethiopia is facing besides discharging their civic responsibility to sustain lasting peace and build a country that belongs to everyone.

As the Premier stated, the government is executing a number of activities ranging from political and economic reforms to institutional restructurings to beat all the challenges and realize nation’s intended prosperity, the ultimate goal.

However, to successfully attain the goal, intellectuals should back up government’s endeavors and contribute their shares through maximizing participation in problem-solving research and conducting series of consultations.

In order to build a community where knowledge and scholars are respected, the government and intellectuals need to work together.

“Let’s get out of the village mentality and work for a common future to build a prosperous Ethiopia which is suitable not only for this generation but also for the one to come,” he remarked.

The Premier also urged participants of the conference to play a constructive role in defending the sovereignty of the nation and ensuring sustainable peace at all means.

It is an open secret, in earlier years before the introduction of the reform, there had been mistrust and intimidation between the government and scholars. Instead of working for the common good of the nation, there

were indictments and finger pointing at each other covertly or overtly. Unfortunately, this has robbed the scholars opportunities to contribute their roles in nation building.

Owing to this, and especially for the reason their academic freedom was denied, several academicians who could contribute a lot and bring about substantial change in country’s overall development are compelled to flee their homeland in order to live freely elsewhere.

Even those living at home had been left refugees in their own homeland, restricted from expressing their political thinking and views pertaining to the political affairs of their own country.

Particularly, over the last three or four decades, specifically in the past two decades, many Ethiopian scholars were forced to leave their homeland as a result of the antidemocratic actions of the authoritarian regimes.

Obviously, struggling peacefully, resolving differences accordingly and working for the greater good of the people is the only viable path that leads to sustainable peace and security, to attain prosperity and create a more just society. On the contrary, distorting national politics and promoting hatred, violence, would benefit no one other than pushing the country into a precarious state. What was witnessed over the years was that- a complete mistrust and hostility. In this regard, the recent national consultation forum carried out between the government and scholars is a landmark that pushes the country forward to narrow the long attached mistrust and nitpick about immaterial things on both sides.

Most importantly, it will surely result in multitudinous benefits in terms of strengthening the channel of scholars living at home and abroad; and enabling them to work unwaveringly and feed constructive input on matters of common interest.

The saying goes: “The best way to predict the future is to create it.” And energy we exert today shapes generations’ future. Thus, contributing our share and discharging our responsibility in each and every path can help brighten Ethiopia’s future.

Opinion

True peace lovers should focus on post war rehabilitation

BY GIRMACHEW GASHAW

A day after the news of the peace agreement reached between the government and the TPLF in Pretoria, South Africa, the country and the people are on a new path of hope and history. And the joy that the agreement created is not mere or ordinary happiness. It holds the attention of all Ethiopians except a few who feel like they would lose their vested interests.

The two sides have now reached an agreement that will reverse the problems of the past two years. This is very important for brotherly peoples who are governed under one country and one government.

It is a vital capacity for their future. At the forefront of the problem is not only the challenge but also the unnecessary cost that is difficult to estimate.

Today, the people of Tigray, who used to lead their lives in constant conflict and violence, have been relieved of their stress due to the peace deal. They are heading towards a stable life. Following

the agreement, we are also noticing that the government is making human and material support widely accessible to the Tigray region. Food and health supplies are increasing day by day. It is the people of Tigray who can tell what this means for our brothers in Tigray who were in trouble with their daily food supply.

In addition to this, public utilities that were interrupted during the war are now providing service after maintaining facilities that were destroyed and out of use. Without going far, if we look at what is happening in the city of Alamata, which was a war zone before, it is now possible to provide services that could not be delivered during the war.

Commercial establishments that were closed in the city have opened and are providing services to the community. Many other social services are also coming into operation. Health and transportation services have returned to serving the community. The residents of the city are getting safe drinking water services.

2G and 3G internet services have also been re-launched. The process of repairing

war-torn optic fibres is accelerating to make internet service faster. Following the peace agreement, Ethiopian Airlines is also making extensive preparations to restart its flights to the Tigray region.

In this way, it is being designed to deliver humanitarian aid to the people on a large scale. As the head of the airline was heard saying recently; Among the airports in the region, Mekele and Shire airports are at a level where they are comfortable to resume the cancelled flights.

On the other hand, due to the extent of the damage caused by the conflict, Aksum Airport is being considered for the maintenance of the airport in a manner suitable for flights. In terms of the implementation of the peace agreement, many brilliant activities can be seen from both sides to prevent conflict-provoking messages from being broadcast by any mass media.

Despite this, some parties, perhaps individuals from outside/inside the country do not seem to be interested in the peace treaty that was born from the agreement.

Few parties or individuals who wish to gain something out of the conflict/ traders of conflict / are denouncing or belittling the peace deal. It is as useless as pouring water on a stone to spread awareness about the importance of peace to these sections. As the saying goes “Those who are asleep intentionally, would never wake up.”

No matter what the reason for the two sides to go to war, now what matters is peace has reigned back. Those who suffered from the direct impact of the war can speak more meaningfully about how much peace means to human beings. Therefore, those who support the idea of the peace deal should never succumb to the disinformation propaganda trap of the conflict merchants. They should rather focus on what they can contribute to further strengthen the peace initiative and rebuild the losses durably.

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

Business & Economy

“With untapped potentials, it is hard for Ethiopia to be poor than rich,” *Melaku Alebel*

BY DANIEL ALEMAYEHU

Ethiopia is trying to be a beacon of prosperity and a role model for the rest African countries, the government and the people of the country have taken every possible way to achieve the set objectives.

Recently, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) gave response to questions raised by the members of the House of People’s Representatives. On the occasion, he stated that Ethiopia has left no stones unturned to stand on its feet in terms of economy. Stakeholders have answered the nation’s call to work for a unified agenda.

As it is vividly clear, currently, the nation faced various challenges posed by local and external forces. Nevertheless, the nation registered better economic growth in the 2021/22 fiscal year.

To this end, as to the premier, agriculture, industry, and service sectors played their part to the total economic growth.

In an exclusive interview with The Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA), Minister of Industry, Melaku Alebel briefed the points raised by the Prime Minister and explained the actions taken by the industry and manufacturing sectors.

The Minister stated that the targeted objectives are cascaded from the 10-year perspective economic growth Plan. Last year, the nation’s economy was troubled in one way or another by the supply-chain disturbance on account of the Russia- Ukraine war.

Moreover, the nation’s expulsion from AGOA has severely harmed the export sector especially exportable textile and leather products. After all these challenges, it is understood that the nation’s economy is resilient and those upside downs served as a motive for the motto ‘we can’. The nation’s economy made itself better and strong amidst numerous challenges.

With a number of challenges and impacts, the manufacturing sector has registered promising growth. In the last budget year, for instance, the sector could attract new local and foreign investments, created new job opportunities, and scaled up the export sector, Melaku said.

In the sector, two thousand eight hundred thirty-eight small and medium enterprises and seventy-seven large scale industries have been operational. It has also created jobs for two hundred fifty-five thousand citizens. The sector generated five hundred million USD from export. Doing so, it contributed 4.9 percent growth to the GDP, Melaku mentioned.

Melaku further noted that the sole



purpose of development is lifting up the lives of citizens. The nation’s economic endeavor should stick to human resource development. Inflation has been hitting the nation since 2011. The disparity between demand and supply is responsible to the witnessed economic turmoil. In order to meet the demand, the supply must be increased. Maximizing citizens’ ability to purchase also helps to withstand the economic crises.

There is also undeniable fact that the manufacturing sector has encountered a shortage of industrial input and technology as well as price hike of imported items. A better example could be the price of imported sugar, edible oil, and wheat. Not only that, the sector has been dealing with the inconveniences created by COVID-19 and Russia-Ukraine war. However, these challenges could not stop the nation from implementing import substitution worth two billion USD.

According to Melaku, the service sector also scored remarkable achievements during the past fiscal year. He said that service sectors should stick to the 10-year perspective economic growth plan and work tirelessly to ensure perpetual development. To this end, every sector should receive equal attention from the government so that the whole sectors contribute their share to the economy. Every sector has to play its own part to attain the intended growth.

As mentioned above, the manufacturing sector faced shortage of input which hinders its productivity. Hence sectors such as agriculture and mining should supply the necessary inputs to the manufacturing sector. “That’s why we need to work on

promoting and maximizing the potential of every sector,” Melaku stressed.

In this course of time, the manufacturing sector is expected to be the development engine of the nation. By maximizing and integrating small and medium industries to bigger ones, it is planned to enhance their role in the economy.

Big industries also should look for boosting export. In order to achieve the objectives, Melaku mentioned that it is time to give response to the challenges related to infrastructure. It is pivotal to answer the queries of adequate power supply, finance, logistics, and skilled manpower that the manufacturing sector needs badly. In this regard, the government has been working on reforming the sectors.

He further said that the policy intervention will bring positive opportunities for the manufacturing sector. It will also provide additional incentives and support for specific focus areas of the sector. Those actions will make the sector drive attention towards economic progress.

Melaku also explained about the movement ‘Let Ethiopia produce’. As to him, the concept is very broad, and the objective is the matter of survival and sovereignty. To create a better and stronger Ethiopia, productivity must be enhanced. In addition to that, it needs to work together with other stakeholders for a unified goal and expanding industries.

Melaku added that the manufacturing industry has both international and local markets. One thing that is seen in the exported goods is that the nation is exporting primary goods without adding value. In order to reverse this trend and become competitive in both local and foreign markets, investors must use their potential. This will bring up the nation’s foreign currency earning capacity. Previously, the government strategy was focused on export-oriented, but this time, it becomes essential to work aggressively on both import substitution and maximizing export.

Melaku also disclosed that the absence of sound collaboration among sectors can be taken as the showcases for less competency of the economy. Most sectors work on their own without better vertical and horizontal relation with other sister sectors. This time, the government is working tirelessly to get rid of the weakness existing in this regard.

“With untapped potentials, it is hard for the nation to be poor than to be rich,” stressed Melaku. To make this idea real, it needs better leadership. So, sectors must work in collaboration with one another to brush off problems and put the nation where it deserves to be.

In this course of time, the manufacturing sector is expected to be the development engine of the nation. By maximizing and integrating small and medium industries to bigger ones, it is planned to enhance their role in the economy

Art & Culture

Is Ethiopian Literature in Arabic overlooked?

“Writers and journalists should publish in Arabic and help arabic speaking world have right information about Ethiopia.”

Author and journalist Anwar Ibrahim

BY KFLEYESUS ABEBE

Arabic language which is among most spoken languages in the world has some speakers in Ethiopia too as it is spoken in some areas of the country. To the very list, many muslim Ethiopians are able to speak basic Arabic because of their religious background. There are historical manuscripts and scriptures in Arabic in places like Harar, the fourth holiest city in Islam. Ethiopia is close to the Arabic world but Arabic language usage especially writings other than the religious ones are very scarce. Writers say the inavailability of Arabic writings about Ethiopia has left the country to be less known or known incorrectly by the Arab-speaking world.

Anwar Ibrahim has decades-long experience in journalism delivering essential information about Ethiopia to the Arab world. He has covered issues like the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam and on other issues of politics and social diplomacy. He says even though Ethiopia is close to the Arab world and there is a significant number of Arabic speaking community, there is no adequate Arabic literature for the Arab world to know about Ethiopia. “As a journalist, sometimes I observe foreign Arabic media making honest mistakes about Ethiopia. As I often tried to correct wrong narratives and as they knew me for working as a journalist in a foreign Arabic media, they began contacting me for crosschecking and double checking names, history and relevant facts. So, I sensed the presence of an information gap about Ethiopia. The good things about Ethiopians are usually left out because we don’t talk or write about them. Based on this knowledge I realized it is up to Arabic speaking Ethiopian journalists and writers to fill the gap.”

Anwar published his debut on Ethiopian culture and heritage and launched it in a ceremony held in Cairo. The book subsequently made him to be enlisted among ten African writers who write in Arabic to introduce their country and culture. He also won an award from the Egyptian Ministry of



Culture. Since then he committed himself to write in Arabic and promote the riches of Ethiopia. He published his second book “Glimpses from the peoples’ museum” and is yet to be launched in Cairo. His third book is recently launched here in Addis Ababa in the presence of media colleagues, representatives of different embassies and other people in the field of publication and study of Arabic language.

Against the traditional way of promoting Ethiopia, that is showcasing natural or manmade sites, Anwar preferred to show Ethiopia through its famous personalities. Short biographies of famous athletes like Abebe Bikila, rulers from ancient times to this day, renowned painters like the Most Honorable Maître Artist World Laureate Afewerke Tekle, theatre giant and poet Laureate Tsegaye Gebremedhin, outstanding singers like Tilahun Gessesse, cinematographer Haile Gerima and scientist Aklilu Lemma are among famous Ethiopians the writer incorporated in his book. He believes the story of these impeccable Ethiopians allow the Arab speaking world to have a good impression about Ethiopia. Through these people, they would see the richness and beauty of Ethiopia and determination, wisdom, pride and hospitality of its Ethiopia, Anwar emphasized.

“Ethiopia isn’t only politics or the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance dam. It is a vast country with many endowments. There are people with different gifts. We have very gifted artists, athletes, innovators and scholars. But unfortunately we are being notorious for famine, conflicts and other bad things. Therefore, I began to confront this narrative and show the other maybe the larger picture of Ethiopia particularly to the Arab world. I thought writing about successful Ethiopians in various fields is a good strategy to show the other picture of Ethiopia. It took me four years. There are people that merit recognition by the outside world. I have included 50 notable Ethiopians in the book.”

The author secured sponsorship for his first book and it is well sold out especially by the diplomatic community. He believes the book became handy for the Arab world particularly for media, researchers and scholars to know about Ethiopia, its people, history, politics and aspirations. On the basis of this knowledge, they could select areas of cooperation with Ethiopia.

Publishing books especially in Arabic isn’t easy here in Ethiopia. It needs strong commitment and investment. Anwar realized his publication circumventing different challenges. Information isn’t



easily accessible in Ethiopia so he had to go to different places to get it. For instance, in writing about Sof Omar Caves in his first book Anwar had to go there in person. With a little budget and no or less support or sponsorship, he tells it was challenging. After the collection of information and writing of the book under time constraint, he was also beset by the rising cost of publication, which is a major problem many if not all authors face. The support from concerned parties haven’t also come to Anwar. Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Ministry of Education, the media and other should have supported this initiative as such books are essential to promote Ethiopia and expand the use of Arabic language in Ethiopia.

In spite of these difficulties, Anwar is committed and urged colleagues with potentials and Arabic language skills to contribute part for the development of the language and promotion of Ethiopia. “My books are being used as reference as there are no or few books about Ethiopia in Arabic. People in media especially those who use Arabic language should encourage themselves. There is a lot to be desired. We have a moral obligation to use our language and journalistic skills to promote Ethiopia. We shouldn’t be confined to office works alone. We have to publish books on different topics. If we analyze it we have an audience maybe greater than the population of some Arab countries. We have to be active like Amharic and English literatures in Ethiopia.”

Ethiopian Writers’ Association (EWA) and other actors in the sector should also step up and support initiatives of such individuals. If relevant actors see and support such initiatives, writers would be encouraged. Many writers could emerge. The language can thrive in Ethiopia. Ethiopia’s visibility and influence in the Arab world should grow.

Lust

BY SENAIT G/HIWOT

He was a person
That didn't have a reason
To be in my mind

That means i was blind
To like a guy like him
Chances were too slim
My standards were high
For a ghetto guy

But he was in my life
Always showing his love
That I think was fake
I noticed at the wake
But his passion of love

Was a reason enough
To like him as he is
In a way that his myth
Works for me no longer
Because he's a stranger.

Global Affairs

Copout in Cairo: 'They' just don't care

BY GRAHAM PEEBLES

As COP 27 drew to a pitiful close with no action on emissions of reparation, I met a friend in a cafe in West London. Distracted by our discussion, we failed to notice his Earl Grey being served in a takeaway cup; aghast, I requested a china mug for mine. Blowing and sipping, we grumbled about the lack of environmental responsibility, including the now widespread use of plastic cups in cafes.

These cups give the impression 'happy to be recycled', but on the whole they cannot be; and even if they could, most staff and customers would likely throw them in with general rubbish, to be buried. Probably in the ground of a poorer country, that needs the trade, albeit in environmental vandalism.

In the UK an estimated 2.5 billion takeaway cups are annually thrown away; it's more than 50 billion in the US apparently, mostly going to landfill. In addition, half a liter of water and 61 g of carbon dioxide are used in the manufacture process. They are an environmental sore, one of many daily irritants that together constitute a chronic planetary disease, The Environmental Crisis.

So why I asked don't cafes use china — don't they realize the plastic paper-looking cups are bad for the environment? They don't care, was my friend's blunt reply; same as the water companies that routinely pump sewage into the seas, the CEOs of the energy companies swimming in money, the fast fashion bosses, everyone who makes and eats animal produce, and most politicians, especially those in developed nations. According to the evidence, they just don't care. The question then becomes, is it possible to make people care. Care about the environment, about one another, about rain, forests, sea, air, climate, animals, ecosystems, etc. To which old friend replied, no, you can't.

Certainly most politicians show little or no interest; Corporate Man and Woman don't seem to care a jot, and the majority of individuals are too overwhelmed with the demands of life to be unduly concerned.

COP27 has reinforced the notion that, 'caring', certainly by the nations chiefly responsible for the mess (and now haggle over paying to mitigate the impact), is totally absent. And that the environmental crisis is just another annoying consideration to be juggled within an economic framework of perpetual growth; perpetual that is until the moment when all the natural resources

are used up, global warming has reached unbearable levels, 3/4°C maybe, land masses submerged, hundreds of millions of people displaced, ecosystems and remaining animal species wiped out.

Caring is a driver for action and, as is repeatedly chanted and consistently ignored, without urgent action the cause is lost.

Children are striking from school, because they care deeply, also because they are furious at the adults, who a) caused the catastrophe, b) aren't doing anything much to address it, and c) because they want to envisage a future for themselves. Heartfelt caring fuels not just everyday action, but action of a certain type or quality — Right Action, based on, imbued with, love.

So, make people 'care' through raising awareness of environmental issues (local and global) and the consequences of (their) behavior, and 'The People', with a small and large 'P', will wake up and change their habitual, often destructive ways. That's the theory; well that was my theory in the Portuguese café.

Who cares?

We can determine what someone cares about and what they value by their actions — most often its themselves. Businesses are driven by the determination to make money; politicians want votes so they can stay in power, and individuals, most of whom are physically drained and emotionally battered, care about their families/the people they like and depend on, and creating some level of security in, what is for most, a hostile, uncertain world.

If caring — the carrot isn't on the table as an effective motivating force, certainly not within the time scale required to Save Our Planet (SOP), then the only option is the stick, heavy and painful. Legislation, my friend asserts, is the only way to curb destructive environmental behavior; and, to a degree, he is right. Pass a law that CEOs of companies polluting the air, water, soil will be imprisoned if such behavior continues and they will, he believes, be more inclined to clean up their act.

But, effective as such legislation might be, the flaw in this approach is that it doesn't impact on the legislative body itself, i.e., governments. In addition it requires that these governments, are not corrupt, i.e., are free from corporate influence — energy companies, big banks, private water companies, etc. But as we know, far from being independent of such bodies, politicians are usually snuggled up in bed with them.

Notwithstanding these drawbacks,

legislation is a powerful stick, and applied vigorously would, could, should, be an important tool in changing behavior. But, and here I'm afraid we are back to caring, given that governments don't care enough to employ the stick, pressure needs to be applied to force them to wield it. And for this to happen 'the populace', or large enough numbers of the weary masses need to care sufficiently to mobilize and act; to protest, to boycott polluting companies, petition politicians, to engage.

To a degree, a larger than ever degree, this is now happening, but despite powerful campaigns by e.g. Extinction Rebellion (XR), Just Stop Oil (JSO), and the brilliant Schools Strike for Climate, very little is changing and the scale of the environmental emergency/crisis/catastrophe grows daily. We are, it seems, back at the beginning.

Who caused the catastrophe?

The people responsible for the catastrophe live in developed nations, particularly the richest people in the richest countries. It's not the behavior of those in Sub-Saharan Africa, or Bangladesh, it's not the poor of the world that are driving climate change, and for the record the environmental crisis is not in any way caused by over-population (birth rates are now falling in every country, including India and China), as many in developed nations seem to believe. Blame 'the other' always, the brown/black 'other' usually; don't look at yourself or the facts, don't accept responsibility, simply blame someone else.

It is the comfortable and complacent in developed nations who caused the mess and continue to fuel it. And, spoilt, deeply selfish and with a myopic view of the world, they refuse to change behavior, refuse to give up anything. To stop eating animal produce, to cut back on air travel, to stop buying stuff they don't need, to stop driving fossil fuelled vehicles, to shop responsibly, and to engage. Because, and here we go again, 'they' don't give a damn, or not enough of a damn to take the uncomfortable steps and make the boring changes required.

Absence of caring hasn't happened accidentally, it has been deliberately cultivated to strengthen an unjust socio-economic system of exploitation and division. Whole societies have been conditioned into selfishness, greed and (sensory) pleasure; taught virtually from birth to be competitive and ambitious and to do whatever it takes to get what they want, irrespective of the damage to others, society or the natural world. Materialism and consumerism, two

sides of the same rusty coin, form the ideological framework of this cynical ugly world view; a view that, via globalization has been spread far and wide, polluting every nation in every continent. Encouraging the same hollow values and cynical outlook that has not only resulted in the destruction of the natural world, but has created unhealthy unequal societies.

Change the environment people are living in, remove the fear and insecurity, reduce the competition — the dog eat dog mentality, be kind, tolerant, gentle and compassionate, and people will naturally care, about others, about society and the environment.

Individuals caring is essential if governments are to be impelled to take the steps needed to impact on corporates/businesses and effect widespread community change. Both are required, and while 'people' cannot be forced to care all efforts should be made to present information and raise awareness of the severity, scope and interconnected nature of the issues; the house, our house is engulfed in flames, the children are inside screaming while we stand around debating whether water will damage the furniture.

There is perhaps just a moment left in which to Save Our Planet, but it will not be salvaged unless we — governments, businesses and individuals, make the environment our first priority, the principle consideration of every decision and action: how does this impact the natural world, is it positive or negative? This is what it means to care; to live responsibly, to govern and manage responsibly; conscious action that proceeds from and is an expression of brotherhood and love, both of which are innate but buried.

As the inspirational Kenyan climate activist Elizabeth Wathuti said at COP 26 in her moving address: "I believe in our human capacity to care deeply and act collectively; I believe in our ability to do what is right if we let ourselves feel it in our hearts.....if you allow yourself to feel it, the heartbreak and injustice [felt across Sub-Saharan Africa, South Sea Islands and elsewhere] is hard to bear... please open your hearts" and act. Act now with environmental responsibility at the core of one's daily life; act now to force governments and businesses to respond, or look around in ten years and see ashes in your hands.

Graham Peebles is a British freelance writer and charity worker. He set up The Create Trust in 2005 and has run education projects in Sri Lanka, Ethiopia and India. This article was first published in COUNTERPUNCH.

Law & Politics

Turning words to deeds

BY ADDISALEM MULAT

The incumbent and relief agencies have been providing the much needed humanitarian assistance to the people of Tigray in quite a lot of fronts making use of the peace agreement signed in Pretoria, South Africa between the federal government and Tigray People Liberation Front (TPLF).

In addition to restoring the urgently needed social infrastructure in the Tigray State, the federal government has been making extraordinary efforts for the realization of the peace implementation according to the agreement within the shortest time possible.

In actual fact, in the aftermath of the promising moves of the government to put the landmark Pretoria agreement into effect, everything in the northern part of the country has been making headways and bringing home the bacon as quickly as possible. In consideration of the foregoing, civilians in the northern part of the country have been hailing the peace deal expressing their infinite appreciation.

Aside from giving authorization for unrestricted flow of humanitarian assistance, the incumbent has been throwing its full weight to fast track the reinstatement of wrecked social infrastructural facilities least to mention power and telecom services. For the sake of truth, as a result of the firm stance of the government, the cessation-of-hostilities agreement is expected to playing a huge role in ensuring peace and tranquility once and for all.

Straight after the breakthrough Pretoria agreement, the government has been going the extra mile and putting the best leg forward to ensure that the people of Tigray are reconnected to the power grid and other disrupted services.

In this day and age, concerned authorities have been working at all hours of the day and night intended for making life easier for the inhabitants of some towns that have been in complete blackout for two years and out of social services.

At the outset, some doomsters did not expect the implementation of the peace accord would end up bearing fruits at the earliest possible moment. However, as time went by when they realized the government's determination towards the implementation of the peace agreement, they jumpstarted besmirching positive developments blossoming out in all regions of the country.

In sharp contradiction though, the delivery of food, lifesaving medicines, emergency kits, lifesaving first aid, and other important assistance has been entering the Tigray state via air and road without any problem. In consideration of the foregoing, peace and tranquility have been prevailing on the left, right, and center of Northern Ethiopia.

In the same way, telecommunications facilitates affected in the course of the war in Northern part of the country have been in progress and going in line with the direction set in the peace accord. The positive moves surfacing in every nook and cranny of



Northern Ethiopia for the most part after the peace deal agreement has been stealing the attention of the global community.

The other thing is that people have been getting access to mobile services and thus contacting their close and distant relatives. As much attention has been given by the government to return the whole thing in area to normalcy, social infrastructure restoration has been pointing in the right direction.

Other than that restoration of power lines in various parts of the war-affected areas has been in progress giving a sigh of relief to every Tom, Dick, and Harry residing in the northern part of the country.

As the federal government has been moving from words to deeds and ensuring peace and tranquility, the looked-for goal is being attained. In good truth, everything on the subject of the ceasefire agreement has been heading in the right direction signaling the living resolve of the incumbent to walk its talks. Furthermore, the federal government has been putting the restoration of essential facilities into effect in a convincing manner in various parts of the country.

The government is making the impossible possible effectuating a considerable amount of successful strategies into play. The peace agreement has been persistently putting a smile on the face of the inhabitants of the Tigray region.

The determination of the government is well corroborated with pertinent bodies speeding up the restoration works.

In an exclusive interview with local media, Ethio Telecom CEO Firehiwot Tamru said the war ravaged telecom infrastructures in all accessible areas are being repaired with utmost efforts.

According to the CEO, war affected areas including Mai Tsebri, Alamata, Korem and Adi Arkai towns have regained mobile network services following the maintenance works.

Shire core network site which was out of service for two years, has been reequipped with all necessary equipment and devises, she said, adding that maximum efforts are underway to restore the telecom service in almost all parts of Tigray region including Axum and Adwa towns. Moreover, 266 km of cyber cables have been repaired, and only 6 km are left for full completion of the maintenance works at Shire district, it was learnt.

The Ethiopian Electric Utility (EEU) CEO Shiferaw Telila told local media that that Power has been fully restored in Kobo, Alamata, Waja, Tumuka, Lalibela and Sekota, Korem and their surrounding areas.

In Northern West areas like Humera, Wolkayit and Shire, he said maintenance and inspection works have been finalized. However, restoration has not been done due to the fact that the main power station is located in Tekeze power transmission. The 230 Kilovolts power transmission line of Axum is being repaired, as to him.

Power restoration process will be completed in two days as the major maintenance activities have been conducted successfully

in Humera, Adwa, Aksum, Shire and in their environs, the Ethiopian Electric Power (EEP) announced.

EEP High Power Transmission Lines Maintenance Technical Support Bureau Manager Tesfaye Mengistu for his part told local media that the Humera-Wolkait-Shiraro power transmission line maintenance work has been done.

As to him, during the inspection work carried out on 474 power transmitting poles from Humera to Shire, power interruption were encountered in the three combined lines at 92 places. Accordingly, a maintenance team that has been organized to repair and restore the highly damaged 230 Kilovolts power transmission line of Shiraro-Shire is now operational day and night.

The damages on the Tekeze-Shire-Humera power transmission line have been fully repaired. The Shire substation would regain electricity within a week after conducting the maintenance work on the damaged power transmission lines in an area called Salakhlekha, he said.

Restarting of the Shire power distribution station will have a great contribution to restore electricity in Shire town and its surroundings as well as the Humra town. An inspection held by the EEP maintenance team proved that there is no any damage on the 230 Kilovolts power transmission line of Tekeze-Axum.

On the other hand inspection works will be carried out to conduct maintenance on the 132 Kilovolts Abiyadi-Adwa electricity transmission line. The Aksum and Adwa power distribution stations will resume providing electricity in the next three weeks after completing the Abiyadi-Adwa transmission line maintenance work.

NDRMC Communication and Public Relation Director Debebe Zewede told The Ethiopian Herald that the provision of unrestricted supply to citizens affected by conflict in northern Ethiopia has been accelerating. Since the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement (CoHA), over 40,063 metric tons of food and non-food items have been transported within 1,017 vehicles. Some 839.76 metric tons of medical supplies within 25 trucks have been transported and 10 convoys loaded with 413,552 liters of fuel sent to the areas, he said.

Some 16 partners have been involved in the operation of humanitarian supplies. Over 4,254 metric tons of non-food items have been distributed within 115 vehicles to the conflict-affected citizens. From October 30 to November 29, 2022, 1,169 heavy trucks were deployed to the areas by partners to accelerate humanitarian distribution via three corridors (Afar-Abala, Gondar-Shire and Kombolcha-Kobo-Alamata routes).

Support has been given for partners to transport over 148.7 million Birr in cash via Mekelle and Shire airport to facilitate humanitarian supply activities in Tigray state. Some 1, 168 heavy convoys deployed by various 16 partners to facilitate humanitarian supply operation, he indicated.

International

Kenya's Meru National Polytechnic shines in Africa Tech Challenge

The EastAfrican: The Meru National Polytechnic in Kenya has emerged third in the Africa Tech Challenge (ATC), a competition targeting youth in technical training institutions from six African countries.

Meru National Polytechnic students, who represented Kenya in this year's competition, emerged third after Luyanzi Institute of Technology from Zambia, which took the first position, and Zambia's Northern Technical College which was ranked second.

The award is a boost to the Kenyan technical and vocational educational and training institution.

ATC is an initiative of AVIC International, a Chinese multinational, in which participants compete on various technical skills with the winner securing scholarships to China.

The challenge resumed this year after a two-year break due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Other countries represented in the competition this year included Egypt, Zimbabwe and Ghana.

The competition, themed 'Limitless innovation', which is the seventh since its inception, focused on boosting design abilities in reading and drafting construction drawings using cutting edge technology tools.

Speaking during the award ceremony in Nairobi, Kenya's Education Cabinet Secretary Ezekiel Machogu lauded the initiative for empowering Kenyans in manufacturing machine parts for export.

"We welcome more participants from the private sector including Chinese investors



to participate in programmes like the ATC, which not only create employment, but also transfer the necessary skills for our young people to be entrepreneurs," CS Machogu said.

Mr Zhou Meifen, a Counsellor at the Chinese Embassy in Kenya, said the competition seeks to address unemployment in Kenya through transfer of technical skills.

"Since 2014, the programme has covered 248 institutions across 10 African countries. The Chinese government will continue supporting the initiative and to increase the number of scholarships awarded to study in China," MrMeifen said.

AVIC International Project Engineering Company vice president XuFei said the winners would get opportunities for internships, jobs and scholarships to pursue further studies at top institutions in China.

He said that the firm is committed to providing essential skills to African

youth for the modern job market through training and equipping technological institutions with the latest machines.

"The seventh ATC training and competitions were digitally supported by AVIC International's online education platform which realised factors such as live streaming and the recording of remote training assignments and exams, allowing participants from different countries to participate in the training," said MrXu.

The top three individual award-winning contestants get full scholarships to study in China. This year, the challenge attracted 65 teams and 259 students as well as teachers from 45 institutions. It included a month of online intensive training from July 25 to August 22.

The preliminary round was held on August 25 where one team from each of the six countries was selected to participate in the final round, with the first phase being launched on November 13 and the final one on November 19.

Somali troops seize strategic town from Al-Shabaab militants

The EastAfrican: Somali forces on Monday seized a strategic town in the central regions of the country from Al-Shabaab, registering another milestone against the militants.

The Somali National Army (SNA), together with local vigilantes popularly known as Mo'awisley, captured AdanYabaal town, about 220 kilometers north of the capital Mogadishu.

AdanYabaal, a town located near the border between Hiran and Middle Shabelle regions that comprise Hirshabelle State, one of the five federal member states of the Federal Government of Somalia, had been a strategic location held by Al-Shabaab, the Al-Qaeda-linked extremist group.

The SNA said in a bulletin that it met no resistance from the normally feared Al-Shabaab fighters who left the town without posing resistance.

Out of fear from a possible fighting between the allied forces and the terrorists, most residents largely left the town, dreading being caught in a crossfire.

Al-Shabaab have lost most of the towns and settlements in Hirshabelle State, both Hiran and Middle Shabelle regions, after the SNA and Mo'awisley vigilantes waged offensive wars.

Mo'awisley vigilantes, who are mainly composed of nomadic herders, took up arms and rebelled against the jihadists' confiscation of their livestock and illegal tax collection known as zakawaat.

Over the last couple of weeks, the government forces and the vigilantes have been gradually inching towards the town which they seized on Monday. The town had been under the full control of Al-Shabaab for over a decade.

Sudan's military, civilian factions sign initial power-sharing deal

The East African: Sudan's military and civilian leaders signed Monday an initial deal aimed at ending a deep crisis that has gripped the northeast African country since a coup a year ago.

Army chief Abdel Fattah al-Burhan seized power in October 2021, derailing a rocky transition to civilian rule that began after the 2019 ouster of veteran autocrat Omar al-Bashir.

The past year has seen near-weekly protests and a crackdown that pro-democracy medics say has killed at least 121, a spiralling economic crisis and a rise in ethnic violence in several remote regions.

Divisions among civilian groups have deepened since the coup, with some urging a deal with the military while others insist on "no partnership, no negotiation".

Monday's deal was signed by Burhan, paramilitary commander Mohamed HamdanDagalo and multiple civilian groups, most notably the Forces for Freedom and Change -- the main civilian faction that was ousted in the coup.

"The ceremony today is a culmination of the sustained efforts of Sudanese stakeholders

over the past year to find a solution to the political crisis and restore constitutional order," said UN special representative Volker Perthes.

Other signatories included the Islamist Popular Congress Party, a faction of the Democratic Unionist Party, and some ex-rebel groups who signed a 2020 peace deal.

During the ceremony, Dagalo reiterated the military's purported commitment to exit the political scene, saying "it is essential to build a sustainable democratic regime."

The deal -- based on a proposal by the Sudanese Bar Association -- was negotiated in the presence of officials from the United Nations, Western diplomats as well as Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, according to the FFC.

On Friday, the FFC said the "framework



agreement lays the groundwork for establishing a transitional civilian authority."

A final deal tackling issues including transitional justice and reforms to the military should be completed "within weeks," it said.

Perthes urged Sudanese factions to "immediately" start the second phase to resolve the outstanding issues and reach a comprehensive deal.

However, that part is far thornier, with observers questioning whether the military would be willing to give up economic interests and wider powers that it views as its privileged

domain.

Phase one of the deal "is a very low level commitment on Burhan's part... allowing him to survive" politically, said KholoodKhair founder of the Confluence Advisory, a Khartoum-based think-tank.

But the signatories will likely face "a real political crisis as they start talking in earnest about security sector reforms, transitional justice (and) financial accountability," she added.

Monday's signing comes months after Burhan pledged that the military would step aside and make way for factions to agree on a civilian government.

Pro-democracy activists reject the latest effort and are calling for new street protests demanding the military return to barracks.

Some of the former rebels who signed peace deals with Sudan in 2020 also voiced their opposition to the deal.

Mohamed Zakaria, spokesman for former rebel group the Justice and Equality Movement told AFP that it "will bring about dire consequences and further complicate the political scene".

Planet Earth

Profiting from *Ye Leemat Terufat* Campaign

BY SOLOMON DIBABA

Agriculture is still the pace setter of the Ethiopian economy and a source of the major export commodities from which the country obtains foreign exchange earnings. Diversification of export of agricultural commodities and increasing their volume and quality for marketing on world markets has proved to be a viable alternative to increase Ethiopia's revenue in foreign exchange.

Over the last several decades, Ethiopia has depended on coffee, pulses and oil seeds to obtain foreign currency. It is therefore imperative to further diversify export of agricultural commodities by adding value to these products for better completion at the world market. The introduction of cut flowers, live animals, and horticulture products for export has earned the nation better foreign exchange but that is still at its lower scale compared to several Sub-Saharan African countries.

Ethiopia is now engaged in massive import substitution programs primarily in the agriculture sector. The country is now ready to fully produce wheat for local consumption and for export as well. This is a promising trend and is expected to grow over several decades.

The country is still importing edible oil which could have been produced locally. There are several ongoing attempts to produce food oil locally but still there is a long way to go before the country could be self-sufficient in edible oil

and export it to the world market.

Ethiopia has a huge potential for apiary and fishery two food types that have so far not properly utilized. Introduction of modern beehives at low cost and preparation of household managed ponds in which fish could be raised will not only add up to balanced diet for families but can be a means of generating income by selling them at local market. Groups could be organized to undertake such farm activities to enhance production for marketing in far off districts.

With a promising bumper harvest in cotton, the country can produce high quality garments that can even be exported. The industrial parks in the country are already exporting a considerable amount of garments and apparel to countries near and afar earning the nation a considerable amount of forex.

Cluster farming system that was introduced in various regions of the country have proved to be effective in increasing productivity per hectare as more crops are being produced in this way. Cluster farms can easily use agricultural modernization techniques and mechanization that is important to markedly reduce post-harvest losses

Ethiopia's foreign trade through import substitution mechanisms is growing. Leather products and foot wear from Ethiopia have already proved to be marketable in large amounts and quality but the sector has still not developed to the desired level.

With the introduction of small scale and large scale irrigation schemes in various regions of the country, farmers have been able to produce 2 to 3 times a year including the main agricultural season. Ethiopia has so far utilized less than 3% of its total irrigation potentials which are generally evenly distributed across the country. Regions like Afar, Gambela and Benishanguel and the SNNPRS have started to engage in irrigated farming focusing on the main marketable agricultural products which can also be exported.

Microfinancing institutions across the country have already have the practice in providing loan to able farmers who can use the cash to purchase fertilizers and other agricultural inputs to enhance their productivity.

Profiting from Lemat Development Campaign as the name tells is to be conducted through campaigns in which all the regions in the country are expected to participate. Conducting such development programs in the form of campaign, although possible could face challenges in terms of coordination with regions, zones and districts across the country. The issue of input provision and conducting the campaign along with the regular agricultural practices across the country requires strong managing skills and capacity building at all levels. Besides, it is important to create awareness creation sessions on the campaign so that all concerned will participate in a more meaningful and productive manner.

It is very important to develop simple booklets and manuals that could be readily used as

reference for farmers when the DA's are not around. These materials could be more useful if they are translated in various languages spoken across the country. Moreover is good to develop agricultural demonstration plots in every village as farmers can replicate the good practices on their own homesteads and community owned orchards and vegetable gardens.

It is also important to link food production and diversification with the National Initiative for Green Legacy as one could complement the other in the entire food production cycle. The campaign of Ye Lemat Terufat is still at take off stage and needs to be further popularized in urban and rural settings of the country.

However, there is one important point that needs proper consideration at this stage of the campaign. Campaigns are usually short-lived and not well coordinated and monitored. It is therefore important to link the program with regular agricultural activities in the country. There should be a training and capacity building component for those who are willing to take part in the campaign. Some level of input provision like vegetable seeds, fruit seedlings could be considered to orient the population to actively participate on the campaigns.

As the campaigns are conducted in various ecological settings in the country, they should be organized in such a way that different approaches should be devised for moisture stress areas and those with better precipitation with potentials for home managed small scale irrigation.



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HU's unreserved efforts to solve improved seeds shortage

BY EPHREM ANDARGACHEW

Haramaya University (HU) has been working to solve the shortage of improved seeds that the farmers have been struggling with.

HU, in its main campus, sub-research centers, and farmers' demonstration centers, has been supporting the framers by providing improved seeds either by selling at a lower cost or for free.

Haramaya University Enterprises Director Dr. Ketema Bekele said that in addition to research, learning, and teaching activities, the University has been providing community services and technical and advisory supports to the farmers starting from land preparation to market linkage.

Hence, for the 2021/2022 farming seasons, HU has distributed improved, disease-resistant, and higher-yield productive seeds to the communities through the university's enterprise. These included Gudane Potato over 1400 quintals, Melkassa II Maize 170 quintals, Muyira I Sorghum 180 quintals, Common Bean includes Ayenew 43 quintals, Tinike 38 quintals, Awash 41 quintals, as well as wheat 180 quintals. It also works in dairy farming,



Dr. Ketema Bekele

selling heifers-calf at reasonable prices, pottery farms, and so on, he explained.

Despite its land limitation problem, HU plans to increase the provision of improved seeds for the 2022/23 farming season. Consequently, improved potato distribution will increase to 3000 quintals, maize to 150 quintals, sorghum to 200 quintals, Common Bean to 50 quintals, while wheat will be increased to 80 quintals, he added.

Likewise, Haramaya University Research Extension Team Coordinator Feyisa Hundessa stated that the university has provided different types of improved seeds to the communities free of charge.

So far, 700 quintals of potatoes were supplied to 5,000 households, 3,000 quintals of wheat to 21 wordas of drought-affected areas in Eastern

Photo: Etuad Ahmed



Feyisa Hundessa

Hararge, and more than 4,000 quintals of corn and teff were distributed to the farmers. These all totally cost over 24 million Birr.

The improved seeds are good at adapting to the local climate, have better yields, and disease resistance. The selection criteria of farmers were being a model farmer, living in the surrounding area, and being trusted and selected by the concerned parties whilewomen and elderly people get improved seeds for free. The university also provides improved seeds for those who have land for urban agriculture, he stated.

Demand and supply mismatch, sustaining the technology, focusing on campaign tasks, and preserving the improved seed for the next farming season are problems observed every year.



Birtukan Yimam

Therefore, he urges the private sector and investors to increase their participation in the multiplication and distribution of improved seeds. This significantly supports the university to concentrate on research and promotion tasks.

Similarly, Haramaya University Research and Technology Transfer Expert Birtukan Yimam explained that apart from providing improved seeds to the farmers, HU has been doing various activities that will put the youth to work.

In particular, the youth were given training that enable them to prepare sweet potatoes not only to be boiled and eaten but also to be served in bread, juice, cookies, enjera, and so on.

At last, she stressed that such training should be strengthened to make the result of the improved seeds accessible not only to farmers but to all sections of society.