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Ready for Tomorrow!



Demelash Gebremichael sworn in as EAPCCO President

BY TAMERU REGASA

ADDIS ABABA- Commissioner-General of the Ethiopian Federal Police Demelash Gebremichael has been sworn in as the president of Eastern Africa Police Chiefs Cooperation Organization (EAPCCO).

See Demelash ... Page 3

Morocco, Ethiopia keen to experience sharing on engaging Diaspora in dev't

BY MUSSA MUHAMMED

ADDIS ABABA - Morocco has shown keen interest and readiness to exchange experience and to work in cooperation with the Ethiopian Diaspora Service.

See Morocco, Ethiopia ... Page 3

Premier assures Ethiopia's prosperity inevitability



Nation marks 17th NNPD in Hawassa

BY BILAL DERSO

ADDIS ABABA- The attempts of destructive forces carrying the mission of destabilizing Ethiopia will never be successful, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) said, adding that Ethiopia will soon emerge shining on the road to prosperity.

The Premier made the above remark yesterday at the celebration of the 17th Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Day (NNPD) in Hawassa town of the Sidama State.

Ethiopia will prosper by overcoming challenges it faces and it will prosper by defeating forces that try to destroy the truth

it has. "There are polarized thoughts in Ethiopia and there are groups who do not live by their own ideas and play political games of innocent blood. We will be tested by these groups, not defeated."

Abiy further highlighted that the problem in the northern part of Ethiopia has been solved peacefully and the government is making great efforts to make the truce sustainable. "No matter how dark it is, Ethiopia's prosperity is inevitable."

Mentioning the main purpose of the NNPD is to strengthen the solidarity of nationalities, the Prime Minister indicated the day is also crucial for firming up national unity. By strengthening national unity, it will be

possible to build a prosperous country.

"We should pay attention to thwart destructive agenda coming from outside and build our common home together, considering that Ethiopians with different cultures and values will create a great Ethiopia."

According to Speaker of the House of Federation Agegnehu Teshager, Ethiopia is a country that has respected its own identity and preserved the multiculturalism of its people. "Everyone has their own role to protect Ethiopia's sovereignty in the future."

For Sidama Chief Administrator Desta Ledamo,

See Premier ... Page 3

NBE orders commercial banks to reopen in conflict-affected areas

BY STAFF REPORTER

ADDIS ABABA- The National Bank of Ethiopia (NBE) has requested all commercial banks to resume services in war-hit areas in Amhara, Afar and Tigray States, as local media reported.

The banks have to assess the status of their branches and undertake auditing before

reopening branches in those places where banking and other basic services have been offline for the past two years.

The NBE banking supervision Directorate Director Frezer Ayalew stated that some of the commercial banks are already resuming operations in areas where telecom and electricity have been reconnected; areas

See NBE orders ... Page 3



News

Companies agree to facilitate remittance flow, modernize digital finance

BY MISGANAW ASNAKE

ADDIS ABABA - In the era of digital world it is high time to revolutionize and make Ethiopian finance system digital thereby boosting the flow of remittances in the nation, so stated companies.

This was noted during the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signing ceremony yesterday between Eagle Lion System Technology PLC and Mastercard.

The Eagle Lion System Technology PLC Founder and Chief Executive Officer Bersufekad Getachew said on the occasion that the partnership will play a significant role in bringing about socioeconomic improvement by reinvigorating the nation's finance system.

"We are honored to collaborate with Mastercard as we are endeavoring toward revolutionizing nation's digital environment and sharing a common goal. The agreement can foster both technical and financial supports. As a result of our relationship with Mastercard, we will be able to expand our workforce. Apart from today's agreement, the company also recently launched a digital foot management interface with CBE," he said.

Currently, the company is developing the National Payment Consolidator, a system that enables the transfer of funds from one financial institution to another and facilitates



Photo: Gebabo Gebrite

commercial and financial transfers between buyers and sellers, he said.

"Eagle Lion Technology System is a tech conglomerate company committed to provide Ethiopia's market digital business solutions that make life easier and are simple to use. The company has developed "Cashgo, Guzogo, It is my dam crowd funding app, GetfeeGetrooms, hotel bidding, and the first ever digital learning platform, Smart School," he said.

Mastercard Business Development Director of Ethiopia, Somalia and Sudan, Elifagid

Aregahagn on his part said that the partnership is a game changer and is the starting of long journey to put a range of systems into effect in long run.

The partnership agreement includes advice support and technical support and the companies will start implementing it in the upcoming January 2023, he said.

Mastercard's business has a global reach, extending to over 210 countries and territories, with over 1.9 billion cards and 35.9 million acceptance locations in 210 countries and territories and 150 currencies.



Abdi Zenebe

EDR catalyzing regional integration via facilitating logistics

ADDIS ABABA - The Ethio-Djibouti Railway (EDR) is catalyzing regional economic integration, covering 15 percent of Ethiopia's import and export logistic facilitation over the last three months, Ethio-Djibouti Railway CEO Abdi Zenebe said.

In an exclusive interview with ENA, Ethio-Djibouti Railway CEO Abdi Zenebe stated that the EDR has been expanding and diversifying its services.

EDR has been transporting very critical commodities to and from Ethiopia, he stated, adding that as part of diversifying services, it has started transporting vehicles and fertilizer and it will soon start transportation of sugar and other important commodities.

"The Ethio-Djibouti railway has multiple purposes in the Horn of Africa region. And one of the most important (mission) is to bring about regional integration between the two countries. And of course, regional integration is part and parcel of the (African) Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and this is a practical demonstration," the CEO elaborated.

Economic aspect is one of the focus areas of EDR, Abdi stated, adding "On the Ethiopian side, the company (EDR), has been playing a very prominent role in supporting the primary export item, coffee and almost 98 percent of coffee is transported via EDR."

"And above all, the EDR also plays a very significant role in bringing about high degree of regionalization, societal relationship between the two countries. And this will bring about not only in enhancing economic scale to attract investment but also ensure a lasting peace between the two countries," he emphasized.

Nothing that regional integration is one of the crucial elements that connect the Horn of Africa with the rest of Africa; Abdi stressed EDR "always gives priority for this important component of its purpose."

Speaking of the services it rendered with regard to facilitating efficient and effective import and export transport and logistics, the CEO said that EDR has been working hard.

"In the last quarter (year), we were able to cover about 15 percent of the overall import and export logistics of the country from the Ethiopian side. We have witnessed major progress in freight transportation and we need to enhance our capability and efficiency in passenger transportation services," he stated.

Ethio-Djibouti Railway (EDR), established in April, 2017 as a share company between Ethiopia and Djibouti, was inaugurated by former Prime Minister Hailemariam Dessalegn in January, 2018.

Administration toiling to make Hosanna investment hub: Mayor

BY MESERET BEHAILU

HOSANNA – Mayor of Hosanna City stated that the administration has been undertaking various activities to help the city become investment hub via effectively exploiting its huge resources.

The City Mayor Lire Jemal told the visiting Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) reporters that the administration in collaboration with concerned bodies has been carrying out various activities such as constructing infrastructure to help Hosanna become investment hub in the near future.

As to the Mayor, the administration has allocated some 420 million Birr for road project and 165 million Birr for water well drilling classifying into phases. However, the drilling (use for potable water) requires over one billion Birr as the number of the community demanding such service is huge. Of the five water well drillings, two of them are close to completion and ready for providing the community with drinking water after a month. Therefore, the administration is working hard to mobilize the public establishing close ties with higher learning institutions to complete the remaining drillings to contain the clean water shortage in the city.



He further stated that the administration has finalized its preparations to build smart village in collaboration with the Dashen Bank and other stakeholders to make attractive Hosanna. He said, "I assured that the city is becoming a center of investment in the next few years after completion of various projects collaboratively."

"Compared with other cities located in the SNNPR (state), Hosanna is a place in which high commercial activities and banking transactions are carried out. Apart

from being a suitable for wheat production and known for its Enset Plant (False banana), the surrounding can become a center of a lot of job creation as it will also be an investment center in the near future," he added.

He called up on investors from various directions to invest their wealth and potential in the city on various fields such as agriculture, animal husbandry, hotels, real estate, and entertainment to obtain significant outcome out of the sectors.

News

Peace deal helpful to mitigate human trafficking

ADDIS ABABA /ENA/ - The peace agreement reached between the federal government of Ethiopia and TPLF will provide great contribution to help enhance the activities being undertaken to mitigate crimes of human trafficking, the Regional Operational Centre in support of the Khartoum process and the African Union (AU) Horn of Africa Initiative (ROCK) disclosed.

ROCK is a regional project to fight criminal networks involved in human trafficking and smuggling, financed by the Emergency Trust Fund for Africa of the European Union, which was launched as part of the Khartoum process at the request of countries from the Horn of Africa.

Technical Director of ROCK, Harve' Jamet, who attended the 24th Eastern Africa Police Chiefs Cooperation Organization (EAPCCO) general meeting, told ENA that ROCK has been working in collaboration with 11 countries in the Eastern Africa region.

According to him, ROCK has coordination offices in its partner countries including Ethiopia and works in the prevention of human trafficking.

Noting that Ethiopia is one of the



victims of human trafficking in Africa, he said ROCK will further strengthen its collaboration with Ethiopia as the country is an important partner in the efforts to prevent the crime.

He stated that a discussion was held between the Ethiopian Federal Police officials on ways to enhance cooperation.

The Director further pointed out that the peace agreement reached between the federal government of Ethiopia and TPLF

will provide a great contribution to help reduce crimes of human trafficking and the flow of immigrants.

"Ethiopia is a very important partner. We have to reinforce cooperation. So, we have decided with the Federal Commissioner to think about how we can improve the cooperation between ROCK and Federal Police. I believe that this peace agreement will help us to solve the problem and reduce the number of smuggling immigrants. It is a very important point,"

Over 90 percent of Interpol's information on human trafficking is gathered through ROCK, he said pledging to strengthen collaboration with countries in the eastern Africa region where crimes of human trafficking are rampant.

The strategy of the ROCK project is to facilitate the exchange of information between competent police Law Enforcement Agencies.

The 24th Eastern Africa Police Chiefs Cooperation Organization (EAPCCO) general meeting deliberated on trans-border crimes, human trafficking, illegal arms trafficking, and drug trafficking as well as security challenges affecting the region since last Sunday.

NBE orders...

include the Amhara and Afar states. Banks in Tigray can start operations, but only after conducting audits.

Each commercial bank has hundreds of branches in conflict-impacted areas, with the Commercial Bank of Ethiopia (CBE) having over 300 branches.

The banks, according to Frezer, must continue their normal activities after conducting the assessments.

The NBE ordered each commercial bank to establish a steering committee that coordinates the activities on the ground with the ministerial committee established at a national level and task forces under it. The steering committee inside each commercial bank follows up on the progress on the ground and reports challenges to the NBE. Then the ministerial committee coordinates at the national level, Frezer elaborated.

The committee reports to the Prime Minister, which comprises the NBE, Ministry of Trade and Regional Integration (MoTRI), Ministry of Transport and Logistics (MoTL) and others. Individual bank steering committees report directly to the NBE, it was learned.

Demelash Gebremichael...

The 24th Eastern Africa Police Chiefs Cooperation Organization (EAPCCO) general meeting was held in Addis Ababa with a theme of "promoting best policing practices in the fight against terrorism and transnational organized crime in EAPCCO region and beyond."

The general meeting was also focus on trans-border crimes, human trafficking, illegal arms trafficking, and drug trafficking as well as security challenges affecting the East African region.

Different agents from 14 Eastern African countries have attended the meeting, namely officials from the Ethiopian Federal Police, EAPCCO officials, Interpol representatives of the region, and military attachés.

The participants of the meeting visited the office of Ethiopia Federal Police Commission whereby Commissioner Demelash briefed the former concerning the reform that had taken place in the commission in the past four years.

He also informed the visitors that the commission has been equipped with different sophisticated technologies to investigate crimes.

The general meeting was held from December 4- 9, 2022.

Morocco, Ethiopia...

Morocco Ambassador to Ethiopia Nezha Alaoui M'hammdi told The Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) that Morocco is ready to support what the members of Ethiopian Diaspora have been working on assisting their homeland in various fields.

According to Ambassador Nezha, as the Ethiopian Diaspora Service has expressed its readiness to the experience sharing with its counterpart in Morocco, the embassy is ready to support such activities in a bid to augment Ethiopian Diaspora participation in homeland development drive.

She further noted that Morocco appreciates the Diaspora effort exerted over the last four years in Ethiopia, and affirms its readiness to continue supporting the sector via working together.

It was learnt that the ambassador and the Ethiopian Diaspora Service Director General Muhammed Endris (PhD) discussed how to enhance Diaspora participation making use the rich experience of Moroccan Diaspora in various activities.

"There are many values that Morocco could share with Ethiopia, and the desire to work on strengthening Diaspora participation."



She reminded that both countries with a large number of Diaspora communities have to come up with legal and structural frameworks to manage the sector and mentioned that it has been 30 years since her country started working on a policy framework focused on Diaspora issues.

Thanking the Ambassador for exchanging worthwhile experience, Ethiopian Diaspora Service Director General Muhammed Endris(PhD) pointed out that the steps Ethiopia has been taking to augment the involvement of Diaspora in various

homeland development programs.

"The Diaspora participation in various aspects has been growing since the advent of the recent reform as their issue is given due attention. It is possible to take great experience from Morocco regarding effective utilization of the Diaspora potentials, participation and nation building capability," he said.

The Director General has accepted invitation to participate in a forum to discuss ways to resolve the challenges facing remittances in Morocco next January.

Premier assures...

the ruling Prosperity Party is building a federal system whereby the people of Ethiopia equally benefited and respected. "Sidama State has been set up as a place where citizens are not being discriminated against on the basis of

ethnic identity."

Apart from solving identity-related questions in a civilized and constitutional manner, the government is also heavily working to build

a country where the rights and benefits of all citizens are duly guaranteed, the state chief remarked.

High-level government officials including

Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Demeke Mekonnen, Speaker of the House of Peoples' Representatives Tadesse Chafo, chief administrators of states, and others were also in attendance at the Hawassa celebration.

Opinion

Besides repatriation oversea citizens, time demands revision of diplomatic ties

BY LAKACHEW ATINAFU

The relation between Ethiopia and Gulf countries traced back before the emergence of modern states. The arrival of Muslim fugitives escaping from scimitars of Qurush is remembered as the heyday of the bond between the Arab world and ancient civilization of Ethiopia.

The peninsula is near to the core so that the Arab enjoys billions of Dollars exporting petroleum for the globe. Such economic security grabs the eyes of migrants from each corner of the world.

Many Ethiopians, as a result, live and earn their lives in the Arab countries as house maid and other jobs. Nonetheless, the conditions of Ethiopians in the Arab world is in jeopardy for a number of circumstances that needs the revision of foreign policy and investigating pillars in international diplomatic sphere.

The repatriation of Ethiopians from Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in one hand displays the government's effort in protecting and safeguarding citizens in the oversea world.

But it might be verbal irony that Ethiopia's foreign policy with the Arab particularly, Saudi Arabia is sound. Hence, it would be counterproductive to investigate diplomatic relations with oil exporting countries.

Currently, thousands of Ethiopians have been returned back to the country that would pose challenges that coerce the government foresees opportunities and options to rescue nationals from desperate economic security and maladjusted psychological makeup.

According to the report of International Organization for Migration (IOM), following an agreement between the Governments of Ethiopia and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA), over 100,000 Ethiopian migrants are expected to be deported to Ethiopia from KSA, with the arrivals starting on 30 March 2022.

Currently, more than 70,000 Ethiopians have returned back to their country and observed to destine at the country's International Airport in Addis Ababa. The returnees, including mothers with little children, were assisted and registered by IOM staff and offered, among others, food, temporary accommodation, medical help and counseling services.

The returnees will receive humanitarian assistance and protection services upon arrival from the Government authorities, IOM and other partners. However, meeting the needs of the 100,000 returnees is going to be an enormous challenge for the government, and its partners.

Roughly USD 11 million will be needed to assist the over 100,000 Ethiopian migrants from KSA through post-arrival assistance. The Government of Ethiopia is appealing to donors, UN agencies, and other humanitarian actors to stretch their hands for generous support.

It is estimated that about 750,000 Ethiopians currently reside in the Kingdom with about 450,000 likely to have traveled to the country through irregular means and need help to

return home. Over the last four years, KSA has returned nearly 352,000 Ethiopians back home.

Previous movements of Ethiopians returning from KSA have included people exhibiting varied needs, risks, and vulnerabilities such as pregnant and lactating women, the elderly, and persons with medical conditions including mental health disorders.

IOM is working closely with the Government of Ethiopia and its partners as the country continues to receive thousands of returnees from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

A coordinated multi-sectoral response is critical to ensure returnees receive essential services such as medical care, food, shelter, and psychosocial support as well as specialized protection services to alleviate their immediate needs, risks and vulnerabilities and enable their return home in safety and dignity.

The Government of Ethiopia, as repeatedly has expressed its efforts, will continue to strive toward strengthening repatriation and rehabilitation programmes and ensuring the orderly return of its citizens abroad.

The involvement of key partners in the planning and operationalization of this goal is essential. Besides, emphasizing on the role of official of the Consular Affairs Directorate General at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia ought to be a timely measure.

According to African news, starting from the end of March, 2022, hundreds of Ethiopians arrived back in Addis Ababa day by day, the first contingent of some 100,000 nationals to be repatriated from Saudi Arabia over the coming months.

Around 900 returnees, including many mothers with their little children, landed at Addis Ababa Bole International Airport throughout the day, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) said.

"As mentioned earlier, it is estimated that about 750,000 Ethiopians currently reside in the Kingdom (of Saudi Arabia) with about 450,000 likely to have travelled to the country through irregular means and will need help to return home," the IOM said in a statement.

A tangible issue to be considered here is these citizens need special help earlier to their move to these gulf countries. One is, they should gain adequate training that helps them be competent in the country they are intending to work. The other, which is very important, is using legal way of entering to any country in order to minimize the hardships they encounter in the country of arrival.

Human rights organizations have for several years denounced the detention conditions of Ethiopian migrants in Saudi Arabia.

The Ethiopian Ministry of Foreign Affairs said it will repatriate about 100,000 of its citizens from Saudi Arabia over the next seven to 11 months, under an agreement recently signed between the two countries.

Ethiopia is a country with long historical, religious, and economic ties with the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) member

countries and peoples. The GCC is a regional organization, which consists of six oil-producing Gulf countries, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

Ethiopia's relationship with the Gulf starts before the seventh century A.D. from long-distance trade relations, but primarily the rise of Islam laid the foundation for the relationship. Ethiopia established formal diplomatic relations with all the GCC member states. However, this long-standing bond has not developed as much as it should have into strong economic and political ties and mutual benefits.

Scholars argue that although the economic and political relations between the two sides have shown improvements during the previous regime (1991-2018), it was not free from mutual suspicion and mistrust.

Neither Ethiopia nor the Arab world has benefited from this long-standing mutual mistrust and suspicion. They couldn't utilize the massive potentials for strong economic and political ties. However, following the political transition in Ethiopia in 2018, the situation has begun to change significantly and Ethiopia's relations with the GCC have further improved.

The study of Ethio-GCC relations and the revision of Ethiopia's foreign policy and finding ways for lasting solution is important for many reasons. From the Ethiopian perspective, relations with the GCC countries are very significant because the GCC countries are the reliable suppliers of fuel to Ethiopia.

Besides, they employ significant number of Ethiopian nationals and alleviate the teaming unemployment rate.

GCC countries, especially Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and the UAE are strengthening their economic, political, and military influences in the Horn of Africa.

Some of them are investing in the development of ports in the region. Politically, they are also playing their role in Somalia's and Sudan's political conditions. Since Ethiopia is a landlocked country located in the Horn of Africa, these GCC countries' influences in the region have direct implications in its domestic political and economic conditions and regional security.

Documents further unveiled that the GCC countries, their relations with Ethiopia are also important because: First, Ethiopia is one of the fastest growing economies and the second most populous countries in Africa, which makes the country a potential consumer market for the GCC countries' oil and other export commodities.

Furthermore, Ethiopia is an influential country in the Horn of Africa. It is the seat of the African Union and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA).

The GGC countries' strong relations with Ethiopia would help them to achieve their interests in the sub-region and the broader Africa.

Moreover, the GCC countries are entirely dependent on imported food. To ensure their food security, they want to expand investment in Agriculture abroad. As Ethiopia is conducive to agricultural investment, they want to establish close relations with Addis Ababa. Moreover, both the Gulf and the Horn of Africa (where Ethiopia is located) have a common regional security threat, which makes their strong relationship important.

Although the relationship between Ethiopia and the GCC countries has a long history and multifaceted nature, it has not been adequately studied. Therefore, conducting further studies and identification of potential hazards is essential for both sides. Scientific study is significant to understand the nature, extent, challenges, and opportunities of the relations between the two sides.

The study should also go to the extent why Ethiopians are deported in mass from the region, especially from Saudi Arabia. Is the same trend happening to migrants of other countries? If it is exceptional to Ethiopians, what is the reason behind? The study should answer all these questions even more.

Furthermore, Ethiopia and the Gulf have to raise some sorts of WH questions: what is the existing level of cooperation? What are the mutually beneficial opportunities? And what are the challenges they are facing in their relations? Based on these questions, it would be paramount importance to examine Ethiopia's historical relationship with the GCC countries.

There is a need to explore the potential opportunities for further enhancement of economic and political ties and mutual trust as well as the challenges hindering their relationships.

A number of important factors and determinants explain the comprehensive relations that have existed between Ethiopia and the Arab countries which predominantly comprise the Middle East Arab countries, the Magreb Arab countries of Africa and the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC).

History has that the age old relations between Ethiopia and the Arab countries which kicked off at the First Hegira may be explained from the perspectives of common historical intersection points, geographical proximity, geopolitical and geostrategic relations, trade and economic relations, cultural and people to people relations, religious interactions and exchange of cultural assets that have developed through the prisms of the multi-faceted relations.

This long lasting relation, thus, ought to contribute for tolerance of some countries where many Ethiopians prefer to work in and act positively on making the migrants legal instead of putting them in jail and deporting.

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

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Editorial

Multinational unity for lasting peace

Ethiopia marked the 17th Nations, Nationalities, Peoples' Day (Ethiopianism Day) nationally in the newly reorganized Sidama state yesterday under the theme: 'Our united National Unity for lasting peace.' The day which cherishes diversity and unity in the country came as the country ended the two-year war following a successful AU-brokered peace deal.

This year's Ethiopianism Day also came amidst the country's mammoth plan to hold inclusive national dialogue, a tall order yet must do the task to strengthen the Ethiopian state.

For Ethiopians, creating a true multinational federal system is about striking a balance between diversity and unity. When the country embarked on the 2018 reform, the question of genuine multinational federalism was at the top of the public's demand list. Here we are now with two new states added to the federation after democratic and popular referendums. The people's quests for statehood had been crushed forcefully with narratives that sow discord and division among Ethiopians.

Over the course of the years, there have been headways in terms of correcting the incorrect narratives, paving the way for true federalism that ensures freedom and equality for all. It must be clear that Ethiopia is home to diverse cultures, languages, and religions making it a melting pot of Africa. And, it needs a federal system that helps diversity to flourish and unity to thrive.

The path towards a genuine multinational federal system, however, has not been without oddities. The rise in extremism, ultranationalist thoughts, and secessionist movements have been testing the system over the years, spewing hatred towards certain ethnic groups resulting in the death of civilians and destruction of properties. Moderation of polarized political views and respecting the rule of law will in fact be the antidotes to violent extremism in the country.

With the country set to hold an inclusive national dialogue, Ethiopians are optimistic that most of the contentious and disputed issues will be

redressed afterward.

In his message in connection with the day, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed said that the festival of nationalities is the celebration of Ethiopianism. Ethiopianism is a manifestation of the common and unity of the nationalities [in the country]. Ethiopianism is a common identity where the values, cultures, histories, heritages, languages, and arts of the nationalities are manifested together. If we want Ethiopia and Ethiopianism to emerge victorious on the world stage, we must create a way for all of us to be victorious.

"We can all be winners when we can build an Ethiopia that belongs to all of us. We can do things that we say we did not do in the past in Ethiopia we are building tomorrow. We will be able to correct the flaws that we say should not have been done in the past in Ethiopia that will be built tomorrow," the premier added.

The time of light and glory has come. Let the time of forgetting that we are a people with a strong foundation end, Abiy said adding that if the country embraces its differences, unity will be built beautifully. Unity and diversity do not conflict.

Yes, Ethiopia's diverse cultures and strong values will serve as glue to the people's unity. And, Ethiopians can build a nation for all by all. Accommodating diversity and committing oneself to keep the country's national sovereignty will pave a way for lasting peace and stability. The country has already started the path to genuine multinational federalism and the notions of extremisms in all ends have become obsolete. Diversity, after all, is an opportunity, not a blank cheque to hate and kill others.

Building multinational federalism is the best prescription to cultivate harmony and put the nation on a strong foundation. In this regard, adding on previous works and redressing the pitfalls facing the implementations should receive due attention in order for lasting peace to prevail in the country.

Opinion

Building unwavering bedrock for peace in the Horn of Africa

BY GIRMACHEW GASHAW

By the end of last November, the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) and All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC), in partnership with other organizations, launched the Salama Hub, an Africa-led independent peace building research and advocacy center in a meeting held here in Addis Ababa.

The event also offered a platform to present some of the work that the center is already conducting. A policy brief on the extent and impact of hate speech in the Horn of Africa was presented on the meeting. The policy brief was developed based on a case study survey conducted in Kenya, South Sudan and Sudan.

The survey was an attempt to answer policy questions related to hate speech and was conducted with the support from multilateral institutions, academia, faith-based organizations, women and youth-led civil society actors, members of parliament, and AACC member churches mainly from the Horn of Africa region.

Key recommendations from a study, "The Horn of Africa: How Civil Society Can Help Build a More Stable, Peaceful Future" was also shared with participants. Kennedy Akolo, AFSC Regional Director for Africa while briefing participants on the study, emphasized "The need for

Africa-led solutions to African problems".

He narrated that "The research provided some insights into how African civil society organizations, policymakers, and others can improve conditions and support peace in the region"

The Salama Hub is an initial three-year project that aims on Transforming Lives in the East and Horn of Africa Region through Evidence-based Advocacy and Campaigning for Peaceful Change, in partnership with Brot für die Welt (Bread for the World). The project is being implemented in all the IGAD member states in the Horn of Africa.

It provides a platform for African civil societies to interact efficiently with institutional stakeholders in Africa, Europe and America in protection of human right, peace and stability in the Horn of Africa region.

In her speech, the AFSC General Secretary, Joyce Ajlouny, stated that "The launch of the Salama Hub could not have come at a better time. The recently signed peace deal between the Ethiopian Government and the Tigray People's Liberation Front is a testament to what Ethiopia and its people can achieve with sheer conviction that peace is possible."

"I am also aware," she added, "that peace deals are fragile and can break down if not built on strong foundations. We believe

that the Salama Hub will help strengthen civil society resiliency and insist on building unwavering bedrock for peace that lasts."

Kerri Kennedy, Associate Secretary General for International Programs at AFSC addressed the gathering and said "Through the Hub, AFSC and our partners will encourage, and support research conducted by African scholars to amplify their voice and counter a history of colonization in academia that marginalizes the voices of non-Western researchers. The idea is based on the Ubuntu concept of shared peace. We can only have enduring peace in the Horn of Africa if we come together to nurture solutions."

On behalf of the All-Africa Conference of Churches, consortium partner of the Salama Hub, Dr. Fidon Mwombeki, General Secretary, AACC, explained that "I want to express our gratitude to be able to launch the Salama Hub. It is a great venture to which both AACC and AFSC are fully committed to ensure its success. We seek to create a space, that will connect peace advocates and peace building organizations in various forms, in order to influence decision-making bodies, institutions, and individuals based in Addis Ababa and in the whole Horn of Africa."

Speaking as a representative of the African Union, Ernest Nya Dolo, the Regional Desk Officer for the Horn of Africa, expanded

on the various types of support provided by the organization to civil society entities on conflict prevention, resolution, peace building data collection, and analysis tools.

The launch event brought together prominent guests from Bread for the World, Mount Kenya University, Tegla Loroupe Peace Foundation, United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and African Union representatives, faith-based organizations and civil society organizations' leaders from the Horn of Africa.

The Salama Hub is a consortium between the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) and All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC). The hub was established in 2021 and aims to ensure that African civil societies interact efficiently with institutional stakeholders in Africa, Europe, and the United States for peace and stability in the Horn of Africa region.

The hub intends to make a significant contribution by equipping civil society organizations and faith-based organizations in the Horn of Africa region with evidence-based research and skills to positively influence conflict situations.

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

Business & Economy

Research based steps essential to ensure sustainable development

BY DANIEL ALEMAYEHU

Ensuring the ongoing prosperity via achieving the set objectives makes mandatory for every concerned entity of the nation to craft possible and feasible strategies and act accordingly. Doing so, continuous progress and development will be attained. To this end, viable opportunities should be opened for stakeholders so that they play their role in building the nation's economy. The government and the private sectors indeed contribute their respective better parts as the goal is common for both parties.

The process of making the nation productive and putting it in a pipeline of prosperity should be led on the right track before anything else. In this regard, every sector that is found in the country should play its part. Particularly, the agriculture sector should play a vital role along with responsible stakeholders to give due attention to support the development of the nation. It is an easy logic that when a nation answers the queries of food security, changes in other sectors become inevitable.

Ethiopia has been working on promoting its agricultural systems and strategies to achieve its major economic objectives. The nation has been practicing Agriculture led Industrialization policy in order to meet its goals. On this particular point, the nation's agriculture sector has been going in line with the policy and doing great in achieving its goals.

In his interview with The Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) recently, Melaku Alebel Minister of Industry, noted that in relation to the nation's 10-year development plan, the government is working on promoting and building the capacity of every sector without giving special attention to a particular sector. All the sectors should work together and play their part in the process of making the country prosperous.

Lately, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) has given a response to the queries raised by members of House of People's Representatives. On the occasion, the Premier pinpointed three major sectors namely industry, agriculture, and service sectors have contributed the highest percentage to the nation's growth. From the total registered figure, agriculture has taken a 6.9 percent share.

Likewise, in an interview with The Ethiopian Press Agency, Minister of Agriculture, Umer Hussien also mentioned the progress and achievements concerning the agriculture sector. The Minister stressed that in the past production year, the nation achieved 90 percent of its goals. The sector has implemented various strategies and plans to hit its target.

"Our irrigation based wheat production paid its price. At this moment, we substitute the imported wheat worth one billion USD with our own products. This year, we plan to maximize our production by cultivating one million hectares of land to produce 25 million quintals. As per our plan, we need around 75



Wheat production Ethiopia's pathway to prosperity – Legatum Institute

thousand water pumps, and we have secured more than 62 thousand. However, fertilizer demand is still a major challenge," he said.

The Minister further said that the ministry has been facilitating the action taken by investors and promoting its best experiences to the rest of the regions including the initiative 'Yelemat Terufat'. Moreover, he said the ministry facilitates contract farming where investors agree with farmers to get a product they need.

Umer mentioned that the government's committed leadership and the community's readiness should be considered when it comes to agriculture. Accordingly, the incumbent supports the sector to get a tax-free import of agricultural equipment, a 15 billion Birr subsidiary, irrigation, and the green legacy. This made it possible to achieve progress. It was also reported that the agriculture sector encountered major challenges though it has scored better achievement.

With all the issues raised above, the agriculture sector should be supported and incentivized with multiple means. In order to promote the sustainable development of the country, stakeholders should work on financing the agriculture sector coupled with creating awareness of insurance.

Days ago, there was an event that was organized under the theme: 'Policy Forum on Green Legacy Initiative and, Agricultural Finance and Insurance in Ethiopia' by The Ethiopian Economics Association (EEA). Speaking at the event, the Association's CEO, Prof. Mengistu Ketema said the association has been working to be part of the solution to the major agriculture and micro-finance constraints of the nation. So as to give response to those challenges, the association is focusing on conducting research in order to help the nation to ensure the projected sustainable development.

Similarly, the CEO noted that organizing such a forum has vital importance regarding singling out the constraints observed in the sector. There is a potential to curb those constraints by conducting practical research and organizing discussion sessions on various issues to add extra value to the nation's economic development.

Mengistu also disclosed that the finance and insurance sectors have not been adequately supporting the agriculture sector. Even though it is currently providing microfinance and insurance, a lot of things remain to be done in the future. To increase the agriculture finance and insurance service, Mengistu stated that serious measures have to be taken to raise societal awareness, financial sector linkage, improve policy, maintain ease of doing business, encourage the private sector, and construct infrastructure.

On the occasion, Assistance Prof. Hailu Elias from Addis Ababa University also presented a paper entitled: "Agricultural Finance and Insurance in Ethiopia Challenges and Policy Option." In his presentation, Hailu underscored that the financial sector has been playing a significant role in creating jobs for rural and urban citizens, fostering business activities, and increasing saving thereby improving the livelihoods of the society and the like.

He added that though the finance and private sectors have been playing an indispensable role in reinvigorating the development of the country, a long journey is left ahead to be marched for various reasons.

Among others; inadequate physical infrastructure, lack of inputs, market linkage and land provision, sub standard of financial service, lack of skilled human power, shortage of foreign exchange, and the like are the main serious factors hindering the active participation of the private sector in the journey to prosperity. Finance accessibility in Ethiopian economic development over the past many years remained being serious bottleneck, Hailu added.

The Minister of Agriculture previously mentioned the above ideas that the government has been working tirelessly to overcome those hurdles.

Abebe Dantie (PhD), a Researcher also presented his research paper titled: "Green Legacy Initiative for Sustainable Economic Development in Ethiopia." In his presentation, the researcher highlighted that forests have been contributing a lot to the progress of the Ethiopian economy.

As to him, forests have contributed 2.3 to the Ethiopian GDP in 2015 which increased to 8.3 percent in 2020. According to The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) 2016 report, the forest has contributed 13 percent to the Ethiopian economy. On the contrary, researches show that Ethiopia has lost an average of 92,000 hectares of forest per year over the past two decades that necessitates intensification of the green legacy.

To conclude the ideas mentioned above, every step that the nation takes must be supported by pragmatic research outcomes. The agriculture sector has the potential to prosper even better than the previous times if the right stakeholders take their part to play. The country still has untapped resources that both the government and private sectors can act upon.

Every step that the nation takes must be supported by pragmatic research outcomes. The agriculture sector has the potential to prosper even better than the previous times if the right stakeholders take their part to play

Art & Culture

Now that the prospects for peace are real, time to promote domestic tourism

BY MULUGETA GUDETA

Tourism development in Ethiopia has passed through many ups and downs before it assumed a modern feature and became one of the most important economic sectors worth promoting and taking care of at this particular time when other sectors are negatively affected by adverse domestic and international factors. The contribution of tourism to the national economy can perhaps be summed up by the following information. "Travel and tourism in Ethiopia contributes much to the country's GDP, employment and investment, etc. Tourism is also part and parcel of the country's poverty reduction strategy with a policy objective of combating poverty and encouraging economic development in the country."

According to a study by the Department of Agriculture, University of Gondar, the tourism sector in Ethiopia in general and in Gondar city in particular, "is a crucial armed force in fighting and reducing the extent and intensity of poverty in general in the areas of employment creation and GDP contribution", according to data available for the study area. We can extend such observation by looking at the different tourism destinations in Ethiopia prior to the onset of COVID-19 in particular that has greatly undermined the meteoric growth of the industry in previous years.

However, despite past achievements, domestic tourism in Ethiopia is a little developed activity mainly due to the low cultural awareness of the advantages or benefits from travel and tourism that can accrue to the local population and also due to the little attention given by the authorities to developing it given the low incomes of most of the people who cannot afford to travel within the country. The grinding poverty and the costs of sheer survival are too high to permit most people to indulge in activities such as visiting domestic sites, an activity that may be taken as "luxury consumption".

There is currently a promotional video sponsored by the Ministry of Culture on displayed on ETV in the context of the ongoing soccer World Cup which is not only revealing but also inspiring to say the least. Without going into the technicalities of the promotion and the sponsorship, we can even say that the theme of the message is nothing but timely and more powerful than the computer generated pictures that accompany the advertisement. It is a call for citizens to take part in domestic tourism as participants at this precise moment when the tourism sector had languished in darkness for the last two years since the onset of COVID-19 and during the two-year conflict in the north of the country.

It is a kind of timely call for the domestic

audience to turn its attention to the untapped resources of local tourism. It is also an invitation for people in other parts of Ethiopia to travel and discover for themselves a city that has survived for centuries and famed for its peace loving populations that have given the city its present shape, cultures and characteristics as the "gem of the east".

The advertisement features the historic city of Harar, famous for its ancient relics not only as the center of Islamic learning but also as a kind of melting pot ethnic groups, something like Addis Ababa embracing people of varied origins who chose to live there in peace and brotherhood giving the nickname of "City of Love" to the charming small eastern town where the sun seems never to set and smiles continue to flicker on the faces of its inhabitants famous for their easy going manners that reflect the simplicity and enthusiasm with which they welcome daily life.

By the way, a short historical introduction or background would be in order here. According to information by Google, "Harar is a city in eastern Ethiopia. It is surrounded by a centuries-old defensive wall that has several large gates, including Duke's Gate. The city is also known for its mazelike alleys and traditional houses decorated inside, with flat hanging baskets. A holy Islamic city, Harar has many mosques, including the Grand Jami Mosque with its tall white minarets...During the Middle Ages, Harar was part of the Adal Sultanate becoming its capital in 1520 under Sulatan Abu Bakr ibn Muhammed. The sixteen century was the city's Golden Age. The local culture flourished and many poets lived and wrote there.

Despite the plurality of the city in terms of religious and ethnic composition, Harar has always escaped the conflicts that had been tormenting some parts of the nation for the last three or four years. Thus it stands as a beacon of peace, mutual understanding and a sense of commonness and common purpose. For this and other reasons, the town should serve as an emblem of peace to the rest of the country. The promotional display sponsored by the Ministry of Tourism is not only timely but also a timely initiative that serves as a catalyst to the sector that remained dormant for many reasons.

The last three or four years were not opportune moments for the development of the tourism sector that was disturbed by domestic and foreign conflicts and economic crises in addition to the COVID-19 that wreaked havoc on the sector at least for the last two years in particular. This is therefore a bold move by the Ministry at this time of global recession when tourism does not enjoy the front seat in international priorities as the world is being moved and shaken by a war-generated global inflation and political insecurity.

It is therefore important to plan and implement a realistic course of action to take tourism general and domestic tourism in particular out of its doldrums and set it on a more dynamic course of development. Maximum efforts need to be made in order to get maximum benefits from the sector. The promotion work can for instance involve youngsters in schools where they may be encouraged to set up students' tourism clubs organize visits starting from the nearest tourism sites to the farthest ones.

Such trips can be organized in voluntary groups and contribute money for organizing student travels and visits to many parts of the country. Such a movement would not only broaden their views and knowledge of their country but also give them opportunities for knowing places and peoples they had never met. Youth tourism can be financially supported by the government and backed by volunteers who can support the initiatives in many ways possible.

Tourism groups can also be organized at work places on a voluntary basis with similar initiatives and can be encouraged by the tourism establishment as well other stakeholders including the respective work places that sponsor such initiatives. Money may be a problem but we can assume that if there is the will there will be the way.

This kind of tourism expansion initiative can start at few workplaces and expand later on as the benefits would attract others in other places to join in. The Ministry of Tourism may also have a positive role to play in expanding such a proposal until the passion for travel and tourism takes hold and things start to roll on.

Most of all, tourism promotion is something that requires sustained efforts, clear objectives and policy flexibility and adaptation. You may not develop tourism by sending once in a while messages to the public on special occasions. You may need to mobilize available resources on a daily basis and oversee their management closely so that the growth of the sector can be tangible and measurable. Young and educated Ethiopian need to be attracted to the sector both as government employees, and for those who can afford, as private sector operators who can be engaged in tourism-related sub-sectors such as providing amenities, developing tourism

Tourism promotion is something that requires sustained efforts, clear objectives and policy flexibility and adaptation. You may not develop tourism by sending once in a while messages to the public on special occasions. You may need to mobilize available resources on a daily basis and oversee their management closely so that the growth of the sector can be tangible and measurable

infrastructures and providing digital services in processing travel requirements and so on.

As wars do not start overnight, so peace is not realized overnight. There is always a transition between the signing of agreements and their implementation on the ground. The transition may be short or long. While working harder to make the peace process irreversible it is also important to plan the post-conflict scenario so that things would return to normal and it will be business as usual. While commending the efforts or the initiatives the Ministry of Culture is taking to promote domestic tourism in particular, it should also be evident that tourism may not be promoted by flashy advertisements alone.

Science & Technology

Russia stepping up support to Ethiopia in the field of technology

BY KFLEEYESUS ABEBE

Ethiopia and Russia have age-long diplomatic cooperation. The cooperation first began seeing similarities in culture and history but then they shared common ideology and world view. The two countries' relation evolved overtime and reached this momentum as they are cooperating in range of fields like international diplomacy, military, cultural exchange, education, trade, investment and technology.

Lately, the cooperation and exchange of visits between the two countries is increasing. On February, Russian Navy delegation led by Major General Alexander Ostrikov arrived in Ethiopia to visit Ethiopia's attempt to rebuild a modern navy, according to a report from Ethiopian National Defense Forces (ENDF). An agreement was also reached with the Russian Navy to collaborate in various fields of training so that Ethiopia can unlock its potential in becoming a competing naval force in the Red Sea.

Russia's support to Ethiopia in the fields of technology was the newest addition but anchored as major area of cooperation. Four years ago, Russia's Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov indicated Russia's interest to expand areas of cooperation to technology and education. "We have agreed to give an additional boost to the work of the Intergovernmental Commission for the sake of implementing joint projects in a number of domains such as energy including nuclear energy, hydropower, biological research connections and many others." Then, Ethiopia and Russia signed an agreement to develop a nuclear facility for civilian purposes in March 2022. They again struck a deal in April 2019 for Russia to construct a nuclear power plant in Ethiopia within ten years. It is also approved by The Ethiopian House of Peoples' Representatives (HPR) in December 2020. As the two sustained supporting each other in the international stage, cooperation in technology has caught the interest of Ethiopian officials. Ethiopia has mainstreamed technology and see it as a way to hasten its development ambition. Any help in this area therefore gets special attention.

On the round of visits and discussions to materialize the agreements, they have held the 8th Ethio-Russia Intergovernmental Commission meeting here in Addis Ababa this week. The aim of the forum is to enhance and advance relation in trade, investment, scientific and technical cooperation. In an opening remark, Ethiopia's Technology and Innovation Minister Belete Molla (PhD) acknowledged Russia's unwavering solidarity and the support the latter showed when Ethiopia was invaded by foreign aggressors and its territorial integrity and sovereignty has been challenged. Straight to the point, Belete requested Russia to strengthen support for the digital transformation aspirations of the Ethiopian Government and people.

Maxim Parshin who is a leader of Russian



delegation and deputy minister of digital development, communications and mass media of the Russian federation "confirmed that "Russia will work to increase its cooperation with Ethiopia in the field of digital technology," according to the Ethiopian Ministry. He further pledged that the Russian Federation will cooperate with the Ethiopian government in improving electronic government services, digital skills, information network security and similar other areas.

Russia has also been supporting Ethiopia in economic and education fields, Belete recalls. "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."

Belete said that 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 deliberation would advance and transform people- to- people relations and the strategic partnership between them.



ICANN to Advance Africa's Digital Transformation

The Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) launched the Coalition for Digital Africa this week. The coalition is an initiative aimed at expanding the Internet in the continent.

The Coalition which is conceived by ICANN is an alliance of like-minded organizations committed to building a robust and secure Internet infrastructure to bring more Africans online. Africa has one of the fastest-growing Internet penetration rates in the world as it is home to the the youngest population on the planet.

According to Cision PR NewsWire, internet connectivity is growing by leaps and bounds – from 1.2 percent in 2000 to 43 percent in 2021 – driven by a digitally savvy, young, and educated urban workforce for whom adopting and using online services is second nature.

ICANN President and CEO Göran Marby said: "The Coalition for Digital Africa provides an opportunity for new ways of cooperating and collaborating among diverse stakeholders."

The Coalition will further promote innovation aimed at building technical capacity and encourage entrepreneurialism by enabling people to access the Internet using their own

languages and scripts.

While its official launch took place during a press conference at the 17th annual Internet Governance Forum, being held in Addis Ababa, the Coalition already has rolled out activities in pursuit of its goals.

John Omo, Secretary General, African Telecommunications Union, noted that the establishment of the Coalition will play the important role of enhancing confidence in many online systems that are now being mainstreamed, even as the continent looks forward to growing Internet penetration in Africa from the current 43% to globally competitive levels. One way the Coalition will tackle this is through a project led by the Association of African Universities aimed at making email and other systems within higher education UA-ready.

"This is an important and welcome initiative for Africa. Improving the technical capacity of higher education institutions across the continent is imperative for a digital Africa," said Olusola Bandele Oyewole, Secretary General of the Association of African Universities.

The Coalition for Digital Africa comprises governments, regional and international organizations, and the local Internet community.

Society

Photo- Hawassa City Administration Public Relations Office



“In reality, we live in everyone.”

BY LEULSEGED WORKU

The Nations Nationalities and Peoples' of Ethiopia are the foundations of the great land-Ethiopia. It is impossible to think about Ethiopia without the harmonious relationships of these nations, nationalities and peoples. The culture of one ethnic group is the culture of the other. The historical identity of one group is the wealth of the other.

There were times when Ethiopian Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' were deprived of their basic human and democratic rights. There were also times when some ethnic groups were used as a “Trojan horse” to quench the political interest of some groups. However, through time this trend has changed, though it is not at the desired level, and Ethiopians are benefitting from their constitutional rights irrespective of their identities.

Marking the Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Day (NNPD) and the right to self-determination is one of the constitutional rights Ethiopian people are enjoying. Using this as a ground, *The Ethiopian Herald* had moments of togetherness with scholars to hear their reflection with regard to the importance of the NNPD.

Dr. Tadesse Fikere, is a lecturer at Hawassa University. For him, Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Day has a special meaning to Ethiopians in general and the people of Sidama in particular. “This year's NNPD is a day when we, Ethiopians, demonstrate our unity in diversity to the world. As the

day signifies Ethiopia's unity in diversity, it has a great meaning to all people who value equality. Besides its political importance, the Day has key role for tourism and promoting the culture of different Nations, Nationalities and Peoples of Ethiopia.”

Before the reformation, NNPD had been marked in Ethiopia for the sake of agenda conversion and media consumption. It was a political propaganda. Without respecting Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' rights, marking the day just simply to observe it is hypocrisy and a superficial practice. For instance, the question of Sidama people for self-determination had been ignored for several years. “However, after the reform, we have witnessed what constitutional right means. This truly shows how far the reform has gone to prove conditional rights of NNPs. In this regard, while marking the Day, we are also testifying what it means the right of Nations, Nationalities and Peoples. The reform has positively responded to questions related to Statehood, and the social and economic quest of the people. In this regard, I can say that this year's NNPD goes beyond a mere dancing and singing. This is a time when the basic quest of Nations, Nationalities and Peoples got a response.”

When asked how he explains Hawassa in relation to being the town of love and tolerance- , Tadesse said, “Hawassa is the little Ethiopia where people with different cultures exist in tolerance. Hawassa Town is commonly called a town of love. Indeed, it is a town where people from different walks of life live in harmony and in love. It is also a little Ethiopia where different religions and cultures are exercised freely,

and various languages are spoken.”

Regarding the issue of unity in diversity, Dr. Tadesse said, unity is not about uniformity. Unity is all about accepting and respecting differences and working together for common goals and visions. “It does not mean that we need to have uniform lifestyle. This is what makes Ethiopia special. Our age-old culture of living in tolerance and love emanates from this principle. As a land of multitudes with diverse social, religious and cultural identities, we, Ethiopians, have an age-old culture of living harmoniously by respecting the culture and identity of others. Unity in diversity has a great value to build a strong nation and a stable society,” he opined.

On his part, Sisay Demeku (PhD, PE) Asst. Prof. of Water Resources Engineering Dean, College of Architecture and Civil Engineering at Addis Ababa Science and Technology University (AASTU), said that after the reforms, we have witnessed some kind of positive changes. However, in other times, we are also hearing sad news. Having respect to one another and creating a positive vibe among Ethiopians is a foundation for sustainable peace. In this regard, the role of every individual and those at leadership circle is vital for stable Ethiopia. He said that marking NNPD needs a practical experience that goes beyond yearly motto. Cultivating a culture of tolerance among all Ethiopians should be the assignment fulfilled by the people in power and the whole society.

Seconding the view of Dr. Tadesse, Sisay also said that, unity is not all about having uniform social political structure;

instead, it is all about valuing the culture and identity of others. This should be the true identity of Ethiopia. “For instance, I was born in a multicultural society where the people speak more than six languages, and exercise different cultural practices. But that did not prevent me or my families from internalizing and appreciating others' value system. Whenever there is a wedding ceremony or other social events, the whole villagers (irrespective of language or cultural differences) will be part of that special event keeping their distinct identity. I was raised in this kind of society. However, this kind of cultural tolerance is deteriorating over time. For this reason, while celebrating days like NNPD, we also need to work hard to narrow issues that cause differences among us.”

Sustainable peace, unity and harmonious co-existence among people are inseparable matters. Ethiopia as a home for several nations, nationalities and peoples is sustained for centuries because of this secret.

The harmonious relationship among its children and their willingness to pay all the sacrifice and their selflessness for the sake of tolerance has preserved the nation.

As it was pointed out by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, Ethiopia can be considered as a whole body, while its children are the parts that made the perfect Ethiopia. Every Ethiopian nations, nationalities and peoples are the parts that made the whole Ethiopia. For this reason, the success of one group is the achievement of the other. The pain of one group is the suffering of the other. The whole body-Ethiopia- is nothing if one of its parts is missing.



Request for Expression of Interest (REoI) to Recruit DEPUTY PROJECT COORDINATOR For Ministry of Transport and Logistics Of Expressway Development Support Project Component 3: Road Safety and Institutional Development Support to the Transport Sector

1. Background

Transport sector policy definition and oversight in Ethiopia is the responsibility of the Ministry of Transport and Logistics (MoTL). The Government of Ethiopia (GoE), recognizing that the size and quality of the road network is a major constraint to economic growth and poverty reduction, has formulated a rolling Road Sector Development program (RSDP) in partnership with development partners including the World Bank (WB), African Development Bank (AFDB), the European Union (EU), etc.

In addition to the rapid expansion and improvement of the road network, the sector has to overcome major challenges, including enhancing the GoE's Road Safety strategy, constructing high capacity roads to improve safety and reduce congestion; and improving institutional efficiency to ensure the delivery of projects within planned cost and time, and with acceptable levels of site safety.

The Expressway Development Support Project will support the Government's Road Sector Development Program by introducing effective strategies for managing high capacity road, and builds on the successes of the Bank's support over many years to the road sector in Ethiopia. As part of the Project, Component 3 focuses on supporting the implementation of the Road Safety and strengthening the Policy-making, Planning and monitoring functions of MoTL. Under MoTL, a project implementation unit (PIU) will be established to carry out the procurement and financial management activities of Component 3 of the Project.

The Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia has applied for a credit from the International Development Association (IDA) towards the cost of execution of the Expressway Development Support Project and intends to apply part of the proceeds of the credit to the Ministry of Transport to eligible payments for Component 3 of the Project, and for the successful implementation of the Component 3 of the Project, the PIU will recruit a Deputy Project Coordinator.

2. Objective of the Assignment

The objective of this assignment is to provide support and assist the Ministry of Transport and Logistics (MoTL's) and RSIFS (Road Safety and Insurance Fund Service) Project Implementation Unit (PIU) Coordinator in coordination of the implementation and day-to-day management of the Expressway Development Support Project, Component 3: Road Safety and institutional Development Support to the Transport Sector in compliance with the Project Implementation Manual.

3. Scope of the work/assignment

The Scope of the services shall include all the activities necessary to achieve the objectives described in Section 2 above and, in so doing, the Deputy Coordinator will be expected not less than the following tasks. The Deputy Coordinator will be expected to keep in regular contact and maintain a close working relationship with the PIU Coordinator, all PIU staffs, officials and organizations with responsibilities for road safety and the World Bank Project team; and also shall act on behalf of the PIU Coordinator upon her/ his absence.

Specific and key duties and responsibilities include, but not limited to:

- 1) Assist the PIU Coordinator in Management, Coordination and monitoring of the component;
- 2) Ensuring timely implementation of the component activities in accordance with the Financing Agreement, the Project Implementation Manual and the current version of the Procurement Plan;
- 3) Supporting and coordinating a smooth interaction between the implementing partners involved in Component 3 of the project, facilitating regular communication between the parties;
- 4) Preparing the annual work plan, budget, cash flow estimate, procurement plan,
- 5) Provide technical support on road safety and institutional strengthening to RSIFS and the other parties involved in implementation;
- 6) Assist the PIU Coordinator for initiation of procurement process;
- 7) Assist in preparation of ToR and RFPs hiding documents, specifications and Facilitate Receiving Tenders;
- 8) Assist the Coordinator in Sending requests to the Bank to obtain No objections;
- 9) Facilitating Signing of Contract Agreements for Goods and Services to be procured under the Component;
- 10) Assisting RSIFS in the proactive management of the consultancy services and goods contracts financed under the Component, ensuring implementation of the Contracts in line with the respective Contract Agreements and the Bank Guidelines;
- 11) Ensure that the consultants contracted under this Component are provided with the support, information and contacts necessary to perform their services, and that they meet regularly with relevant stakeholders;
- 12) Assist the RSIFS in reviewing the interim and final outputs of the contracted consultants, ensuring the full participation of RSIFS and stakeholders in this process;
- 13) In consultation with RSIFS, develop capacity building plans to allow RSIFS staff to work closely with and be mentored by the consultants' staff;
- 14) Identify the constraints that are causing delays or reducing the effectiveness of the achievement of the project results, and work with parties involved to overcome these constraints;
- 15) Support the PIU Coordinator in preparing for and meeting with the WB's interim Support Missions:
- 16) Drafting any letters concerning the Component to be signed by the PIU Coordinator:
- 17) Checking payment invoices before Certification:
- 18) Liaising with different Directorates within MOT to facilitate project related activities.
- 19) Promote teamwork and create an efficient and conducive working environment;
- 20) Support the PIU Coordinator in preparing for and meeting with the WB's interim Support Missions:
- 21) Assist MOT in monitoring project progress in accordance with the relevant indicators set out in the project Results Framework;
- 22) Assist the coordinator regarding to ensuring implementation of the Contracts in line with the respective Contract Agreements and the Bank Guidelines, Review and provide comments on consulting firms performance reports approval,

Continued to page 11



This is Ethiopia

Dishta-Gina: Ari community's New Year festival

BY TEWODROS KASSA

Ethiopia is a country with diversified cultural assets and a home for more than 80 nations, nationalities and peoples who have their own colourful cultural festivals.

Recently, the *Dishta Gina* festival, the New Year celebration of the Ari community, was celebrated in Jinka Town, South Omo Zone of the Southern Ethiopia.

The *Dishta Gina* festival of Ari People's New Year is a traditional ceremony celebrated annually from the middle of November to the beginning of December. The festival preaches peace, love, unity, solidarity among human beings and promotes togetherness and development. It marks a bright transition from the old year and sought to bring new achievements among the Ari community.

South Omo Zone Culture and Tourism Department Culture and Heritage Research and Conservation Coordinator Dagne Gebre told local media that, the festival plays a fundamental role towards socio-economic development of the community. It has a paramount cultural value that plays a significant role in development, peace and solidarity.

"*Dishta Gina* is mainly performed by the fathers, where they give blessings for the New Year to bring peace, love and harmony. They



also said that it is the festival of change that they celebrate it warmly by bidding farewell to the old year and welcoming the New Year looking optimistically," he said.

Dishta Gina is a traditional New Year celebration that contains humanistic ideas such as empathy, mutual aid, forgiveness and reconciliation. Thus, it has great benefits for strengthening social cohesion and other cultural values of the community.

He pointed out that, utilizing various festivals' social values will help to bring peace to the country, eradicate diseases, drive out hatreds and promote reconciliation.

As to him, the social values of the festival include giving thanks, helping each other, expressing

love, bringing peace, strengthening solidarity and maintaining cleanliness and beauty among the society.

The festival is celebrated with great zeal as it is done to welcome the New Year with peace and hope by getting rid of past resentments.

Currently, various activities are being carried out as preservation of the festival is of great importance to strengthen peace and development. Wide promotion of the festival is one of the tasks being undertaken by pertinent stakeholders.

On his part, Jinka Town Mayor Kulal Kzhimak said that, this year's festival is unique where the country and the zone have faced tremendous challenges and transcended into a new hope and peaceful environment. In the future, the

Zone will take various measures to promote this wonderful cultural asset to benefit local people.

South Omo Zone Deputy Administrator and Security Office Head Tadesse Kaye said that, every stakeholder should exert efforts to promote such festivals as it nurtures togetherness and peace in the country. The community and cultural and tourism experts should also contribute their part to preserve and promote the festival.

The Cultural Policy of Ethiopia published in 2016 by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism also indicated that the cultural identity, diversity, and manifestation of a country's nations, nationalities and peoples are significant resources for their members and the foundation for their social personality. It is necessary to protect these against destruction and to develop and strengthen them for sustainable development. Just as it had created the civilization of the past, culture is expected to serve today's development efforts and shape tomorrow's generation.

Dishta Gina festival is being celebrated in various traditional ceremonies in Ari zone including Jinka Town, South Ari, North Ari, Woba Ari and Baka Dawla Ari woredas starting from the middle of November.

It has been indicated that the closing program of the festival will be held on December 10, 2022 in the presence of various invited guests.



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Ethio-Kenya electric system interconnection economic inputs

BY DIRRIBA TESHOME

Electricity is not only a tool that turns darkness into light, but it is also a tool that can knock and open the door of civilization and development. It is the essential resource behind everything from menial work done in sheds to massive machines and industries.

It is almost becoming a basic need as it is becoming more closely related to the daily activities of human beings. And it is not a hyperbole to say that electricity plays a critical role in the growth and prosperity of a nation. Consequently, in planning about growth and prosperity, increasing electricity supply is required in advance.

Ethiopia is making efforts to get rid of poverty by increasing its electricity supply from various options enjoying the grace of nature with technology. In a short period of time, producing energy from water, wind and solid waste, it has gone from being accessible to social services and industries to becoming a hope for neighboring countries.

Ethiopian Electric Power Director of Corporate Communication, Moges

Mekonen told Ethiopian Press Agency that recently it has announced that the 500KV Ethio-Kenya high power transmission lines which have the capacity to connect African countries with electricity, has become operational.

He says that Ethiopia is struggling to reach its development goals by its give and take strategy to enhance regional development through sharing what she has with the neighboring nations. "She does this by designing a policy of living in cooperation."

The director said that Ethiopia was previously earning foreign currency by providing electricity to Djibouti and Sudan. Besides, recently she started sending electricity worth of 100 million US dollars to Kenya. South Sudan, Somaliland and Tanzania are also interested in buying Ethiopia's electricity.

"Ethiopia has the potential of natural resources to generate electricity for domestic consumption to ensure growth and prosperity, besides selling it to the neighboring countries to earn foreign currency," he noted adding that such cooperation is strongly in line with the African Union's Agenda 2063 and will contribute to the economic integration of Africa as a model.

In the future, foreign exchange and cooperation will be continued and strengthened by establishing high power transmission lines with the neighboring and bordering countries in all four directions, Moges elucidated it.

The Ethio-Kenya high power transmission line that stretches from Wolaita Sodo to the Kenyan border is 440 kilometers long. As to the agreement, the electricity sent to Kenya will be reduced to 65 megawatts during off-peak hours and up to 200 megawatts during peak hours, he stated adding Ethiopia can earn up to 100 million US dollars a year.

Further export follows the fulfillment of the domestic demand. Stating that the generating capacity of the facility has reached 5200 megawatts, he said that even when there is a high load of energy during the peak hours, i.e. when there are celebrations and other situations that require the use of electricity services, the maximum power supply used for domestic consumption is not more than 2700 to 2800 megawatts.

"Though it was used to be supplied in shifts, but recently it is provided even large factories are being made to use electricity on holidays without any usage restrictions. And the electricity that is exported abroad

is only seven percent of the total energy that the country generates on average and that there is a possibility to export even more," Moges justified.

However, he mentioned that it was not possible to make electricity available to the citizens as required, not because of the lack of power, but since the electricity infrastructure that benefits the society could not be expanded to the required level. The main mission of EEP is to build power stations, carry out operations, wholesale the generated power and purchase it when necessary.

At last, beyond this, the electricity infrastructure network that has been created will strengthen business and people-to-people connections and increase mutual benefits. It is a confirmation that the rivers used for power generation are not only for one country but also for common benefit.

At last, in particular, following the request made by South Sudan, the technical committees are conducting a study. With this, Ethiopia will become not only East Africa but also the center of Africa's electricity source, he mentioned.