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## Commission expresses readiness to engage Diasporas in nat'l dialogue

BY MENGESHA AMARE

**ADDIS ABABA-** In efforts to ensure the inclusivity of the much-anticipated National Dialogue, efforts have been made to create a way for the Ethiopian Diaspora across the globe to participate in the consultation, the commission said.

Commission's Chairperson Prof. Mesfin Araya presented the performance report to members of the House of Peoples' Representatives (HoPR) yesterday at African Leadership Excellence Academy in Sululta town. In order to involve the Diaspora in the consultation, starting from the end of 2023, there will be an internet option and page-to-page communication.

The chairperson further stated that the commission has established a directorate to monitor the relations with the Diaspora and is working with the relevant institutions including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

"The national consultation forums, which were expected by many people, will start

See Commission expresses ... Page 3



Prof. Mesfin Araya

Photo: Gebabo Gebre

## Humanitarian aid deliveries to conflict-affected citizens on rise: NDRMC

• Partners deploy 1,169 heavy trucks to accelerate aid delivery

BY TSEGAYE TILAHUN

**ADDIS ABABA -** National Disaster Risk Management Commission (NDRMC) disclosed that over 45,000 metric tons of food and non-food humanitarian supplies have been transported to conflict affected areas over the last 30 days.

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

See Humanitarian ... Page 3



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## IGF panelists pin policy framework to ease internet fragmentation

BY HAILE DEMEKE

**ADDIS ABABA-** In order to ease internet fragmentation globally, cooperation among multi stakeholders and policy framework need to be put in place, according to the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) panelists.

See IGF panelist ... Page 3



Zafu Eyesuswork Zafu

## Economist foresees local banks consolidation amidst foreign firm's entry

BY TAMERU REGASA

**ADDIS ABABA-** The coming of foreign banks may benefit Ethiopia in generating foreign currency and adapting world-

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Privatization, its economic rewards

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Restoration of constitutional order in Tigray: The sacred element of Pretoria peace deal

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Media: Key to addressing, ending GBV

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## IGAD's 48<sup>th</sup> ordinary ministerial council underway in Khartoum

**ADDIS ABABA-** The 48th Ordinary Session of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) Council of Ministers convened yesterday in Khartoum.

Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Demeke Mekonnen is in Khartoum attending the 48th IGAD Council Ministers meeting.

At the opening session, IGAD Executive Secretary Workneh Gebeyehu said positive developments have been witnessed in peace making and stability in the region citing the recently concluded peace agreement in Ethiopia, where IGAD played pivotal role.

It is indeed a welcome development for the people and Government of Ethiopia, the region and the continent at large, Workneh noted.

Furthermore, he stated that IGAD is working closely with member states to respond to challenges including climate change, drought, pest invasions and seasonal flooding which are contributing to food in security.

Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign



Minister Demeke for his part underlined that peace and security situation is of a paramount importance in the region, and noted the unwavering support of member states during those difficult days is cherished by the people of Ethiopia.

The peaceful resolutions of the conflict in north Ethiopia on the basis of full respect for the unity and territorial integrity of Ethiopia underpins a lesson as an African

solution to African problems to the region and beyond.

Demeke expressed his concerns over the series impacts of climate change and drought and called for concerted efforts by Member countries and partners to avert the immediate crises.

The IGAD meeting is expected to cover topics such as the current state of peace and security in the Horn of Africa, conflicts,

natural disasters, and humanitarian aid, food security, as well as other regional and global concerns.

The IGAD Ministerial Council is expected to listen the regional peace and security, as well as humanitarian situation report.

A report on the status of IGAD's institutional reforms will also be presented and discussed, according to Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

## French Embassy, EU donate medical equipment to Dessie Hospital

BY BILAL DERSO

**ADDIS ABABA-**The French Embassy in Ethiopia, in cooperation with the European Union (EU), provided medical equipment worth more than 9.6 million Birr to the Dessie General Hospital, which is one of the war-affected health facilities in the country.

A delegation led by French Ambassador to Ethiopia Rémi Maréchaux visited the hospital, which was heavily impacted by the recent war, yesterday and provided the support to the facility's rehabilitation project.

Speaking on the occasion, Ambassador Maréchaux stated that the Embassy has been working to render medical supplies with a view to helping the hospital to enhance the service. In cooperation with the EU,

France has provided medical equipment and materials for the general hospital and a new project for the rehabilitation of the facility has also been announced.

The project includes liquid and solid waste disposal, internal road work and other constructions.

Dessie General Hospital General Manager HemanAyele (MD) said that the support will play an important role in improving the facility's servicedelivery to the local community and beyond. French Embassy has made commendable measures in donating medical supplies after witnessing the destruction that has happened in the hospital.

The EU will work to strengthen the long-term cooperation with Ethiopia, said Roland Kobia, the Union's Ambassador to Ethiopia.



“The current support helps to strengthen the relationship between the two sides.”

It is to be recalled that Health Minister Lia Tadesse(MD) said on last June that France has been a key partner in the

ministry's efforts to restore and rehabilitate health facilities damaged during the war. Accordingly, the French government has donated over 81 million birr to refurbish the Dessie General Hospital.



## DBE secures over two bln. Birr earnings in quarter

BY ESSEYE MENGISTE

**ADDIS ABABA-** Development Bank of Ethiopia (DBE) announced that it has

earned a total income of 2.03 billion Birr in the first quarter year.

During the evaluation of the first quarter

of the bank, the DBE management noted that DBE has achieved 87 percent of its plan and generated 743.1 million Birr net profit. The profit is 185 percent higher

than the same period of last year. In terms of revenue and profit the bank has achieved better performance than in the same season of last year.

In addition to, DBE has earned 54.1 million foreign currencies. According to the bank report it facilitated 3.5 billion Birr loans, which is a 218 percent increase compared to the previous fiscal year, as local media reported.

In the first quarter year the Development Bank of Ethiopia bad loans reached 19.5 billion Birr. Out of this, 10.4 billion Birr is in the Tigray state

In the last years, the increase in bad credit ratio is higher than recommended for the sector and remains a challenge for the bank.



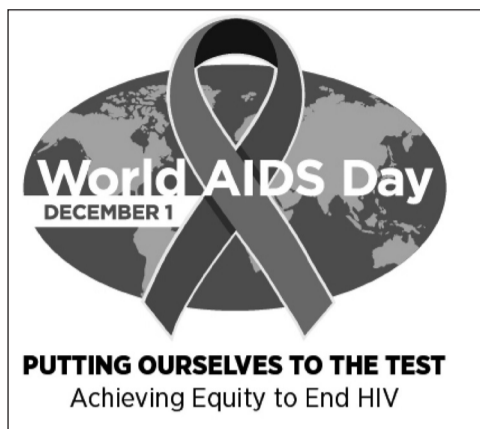
## Coordination action needs to realize goal of ending AIDS in 2030

BY MISGANAW ASNAKE

ADDIS ABABA—WHO Regional Director for Africa stated coordinated action is required to stop the epidemic since only eight years left to the 2030 goal of ending AIDS as a global health threat.

In her message in connection with World AIDS Day 2022, the WHO Regional Director for Africa Matshidiso Moeti (MD) said that : “ No other day is more appropriate for this call than today, 1 December when we yearly come together with the global community to mark World AIDS Day.”

Director urged all Member States and Ministries of Health to expand access to essential HIV prevention and treatment



services to all and build resilient adaptable health systems, avoid inequalities among the community to tackle issues respectively.

In this World AIDS Day, She said that : “I urge governments and partners to close the inequality gaps in the progress toward

ending AIDS by focusing on the populations that are being left behind. We need to put people at the center of the response by organizing services around people’s needs and promoting integrated patient-centered approaches that are strongly linked with primary health care services.”

This year’s theme is “Equalize” she added that support people living with HIV and remember those who have lost their lives to AIDS.

Yet, progress has been made over the past decade, reducing new infections by 44% and reducing AIDS-related deaths by 55%. The progress is because of WHO and partners advocated for and supported the expansion of new HIV prevention and treatment technologies, provided guidance on combination HIV prevention, testing

and treatment and supported national HIV treatment catch-up plans in west and central Africa, she said.

Even so, the progress is slow, and inequalities persist in HIV prevention, testing and treatment services. Data from WHO on the global HIV response reveals that since the start of COVID-19 and other global crises, progress against the HIV pandemic has wavered, resources have decreased, and millions of lives are at risk.

She also called on the community leaders to reach out and assist their populations with access to HIV services when needed and to combat stigma and discrimination by ensuring that everyone feels safe to access HIV services. And all to address the inequalities driving the epidemic and holding back progress in ending AIDS.

## Commission...

in March 2023 and before the consultation, agenda gathering will be done from January to February 2023. From February to March, the process of formulating an agenda will take place and then it will enter the consultation process.”

The commission is working closely with government officials at all levels and prime attention has been given to garner an agenda from the grassroots level and from the general public. The approach is instrumental to hear the heartbeat of the society thereby formulating an agenda that would have a profound importance to address contentious issues.

As to him, the door is widely open to all relevant stakeholders including rebel factions to take part in the National Dialogue. Also, necessary efforts will be made to ensure that the voices of conflict impacted and displaced citizens are heard in a way that includes the elders, religious leaders, and all bodies related to peace-making.

The HoPR Speaker Tagesse Chafo sent a message to members of the council and the society at large to support the success of the National Dialogue, which are based not only on the interests of the elite but also on the basis of the needs of the general public.

The speaker pointed out that both the government and competing political parties, as well as any one, should accept the issues that the broad public reach a consensus with wholeheartedly and work tirelessly to make the next destiny of Ethiopia beautiful.



## IGF panelists pin policy framework...

The 17<sup>th</sup> edition of IGF is underway in Ethiopia and panel discussions on different issues are being held on internet governance and to create a shared understanding on the use and administration of the internet.

Accordingly, Global Engagement and Advocacy Head Sheetal Kumar said different aspects may lead to the internet fragmentation and failure. One is control over information flows that removes the ability for a user to decide if they want, they can access it online. Question of control over information and resources is overarching.

Mentioning the user experience, she indicated that there are different human qualities in the usage of the internet, as it has a different role. The internet has to be used, not only in terms of the individual experience, but also important for all to achieve and promote collective values and solve global issues and to contribute to the promotion of the sustainable development goals.

“The notion of data fragmentation is extremely important, the need for us to move from a rather individualistic approach to one that is human centric, which is very much grounded. It needs the involvement of

a policy network.”

Internet Governance Expert, Policy Analyst and Consultant Wim Degezelle told *The Ethiopian Herald* at the sidelines of the forum that there is enough infrastructural capacity in the internet sector. The provision of quality infrastructure plays a paramount role in avoiding the internet fragmentation and blackout.

Degezelle further stated that cooperation among multi stakeholder is very important to avoid the existing problem and enhance connectivity.

Another panelist Edmund Chen said for his part that the value of the internet is immense in connecting the global world and what causes the internet fragmentation is that the law and regulations of the country aims at protecting their sovereignty and national interest.

It is difficult to regard internet blackout and shutdown as internet fragmentation and if the given country completely turns off the connection. Currently most of the public service institutions are connected to the internet and if it is closed it may cause severe problems, he emphasized.

## Humanitarian...

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).

The 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.

Recently, NDRMC Commissioner Shiferaw Teklemariam stated that the federal government is spending 500 million Birr to provide humanitarian aid. It has made arrangements to distribute humanitarian aid to more areas of Tigray after the South African peace agreement.

“International institutions can use the four land routes without restrictions to provide humanitarian aid to northern Ethiopia with the help of appropriate aid delivery ethics. “Those who provide humanitarian support in Tigray are expected to assist the needy people in the Amhara and Afar states in their line.”

## Economist foresees local banks...

class technologies, an expert in the area said, adding that domestic banks have a monumental task ahead to keep competitiveness.

Speaking to *The Ethiopian Herald* the economist Zafu Eyesuswork Zafu has urged local banks to enhance competitiveness in the wake of foreign firms’ involvement

in Ethiopia’s banking industry following owing to the government’s decision to open up the market.

“Ethiopia’s protectionist policy, which does not allow the participation of foreign actors in the banking industry, has immensely harmed the growth and competitiveness of local banks and most of our banks are

at an infant stage and could not compete globally.”

Zafu, who has formidable experience in Ethiopia’s banking and insurance industry, noted that the government has carried out commendable tasks to support the private sector including enhancing the capacity of domestic banks. By doing so, the

government has helped local banks to join the international markets.

Ethiopia’s appeal to become a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO) and its ratification of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and the ongoing economic reforms could enable local banks to go along with foreign counterparts.



# Opinion

## How inequality drives HIV in adolescent girls and young women

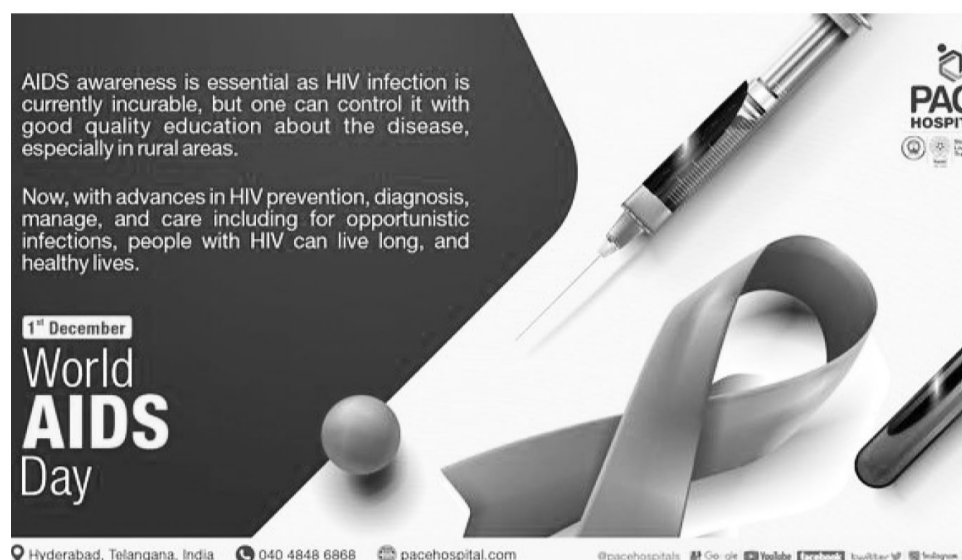
Despite the advances that have been made against HIV, the world has 37 million people living with HIV. And 680,000 people died from AIDS-related causes in 2020. While the prevention of mother to child transmission, and provision of treatment as prevention, are great successes, there are still gaps. Over 1.5 million new HIV infections were recorded in 2020.

In 2020, adolescent girls and young women aged 15 to 24 accounted for 25% of new infections, while making up only 10% of the population. Six in seven new HIV infections among adolescents (aged 15 to 19) were among girls, even though boys live in similar contexts. Young women aged 15–24 years old were twice as likely to be living with HIV compared with men.

In addition to the difference in risk between the sexes, other risk and protective factors may have an influence. So, within the population of adolescent girls and young women, differences in their unique risk profiles mean that some may be at a higher risk of HIV infection than others.

Understanding risk profiles helps us realise that HIV is more than just a virus. These profiles highlight how HIV risk and HIV prevention uptake are influenced by biological, socio-behavioural and structural factors. So while new HIV prevention options may become available, adolescent girls and young women will weigh up the benefits of using them. They consider factors such as partner trust, the social value of relationships, their perceived risk and the economic and social consequences that occur as a result of using them. All this happens in the context of the structural inequalities that sustain risk – things that individuals can't always control.

Risk profiles – the unique combination of factors that work to mediate HIV risk – should inform responses to the evolving pandemic. More nuanced and locally



responsive approaches are required.

As the world aims for the 90-90-90 goals, it's useful to see who is falling behind. Global data suggests that in 2020, 84% of people living with HIV know their HIV status, 73% of those are accessing HIV treatment and 66% of those on treatment are virally suppressed.

Hidden in these successes are those who have still not been reached by HIV prevention and treatment efforts, who are put at risk by inequality, exclusion and social and economic vulnerability. What is the profile of those who have still not been reached? What factors within those profiles prevent us from reaching them? And how do we tailor interventions that respond to local contexts of risk? A large number of studies and programmes have already provided some of these answers.

**Power in relationships:** Adolescent girls and young women who are sexually active are at the highest risk of HIV infection. Delaying sexual debut is a key goal of HIV prevention. But sexual relationships often start in adolescence. The HIV transmission cycle highlights that adolescent girls and young women in age-disparate sexual

relationships, (i.e “sugar daddies”) are at higher risk than those in peer relationships. Age-disparate relationships often have social, emotional, economic and sexual value that may outweigh potential risks. But they are usually characterised by power dynamics that make discussions about sexual health difficult. In contexts of high female poverty and partner dependency, the power and gender inequalities of these relationships will increase the risk of HIV infection and may limit the ability of adolescent girls and young women to negotiate safe sex practices.

**Gender-based violence:** Adolescent girls and young women who are victims of gender-based violence will have risk profiles that make them more vulnerable to HIV infection. In contexts where female poverty is high and retaining relationships is critical for survival, agency to make sexual health decisions may be difficult. In South Africa, home to the largest HIV pandemic, over 10,000 people were raped between April and June 2021. Many of these incidents took place at the home of the victim or the home of the rapist. In the same period, over 15,000 domestic violence assault cases were reported. These high rates of gender-

based violence highlight that access to HIV prevention services are necessary but not sufficient to protect women from HIV infection.

To fight economic inequality, female dependency on relationships and gender-based violence, female education is critical. Additionally, changing gender norms in young boys and ensuring more equitable gender beliefs as men grow older will create an environment in which female agency is non-negotiable and respected.

Use of HIV prevention services is influenced by inequalities in access and by social and gender norms. Access does not equate to uptake. A lack of knowledge about sexual health, inequitable gender norms around sex, and conservative social norms about adolescent sexual well-being contribute to poor uptake of sexual and reproductive health services among adolescent girls and young women.

Engaging their sexual partners, challenging social and gender norms, providing comprehensive sexual education, and creating sex-positive and egalitarian health services for adolescents are essential for fighting the HIV pandemic in young people.

Without understanding the social context in which adolescent girls and young women manage and negotiate sex, and tailoring interventions to break the transmission cycle, it will be a struggle to achieve epidemic control in adolescent girls and young women.

In sub-Saharan Africa, a more nuanced view of the risks faced by adolescent girls and young women will be essential for developing targeted and relevant interventions. These efforts will also help reduce inequalities and build societies more resilient to future pandemics.

(Source: *The Conversation*)

## Ending HIV as a public health threat

In 2014 the United Nations set an ambitious goal: to end the AIDS pandemic by the year 2030.

There have been significant advances in HIV treatment and prevention. Access to antiretroviral therapy has saved millions of lives. The UN estimates that since 2010 there's been a 52% decrease in AIDS-related deaths. New infections have also fallen drastically.

But we're far from out of the woods. A recent report warns that this progress is in danger if current conditions of inequality prevail. Experts across the board have identified inequality as a major challenge to efforts to end AIDS.

Over the years public health experts have written numerous articles for *The Conversation Africa* about the drivers of this

pandemic. We've selected three here which highlight the complexity of the problem.

UNAIDS executive director Winnie Byanyima argues that HIV, like COVID, feeds off inequalities. In an interview with Imraan Valodia, head of the Southern Centre for Inequality Studies at South Africa's University of the Witwatersrand, Byanyima highlights how women who don't have access to basic rights such as health and education pay the price in poverty, ill health and sometimes even death.

Adolescent girls and young women are particularly vulnerable to HIV infection. It's estimated that every week 4,900 women between 15 and 24 years old acquire HIV. Women in this age group are twice as likely as their male counterparts to be living with HIV. Unequal gender dynamics often make

it difficult for young women to negotiate whether, when, or how they want to have sex. But there is a way for adolescent girls and young women to protect themselves without having to negotiate condom use. Pre-exposure prophylaxis, or PrEP, is a pill containing antiretroviral drugs that can help prevent HIV. Morten Skovdal, associate professor of health psychology, asked Zimbabwean healthcare workers for pointers on how to improve access to PrEP for young women.

The risk of HIV infection and the uptake of treatment or prevention measures are influenced by several factors. These include biology, people's behaviour and their social contexts. Behavioural scientist Hilton Humphries explains how individuals make decisions about whether to use PrEP, in the context of structural inequalities that sustain



**PUTTING OURSELVES TO THE TEST**  
Achieving Equity to End HIV

risk – things that individuals can't always control.

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

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## Editorial

### Cultivating youths: Key for peace, development

The 48th Ordinary Session of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) Council of Ministers underway in the Sudanese Capital, Khartoum, has discussed the security situation of the region. The session will also dwell at length on the situation of peace and security across the Horn.

As one of its principal mandates, IGADs due attention to dealing with peace and security issues of the region is a vital step. It is high time the Horn of Africa region as well as the entire continent work relentlessly to ensure peace and security. Among the various measures, they have to take towards this end is to address the socio-economic problems the youth are facing. Creating job opportunities is likely one of the proper measures to divert the attention of the youth from engaging in conflict to development.

Africa's population in general and that of Ethiopia in particular is highly characterized by being dominated by young people. This makes the continent endowed with adequate labor force to boost work and economic growth.

It can be recalled that recognizing the dire challenges and great opportunities that youth present in Africa, the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union (AU) declared the period 2009 to 2018 as the "Decade on Youth Development in Africa" during the meeting held in January 2009, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

However, what is happening in the continent and all developing countries is that the youth are increasingly resorting to mass exodus to the developed world in search of better living conditions.

Those who could not make it to the developed countries have no other option than falling victim to those recruiters of terrorism and conflict.

Unemployment usually tends to lead the youth to conflict, armed insurgencies. Even though the direct correlation between unemployment

and conflict is contested, one can easily understand that those youth who could not meet their needs for income generation have no other option than accepting any offer for survival including violent means.

It is also possible to judge from ordinary human behavior that the youth who have decent means of income and are making dignified living are not likely to join armed groups and gangs as good options.

In addition to the loss they incur on their country through the conflict, the country would also lose the rich labor force which would also have been an integral asset for development.

Therefore, making more on youth development and empowerment is a lucrative investment and alleviates the double jeopardy.

Ethiopia is also one of the most populous nations of the continent. Majority of the population, around 70 per cent is believed to be young and at working age.

As the country is also found in the turbulent Horn of Africa region it's advisable to devise policies that open up job opportunities for this large number of youth. Accordingly, the government has been implementing various development projects that create jobs for the youth. The various ecotourism attraction sites like amusement parks, resorts, greening campaigns among others are likely to open up as many jobs as possible. Furthermore, the government has recently launched the *Yelemat Tirufat* initiative that focuses on harnessing the nutritional resources of the country to ensure food security.

These are but a few of the development endeavors that can cater for the economic development needs of the youth thereby encouraging them to be active participants in development rather than in conflict. Therefore, all concerned stakeholders can channel their support to such initiatives that respond to both developmental and security issues of the continent.

## Opinion

### Cultural revolution to maintain and promote the judicial system

BY EPHREM ANDARGACHEW

Before the reform that took place in mid-2018, the Ethiopian judicial system used to lack public trust. Corruption, favoritism, and inaccessibility have been the main cause of the distrust. Hence, citizens had generally no or little trust in the judicial system which in turn significantly affects the public trust in respecting the rule of law, hope for democratization, and the protection of fundamental human and other rights.

Cognizant of these facts, the new government that came into power has taken reform measures that increase public trust in the judicial system. Among others, the reform includes ensuring judicial independence, improving transparency and accountability, the leadership of the court, and revision of the proclamation.

Expert and attorney at law Selamawit Yilma said that to implement the reform, the government has designed a ten-year plan which increases the implementation of strategic leadership, strengthening the internal and organizational system through human resources, fair access, and strong justice service that respects and upholds the rule of law.

Indeed, a proper judicial system is the best way to ensure peace, development, prosperity, co-existence, and democracy in any country. Even we can garner a response when we request that why do the states and people take a series of reforms in the judicial

system? According to experts in the field of Law and Governance, a country like Ethiopia which has a diverse society needs a vibrant judicial system to ensure economic, political, and social development.

Addis Ababa University School of Law Lecturer Wendimagegn Taddese (Ph.D.) said that reform in the judicial system is key for the prevalence of peace, development, building democracy, equality, innovation, science, and technology.

Hence, the national reform has brought about significant improvements in the judicial system noticeably reducing the intervention of executive organs. It also avoids the interference of the executive organs in political and sensitive court cases that attract the public's attention.

Consultant and attorney at law as well as an independent researcher Asegid Tilahun said that before the national reform, internal and external interference in the judicial system was widely noticed. The intervention is not only from the executive organs but also from the court administrations. Particularly, the executive organs had an inappropriate influence on civil cases in which criminal and government bodies with political content are presented as litigants.

Nevertheless, the reform has reduced such undue intervention by providing a guarantee for the judges to work without any fear or threat, amending the law, increasing the number of judges' representation. This has played important role in the improvement of

the judicial system, he recalled.

The direct allocation of the budget from the House of People's Representatives, the provision to manage the hiring, salaries, and administrative staff as well as the imposition of fines on any body that violates or attempts to influence the freedom of the judiciary system were highly attributable to the improvement of the judicial system. Besides, the revised Federal Judicial Administration Proclamation sets out more detailed requirements than the repealed Proclamation on judges appointed at each level, he added.

Although the intervention of the executive branch reduces, there are gaps in executing the orders and decisions given by the court in the process of litigation. As stated by Selamawit, the judicial system has limitations such as access to justice, delay in decision-making, the procedures of witnesses, forcing victims to collect evidence, lack of quality of charges, the proliferation of records that are terminated due to the failure of the accused and witnesses to appear, deficiency of knowledge and skills, ethical misconduct and vulnerability to corruption as well as impartiality in the investigation process.

Accordingly, modern and up-to-date systems and technologies are required to solve these challenges that the judicial system still faces. According to Dr. Wendimagegn, applying appropriate and modern technologies is important to fight corruption, and deliver a summons that avoids delays in justice. It is also important to prepare incentives that

increase diligence, and address issues of incapacity.

Addis Ababa University Social Work Department Lecturer Demelash Kasaye (PhD) noted that there is a need to further strengthen the results of reforms in the justice system via continuous capacity-building training to make the judicial system fast, reliable, and accessible to all citizens.

Providing capacity-building training to police officers will also help prevent sophisticated and complex crimes which can be committed using modern technology and scientific methods, he underlined.

The reform indeed supports the judicial system by reducing the influence of the executive organ. It is believed that improvements like this would send a strong signal regarding the direction of the judicial system about tackling judicial corruption and strengthening judicial integrity.

Besides, it is imperative to notice that the judicial system is not only the issue of politicians, lawyers, prosecutors, or judges but also of all sections of society which requires a cultural revolution. Because the participation and practices of the society could contribute to strengthening the judicial system.

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



# Business & Economy

## Privatization, its economic rewards

BY DANIEL ALEMAYEHU

Among the government responsibilities, Planning better economic policies and supporting both public and private sectors can be mentioned. Decisions made by the government have the potential to bring positive or negative outcomes.

To advance economic progress particularly boosting export and garnering hard currency, substituting import and reducing dependency on foreign financial support is vital. Economic prosperity has positive implication on one's country sovereignty. The aftermath of the Russia and Ukraine war brought negative economic consequences on developed and developing countries.

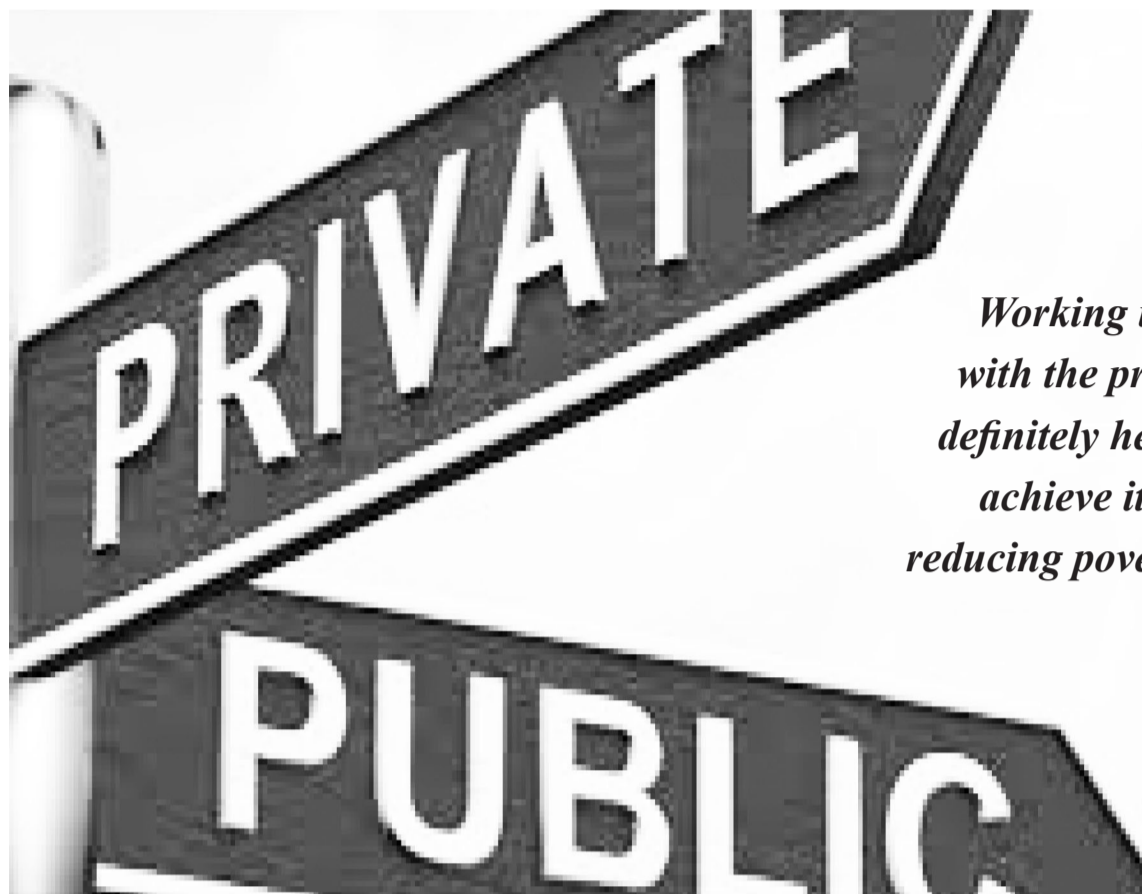
As a Sub-Saharan country, Ethiopia is struggling to make the nation better place for its citizens even though numerous pressing challenges it faced. At this point, the incumbent has been working aggressively to achieve economic growth. However, due to the war which was broke out in the northern part of the northern part of the country two years ago, some western countries leveled Ethiopia as belligerent with no evidence and impose economic sanction. The AGOA incidence is the case in point in this regard. With all the odds, the nation has not stopped searching for a way out of the existing challenges.

Since the reform government took power, it has been taking various measures to alleviate poverty and transform the economy to be a hub in the horn. The government has also made various efforts widening the space for the private sector to play pivotal role in the economy. So far the sector involves in service provision such as hotels, tourism, education, health etc.

In the last budget year, the government gave green light to foreign companies to operate here and the entry of Safari-com, the Kenyan based private company by partially privatizing Ethio-telecom can be mentioned as good example. Prominent economists have expressed the benefit drawn from privatizing public owned enterprises. Such venture encourages foreign companies to invest their capital here. Enhanced competition between companies creates self-sustaining private sector and boost government revenue collection capacity.

While he made an exclusive interview with the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA), Economist Costantinos Berhetesfa (Ph.D.) said that the decision made by the government to advance privatization scheme is applaud able. He also said that the government has to work on opening more doors and create favorable environments for the private sector to play its own part in the economic activities. He also appreciated the government's commitment to privatize institutions such as Ethio-telecom, sugar corporations and other public owned profit making institutions. In addition he admired its will to open the door to foreign financial institutions to operate here.

The economist has also elaborated on the



*Working in collaboration with the private sector will definitely help the nation to achieve its goals through reducing poverty and moving to prosperity*

negative quensequence of the monopoly ownership of government on various public enterprises.

State monopoly of enterprises paves the way for corruption, mismanagement and nepotism due to the absence of sense of ownership. Showing green light for the coming of Foreign Direct Investment enables the nation to garner hard currency and shore up shortage of finance. For instance, the government could secure a 3.5 billion USD in the form of loan from China for upgrading Ethio- Telecom. Currently, the loaned money is being paid. Similarly, when Safari-com started business here it invested millions of dollars.

When foreign companies operate here, the nation could draw lesson from the best practices of other countries, enables to tap the opportunities for transferring technology, skills and knowledge.

“When I was working at the United Nations, there was a debate to privatize the telecom in Nigeria. Later, we consulted and convinced them and they implemented it. Currently, the country is earning 19 billion USD from the privatized firms. Therefore, it is feasible to privatize profit making organizations to private and foreign companies.” Said Costentinos Berhetesfa.

The companies also created more jobs for skilled and semi-skilled professionals. When the government lets private sectors get involved as shareholders in the state-owned sectors like the telecom, finance, transportation, and others, it will make the economy stronger, the economist stressed.

It is also reported that Ethio- Telecom issued an international tender that shows its interest to privatize 40 % of its share.

The Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) has also interviewed Fairfax Africa Fund, Global Chairman, Zemedeneh Nigatu on permitting the third Telecom operator into the Ethiopian market. He said that allowing foreign

company to operate here will strengthen the nation's development endeavor.

As to Zemedeneh, the peace agreement between the Government and TPLF in South Africa, Pretoria, would build confidence in international investors to invest in the country. Besides, the decision will bring blessings for Ethio-Telecom to enjoy the international market. Bringing international companies to the nation also has numerous advantages for attaining prosperity to the people of Ethiopia. The involvement of foreign financial companies help in transferring knowledge and experiences, increasing the efficiency of the nation's financial sectors, introducing advanced technologies, and reducing poverty.

Zemedeneh explained that, 40 % of Ethio-Telecom shares will be on sale, and the government plans to own 55 % of Ethio-Telecom, and decided to let the rest, 5 %, to the local investors. In this regard, having three telecom companies in Ethiopia will speed up the nation's development through strong competition. Such decisions and the peace accord signed earlier this month showing the nation is a good place for investors.

According to the chairman of the Kenyan based Safari-com which recently began to operate here in the Tele-com business here the company registered one million customers within a short period of time. This shows that the telecom sector still has the potential to become the major area to attract foreign direct investment. Expanding and promoting the telecom sector which brings multi-dimensional advantages to the development of banking and ICT sectors that give chance achieving economic acceleration.

From the onset of the reformist government's assuming power to rule the country, it has taken actions to revive the nation's economy by addressing its past ills. In order

to broaden the role of the private sector in the economy, the government decided to privatize specific institutions so that foreign and local private investment can print their fingerprints on the economic development of the country. Working in collaboration with the private sector will definitely help the nation to achieve its goals through reducing poverty and moving to prosperity.

Ethiopia is still an agrarian economy and agriculture plays vital role in all aspects of people's life. It is a means of living for 80 % of the population, utilizes 75 % of the nation labor force and contributes 90 % of foreign currency earning. The other sectors such as the service and the manufacturing though they are rapidly growing their role in job creation and contribution to the Growth Domestic Production is not satisfactory. They rather lag behind. Therefore, to transform the economy from agriculture led to that of industry bringing structural change is essential and to that end the labor force stranded in the rural areas must be shifted to the none agriculture sector which are the service and the manufacturing.

Though the government long ago aspired to bring structural change, it plays a dominant role in the economy. Therefore to support the structural change endeavor the role of the private sector in the economy should be widened. The ongoing privatizing the ill-performing public enterprises must be strengthened.

Privatization as mentioned above brings opportunity to attract local and foreign investment, to obtain better management skills and knowledge transfer. Moreover, it minimizes the role of the government in the economy and will give sufficient time to engage in regulatory activities.

The increment of private investment plays key role in job creation for hundreds of thousands of unemployed labor force which again gears to attain structural change.



# Art & Culture

## Of book launching events, the fate of writers, actual challenges

BY MULUGETA GUDETA

In times long past, Ethiopian writers were isolated from and shunned by society that mostly regarded them as “deranged creatures”, or rebels without a cause, acting and living like narcissistic creatures with big egos pretending to change society or rebel against the established orders. Under the monarchy and later on under the republican regimes, writers were not only targets of social ostracism but also government punishment for daring to speak or write their minds. They were considered rebels whose job is to cause or provoke trouble by agitating the public or organize secret groups that connived to undermine public authority.

The then prevailing public image of a writer was someone with rough looks, wearing casual clothes, spending time in alehouses or night clubs, getting drunk and speaking politics in public places. The writer was portrayed as living on the margins of society, without fixed address and loitering in the streets carrying a tattered bag or bundles of papers, without caring for their looks or money and living like tramps.

Whatever the stereotype of the typical writer was at that time, there was no denying the fact that writers lived in great poverty as they often had no fixed jobs or incomes as if they preferred the liberties of loneliness, and deprivation over a normal life. That was of course a stereotypical portrait of writers and like any stereotype it was bound to change with times.

Speaking about the lives of Ethiopian writers back in the 1960s, 70s, 80s and 90s, the late veteran editor, translator and publisher Amare Mammo once said that, “Ethiopian writers live in extreme poverty... They don’t even have the financial means to buy typewriters, let alone modern writing gadgets such as computers. They mostly live from hand to mouth and struggle hard to make ends meet let alone live in luxury”. The late Amare had enough experience and observation to speak about the lives of Ethiopian writers. He personally knew some of them and had truck friendships with others.

Even compared with writers in other parts of Africa, Ethiopian writers are still lagging behind in terms of benefitting or improving their lives from their hard works. They are generally shunned by society and there is no fund or financial support to improve their lives or their writing careers. As a result of this, many of them had abandoned their work early in their careers, without fully tapping their natural gifts. The beneficiaries are mostly people who have nothing to do with the business of writing.

Even if modern writing technology has evolved and spread widely in the last one or two decades, few are writers who can even now buy a laptop or desktop. Still fewer are those who can afford to gather the financial

means to publish their works or distribute them outside established channels that are totally controlled by wholesale and retail book traders. In short, the fate of Ethiopian writers more or less remain the same as compared to what it was two or three decades back. Compared with their European and American counterparts, African writers suffer from multiple challenges.

In his book entitled “African Absurdities”, exiled Ethiopian writer Hama Tuma observed that, “As the African writer strives to fulfill his social role both as an objective and committed scribe recording the mores and experiences of the betrayals and epics of the people and also as a teacher and agitator, he or she is confronted by hardships that can hardly be neglected. It is of course essential that not to exaggerate the roles of the writer in a continent where the majority are illiterate, books are expensive and the publishing industry miniscule.”

In addition to material deprivation, writers in Africa, including in Ethiopia suffered greatly from the evil of state censorship that undermined their efforts, distorted their intentions and stifled their imagination. Nowadays, official censorship is legally revoked in Ethiopia. In the past, many writers complained about stifling censorship that they said discouraged them to produce better quality works. Arbitrary state intervention was even worse than pre-publication censorship that stifled any aspiring writer in Ethiopia.

The literary history of Ethiopia has also witnessed the imprisonment and killing of prominent writers like Abe Gubegna and Be’alu Girma who lost their lives in the hands of state security operatives because their works were critical of the regime or because they dared to challenge the authorities. There were also many writers who endured long imprisonment, banishment or even worse situations. It is a paradox of Ethiopian literature that no major works or major writers have appeared after the scrapping of the censorship laws and state repression.

Maybe the “Great Ethiopian Novel” is still in the making maybe because political and historical events have been changing at breakneck speed and writers do not have enough time to reflect and write on these events. Writing surely takes much time of gestation, reflection and actual scribbling before major books appear on the literary scene.

Lifting censorship alone without providing any kind of support to writers who are still engaged in the business of writing is arduous, time consuming and negatively affecting the health of many writers who live in absolute poverty with only their talents and moral strength to turn to. Many have suffered from the frustrations and fears that might accompany their works if at all they are published even under conditions of indirect censorship. They work in fear or

self-censorship as democracy in Africa is a fragile promise that often victimizes writers and opinion leaders more than anybody else.

There had been a number of initiatives by the Ethiopian Writers Association (EWA) to help its members publish their works with the cooperation of publishers or printers. There were also plans to improve the livelihoods of Ethiopian writers by providing them with better amenities to create improved working environment so that they can produce better quality works. At one time there was a talk about providing writers with low-cost housing or build residential quarters for them to live in a relatively better comfort.

All these lofty visions by the leaders of EWA who came and went at different times in the past have not so far produced the expected results with the exception that members of the association now enjoy free medical treatment in cooperation with the Black Lion Hospital. Even this is no small achievement given the unbearable medical costs writers might be forced to shoulder whenever they fall ill and have meager financial resources for such emergencies.

One of the challenges Ethiopian writers faced in the past is that they were forced to live and work in complete anonymity without supporting publishers or encouraging critics. They had no contact whatsoever with the book reading public and lacked the opportunity to publicize their works. Understandingly, a handful “elite writers” dominated the literary scene while they were equally victims of deceptions, overt or covert theft and other dubious actions from irresponsible and heartless, deceitful book sellers whose greedy temptations condemned so many defenseless writers to unnecessary sufferings. Whenever some of the more courageous writers managed to publish their works with money they borrowed even from money lenders with exorbitant interest rates.

Official book launching events that started one or two decades back have in some way alleviated the above shortcoming by allowing writers to popularize their works, reach out to their readers and comment on their works while critics also found the opportunity to evaluate new books. Book launching events are also serving as bridges connecting writers with potential publishers although they are very few in number. They also create opportunities for non-professional critics to speak their minds in connection with certain works that often provoke controversies and debates.

These events also attract new writers who used to confine themselves in their houses or in public libraries to come out and see what others are writing or be encouraged to publish their works for the first time. There are many new works that found publishers at those events and become bestsellers simply because they were promoted in public.

Book launching events have also drawbacks in the sense that the works to be presented

at such events are not selected by critics or publishers for evaluation. Non-professional “critics often take the floors and comment on certain books in ways that do not promote the writers or their works. There are also allegations that books are reviewed or commented on at these events through mutual acquaintances with the commentators or friends of the authors in question.

This approach is presumably causing bitterness and damage to the morale of writers who work in isolation and have no one to turn to for comments or presentation at book launching events. This is also alleged to be the cause for the proliferation non-professional critics or book reviewers to proliferate simply because they read books and say whatever they like or dislike about the books or the writers in a subjective or arbitrary manner. However the positive contributions of book launching events are more important than the alleged shortcomings that can be rectified in the long run. In the final analysis the domestic literary scene could have remained dull without these events and writers could not know where to turn to in order to publicize their works. Fewer books could have been published and people who have the ambition to become writers could be intimidated and refrain from publishing their works.

The problem is that this culture of public discussion of literary works is confined to the capital Addis Ababa and to some major towns while most of the remote places learn about these events through the media. Young and aspiring writers and established ones should be encouraged to come forward and discuss books as this is the only sure avenue for producing a generation that will be shaped by knowledge and wisdom and able to articulate the aspirations of the older generation and the country at large.

Cultural bureaus in many regions can and should get involved in this kind of activity instead of focusing exclusively on music and traditional dances while young as well as older people are starving of books, knowledge and the means of spending their free times in a constructive way. Books, libraries and recreational facilities are concentrated in the capital Addis Ababa while remote regions are deprived of these facilities. It may however be time to rectify this imbalance and share the opportunities with people that are so far deprived of these opportunities and facilities.

The promoters of these events should be more extroverts, and their vision should be inclusive and wider in scope. As Chinua Achebe, the godfather of African literature once said about African literature, “every literature must speak of a particular place, evolve out of the necessities of its history past and current and the aspiration and destiny of its people.”.



# It's all about peace

BY HENOK TIBEBU

**W**hy is the world suffering from routine conflicts and wars that claim millions of lives? Why are some countries portrayed as being synonymous with drought and famine? Why is the media fond of painting a gloomy picture and fixing its eye on tragic stories? Why is Africa the major focus of the western nations? Why the western media are so obsessed with Africa and Ethiopia? Why are some countries after our mega project; The Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) and why do other entities continue to serve the interest and echo the unfounded claims of Ethiopia's arch yet historical enemies? How is Ethiopia going to be able to address all these problems diplomatically?

All these and other issues of concern are being questioned by many Ethiopians and other concerned bodies currently and before. They are expected to be questions of the future generation until the issues are addressed appropriately and anyone in a leading position throughout the country.

A country may go through several steps of changes be it positive or negative. Mainly it is the socioeconomic and political hurdles that ignite changes or reforms in a country. In fact, change is inevitable. However, Ethiopia and its people have been tested by and gone through all these problems that still pose the questions this writer raised above. The war which came to an end with a peace accord struck between the Ethiopian government and TPLF in Pretoria caused the nation a great deal of loss.

The Cessation of Hostilities (CoH) agreement signed between the parties is the first sign that shows Africans can solve their problems on their own. The execution process which is still underway seems to have several questions coming from different interest groups around the world.

Last week, TPLF official Getachew Reda announced that the organization is exerting efforts to implement the terms of the peace accord, such as disengaging and disarming TPLF combatants. Getachew also admitted that unhindered humanitarian aid is being delivered to the Tigray region ever since CoH is signed.

Unhindered humanitarian aid supply to Shire, Axum, and Mekelle is being delivered by the Ethiopian government and humanitarian aid agencies. About 1.8 billion Birr worth of aid is supplied by the government of Ethiopia as well.

Trying to rebuild destroyed infrastructure in Amhara, Tigray, and Afar states which the war has destroyed to some extent is the commitment of the Ethiopian government.

While allowing unrestricted access to

humanitarian assistance, the incumbent is working round the clock to restore basic services as pertinent bodies expedite the process. In some areas, banking electric services have already been resumed.

Accordingly, Ethiopian Electric Utility is working on maintaining transmission lines. It has announced that electricity has been restored to Alamata, Korem, Waja, Timuga, and Kobo towns, following the completion of the transmission lines maintenance. Electric power was cut off in these areas for a while following the destruction of electricity infrastructure by the conflict.

Utility's Woldia District Director Shimelis Wolde samayat

explained that these areas have regained electricity service due to the swift maintenance of the electricity infrastructure to restore the service. He also mentioned that the areas have been without power for a long time as they get electricity from the Alamata substation.

The Utility also revealed that it was possible to restore the service by repairing the high-voltage and low-voltage power lines that were heavily damaged during the war. The damaged

medium power lines from Alamata to Kobo were repaired in a short period of time due to the diligent maintenance work done by the district workers, the director added.

He said that the technical staff of the district have completed the maintenance of the 66 KV power transmission line from Alamata to Lalibela and are making great efforts to make the surrounding towns benefit from the service.

Likewise, the restoration of electric lines that cover Alamata-Bisober to Yalo-Kelwan towns has been completed, Afar State Electric Utility Executive Officer Yasin Ali said. The maintenance work has been carried out from Alamata-Bisober to

Yaleo-Kelwan towns and the transformer repair work has been completed. "Some electric lines which are covered by tree branches are being cleared and will be restored and get full service shortly."

The inspection work is undergoing to repair the Mekelle-Wukro substation since the area gets electricity from the line that passes through Kilbeti District and the necessary materials are being prepared. Also, the service in Chifra, Awura, and Ewa towns will be restored after the repair work in Woldia mobile electric substation is completed, he said.

There are hopes that other parts of the northern part of the country will get a full electric supply soon. In this case, people reaffirm pledges for the achievement of the cessation of hostilities so that social services are reinstated in Amhara, Tigray, and Afar regions.

The peace deal has been hailed as a breakthrough to ensure lasting stability in the country and has been attracting acclimation both in and outside of the country.

Commenting on the accord, Tigrayan community lauded the deal signed between the federal government of Ethiopia and TPLF saying that the value of peace is more than irreplaceable for the people of Tigray who have been suffering from the war that took part in Amhara, Tigray and Afar states in the past years.

Meanwhile, it is obvious that war is always destructive. And, there is should be no room for conflict entrepreneurs to instigate war and dump their interest in the poor country's internal affairs for their own benefit at the expense of poor people's lives.

"The people of Ethiopia, be it the Tigray, Amhara, Afar, etc have suffered a lot from internal conflicts. This reality has to change and the people of Tigray, Amhara, and Afar who are direct victims of the crisis are lauding the cessation of hostilities because it serves everyone else right" says Masho Kidane a Tigrayan resident in Addis Ababa.

The peace agreement is accepted by the global community except for some war mongers who live comfortable life outside Ethiopia and who do not know the current reality on the ground. They rely on fake voices that come from outside and think they could only get solutions from outside. So they are still trying to convince the global community that war is the only way. But it proved to be peace is the only way.

Now the war is ended and a peace accord is signed the focus remains on the successful effectuation of the deal. In this regard, The Ethiopian government is living up to its words as it doubles down its efforts to provide humanitarian aid to conflict-ridden areas.

**The peace agreement is accepted by the global community except for some war mongers who live comfortable life outside Ethiopia and who do not know the current reality on the ground**



# Law & Politics

## Restoration of constitutional order in Tigray: The sacred element of Pretoria peace deal

BY ADDISALEM MULAT

The Cessation of Hostilities Agreement (CoHA) without doubt plays a paramount role in restoring constitutional order and permanent suspension of hostilities. Apart from that the agreement on the ceasefire indisputably is a bedrock for ensuring a lasting peace and putting constitutional order in the Tigray state into effect.

Aside from paving the way for expediting humanitarian aid and restoration of infrastructural facilities in the war-impacted areas, the peace deal also helps to reinstate law and order in the Tigray state.

In addition to serving as a springboard for long-lasting and prolonged peace, the cessation of hostilities agreement gives backing to restoring constitutional order in the Tigray State. It is self-evident that in the present circumstances the move taken by the federal government and TPLF has been receiving a pat on the back and winning the hearts and minds of the wider international community.

It is a matter of common sense that the peace accord has played a huge role in beating swords into plowshares. Aside from that, it plays a huge role in the disarmament, demobilizing, and reintegration of the Tigray Defense Force for the reason that there should not be two armies under the roof of one Ethiopia.

In recent times, Commander of Tigray combatants Tadesse Werede on the subject of the peace implementation said that in some areas, leaders of the TPLF forces and the Ethiopian National Defense Forces (ENDF) are meeting in person and discussing the implementation of the agreement. The disarmament process is progressing well according to the agreement reached in Nairobi, Kenya.

TPLF forces have received orientation in the Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR) process and various activities have also been carried out to raise public awareness in this regard. The orientation would be completed soon.

After the disengagement of forces from areas of deployment, they would be transported to rehabilitation and orientation centers and all the necessary preparation has been finalized to this end. "Other activities have also been carried out in accordance with the CoHA in a clear manifestation of our commitment to implement the truce," Tadesse noted.

On the heels of the resolute stance of the incumbent, the peace implementation is making progress in the right direction and registering positive changes.

Notwithstanding the fact that prior to the start of the law enforcement operations, the federal government has moved heaven and



earth to get to the bottom of the problem in an atmosphere of calm, the choice of force sparked a devastating conflict that almost lasted for two years tensions and turning the knife in the wound.

It should be remembered that the last straw that broke the camel's back was the attack carried out in the early morning of 4 November 2020 by TPLF on the Northern Command of the Ethiopian National Defense Force. In the fullness of time, the attack metamorphosed into bringing about unimaginable human suffering and material damage.

The Pretoria peace deal if implemented effectively will help ensure equality, and fairly in making the supreme law of the country fully functional.

The speedy disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) of TPLF armed combatants is the kernel for the successful implementation of the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement (CoHA), according to a veteran politician.

Lauding the government's commitment to the implementation of the truce, the politician Neamin Zeleke told local media that the former should work to end the public suffering and humanitarian crisis in Tigray and other parts of the country.

The only guarantee for the government and the people of Ethiopia to have lasting peace is continuing the effort of disarming the armed group according to the peace accord. Unless ending the potential insurgency efficiently with the active participation of the public, the situation would cause further human loss and property damage.

"By doing so, the government would thwart the security threat that would be imposed by an armed group and sustain the peace of the country. As guaranteed in the CoHA, the existence of parallel forces in Ethiopia is impossible."

As to him, there are some groups that consider the trilateral cooperation among Ethiopia, Eritrea, and Somalia as a threat to their greedy interest in the strategic Horn of Africa and have made every effort to ruin the alliance.

Noting the ill-conceived attempts of those groups would have a negative impact for the implementation of the peace accord, Neamin stressed that the Ethiopian National Defense Force has the capability to foil any destructive attempts that transcend the CoHA.

The level of the commitment of the government to implement the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement (CoHA) is limitless owing to its desire to lift the people from crises that are created by the war, an Ethiopian diplomat said.

Speaking to international media, Ethiopian Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) Suleiman Dedefo stated that the government's desire to avoid war and end the public suffering from conflicts is so firm. The speedy implementation of the CoHA is also in the best interest of the people of Ethiopia and not meant to please third parties.

"The government is expecting the same from the other end and until now we are watching that even though it is not speedy, the implementation of the CoHA

(by TPLF) is going on, but expect that the implementation process will be as per the agreements in Pretoria and Nairobi. We are very hopeful that the agreement will be implemented as it is."

He continued: "The government is doing its level best to execute the CoHA because this unnecessary and meaningless war is imposed on it." Ambassador Suleiman further noted that it is the responsibility of the Ethiopian government to secure and protect the Tigray State and no one can be concerned more than the former about the safety and security of the people of Tigray. "This should be left to the Ethiopian government as per the agreement that clearly stipulated that once it takes over Tigray, the government is entitled to ensure peace and order in the area."

In good truth, as the federal government has been working around the clock for the realization of the agreement, TPLF should respond in kind. The agreement also gives assurance to the need to respect the demarcation of authorities and get back the Tigray state to the constitutional framework in the shortest possible time. As putting the peace accord into effect provides a foundation for the suspension of hostilities and gives the thumbs up for the full functioning of the country's vital organizations, all stakeholders should go to the ends of the earth with the intention of bringing peace implementation into effect. At this moment in time, the incumbent is extremely resolute about representing Tigray's people in the federal organizations in conformity with the constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia.



# Women in Focus



## Media: Key to addressing, ending GBV

BY BETELHEM BEDLU

Violence Against Women (VAW) has become one of the most universal human rights violations in the world and it remains as one of the most persistent barriers to gender equality and sustainable development.

Unfortunately, this fact has become more visible during the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic, impacting directly the health, wellbeing, education, productivity, safety, and education of women as well as interfering with the realization of their rights and contributions to the society, as sources indicate.

Undeniably, it is mostly girls and young women, commonly migrants, Internally Displaced Person, (IDP) Persons With Disabilities (PWDs), and those suffering from chronic diseases who feel the impacts of GBV even more.

As part of the celebration of the 16 days of activism campaign against Gender Based Violence (GBV) that was held under the theme “Orange the world- End Violence against women and girls now!”, the Ethiopian Media Women Association (EMWA) which is a non-partisan, non-profit professional association in collaboration with the Embassy of Germany organized a one day training workshop on the role of women in combating GBV.

Since its establishment in 1999 aiming to promote women’s rights through and in the media, EMWA has been engaged in advancing professional freedom, excellence, and ethical conduct among women journalists and media practitioners.

During the training workshop, Media and Communication Specialist and Media and GBV Trainer Elshaday Gebeyehu noted that the purpose of media coverage is not only to report news as it happens but also to highlight the impact of what has happened on diverse sections of the people affected- especially those at most risk- so that action to deal with the situation can be equitable and responsive to the special needs of different groups.

**Besides playing a central role, media houses should collaborate consciously in the efforts toward reducing Gender-Based Violence in societies and should inform, inspire, and be multipliers of positive references, models, and tools**

She said that the media houses could play a vital role in increasing awareness about GBV and related crimes. They also have the power to change behaviors and attitudes, as well as shape the minds of people through providing gender-sensitive content, trustworthy and fact-checked information, and avoiding perpetuating gender-based

discrimination and gender stereotypes in their content.

Furthermore, they can point out the negative impacts that GBV put on the social, political and economic spheres and disseminate the required information through their reporting, she stated.

While reporting GBV, the media must be flexible with the interview schedules. She highlighted that the reporter must conduct the interview when the survivor is ready-physically psychologically; and recovering from the trauma.

Similarly, she noted that interviewer should be mindful not to intentionally trigger victims of sexual violence and relive their traumatic experiences. “Certain situations, photos, words, sounds and smells can trigger memories from a survivor’s assault and this can be very traumatizing,” she underscored.

The other major thing that she pointed out was that the reporter must take in to consideration and avoiding questions like ‘why,’ because as to her, this can be viewed as victim blaming and suggest that the victim somehow provoked the incident.

Since blaming victims for what had happened to them is unprofessional, it is important to ask instead open-ended, non-judgmental questions that allow survivors to share their stories, she stressed.

Moreover, labeling perpetrators as ‘monsters’ might on the other hand set them apart from the rest of society, and it might also implies “them versus us” dynamic. Such labeling can hinder people from reporting suspicions they may have about someone, because it challenges their concept of how ‘good people’ do ‘bad things.’ Thus, reporters should always try to use the most accurate language possible, said Elshaday.

By the same token, she emphasized that media should play a fundamental role in law and policy formulation as well as need to play a leading role in pushing entities to hold those who fail to implement the laws and the policies accordingly accountable.

The role of media should also be advocating concerned institution to become voice

as well as denounce any gender based violations that are perpetrated against girls and women.

Likewise, fairness, impartiality, duty to inform accurately, respecting the privacy of the sources, avoiding payment for interviews, not harming survivors, following A Survivor-Centered Approach are regarded as the major ethical considerations when reporting GBV, according to her.

Several sources have also revealed that media outlets should provide gender-sensitive content and trustworthy and fact-checked information, while avoiding perpetuating gender-based discrimination and gender stereotypes in their content.

Besides playing a central role, media houses should collaborate consciously in the efforts toward reducing Gender-Based Violence in societies and should inform, inspire, and be multipliers of positive references, models, and tools.

It is important to keep in mind that collaborative approach which combines sensitive reporting and advocacy, sensitization and support for media personnel would contribute in curbing the challenges in GBV.

The 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence campaign is an annual international campaign that is carried out from 25 November, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, and runs until 10 December, Human Rights Day.

The campaign aims to not only raise awareness, but also to be a conduit for people to engage in their communities to eradicate gender based violence.

The campaign was started by activists at the inauguration of the Women’s Global Leadership Institute in 1991. It continues to be coordinated each year by the Center for Women’s Global Leadership. It is used as an organizing strategy by individuals and organizations around the world to call for the prevention and elimination of violence against women and girls, as documents stated.



# International News

## Kenya Treasury says country has no room for fresh borrowing

Kenya's National Treasury has doubled down on its efforts to swap the country's short-term debt with longer-term issuances.

This comes barely a week after it commenced a debt swap that will see Sh87.8 billion (\$714.6 million) worth of short-term debt converted into long-term debt to ease the pressure it is experiencing from maturities. Last week, the Kenyan government floated its first switch bond since June 2020.

Treasury Cabinet Secretary Njuguna Ndung'u said that Kenya has little wiggle room left for fresh borrowing, a situation that has been aggravated by the multiplicity

of shocks to the economy, including the ongoing drought, effects of the Covid-19 pandemic and the Russia-Ukraine war.

"Right now, we don't have headroom for accumulating debt, so in a sense, we have to go down into liability management. When you are buffeted by multiple shocks, the reaction is often to use the resources that you have or even borrow to overcome the crisis," Prof Ndung'u said.

A fortnight ago, President William Ruto directed Treasury not to borrow from the domestic market at rates above 10 percent.

*Source: The East African*



## Inflation, debt pile pressure on Ghana's economy

Ghana is experiencing a deep economic crisis, with a rampant inflation that has reached almost 40% and its currency that has fallen by almost half compared to the US dollar. The government's finances are also at their lowest point in years.

President Nana Akufo-Addo, who has faced several protests in the West African country because of the situation, admitted that Ghana is in crisis and blamed what he called "malevolent forces...that have come together at the same time" referring to the COVID and Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Ghana, along with many African economies, was still recovering from the pandemic when it was hit by the global increase in the price of food and energy, caused by the war in Ukraine. But the country also had to deal with the fall of the Cedi - its currency - that has been one of the world's worst performing against the dollar this year

Home of 31 million people, Ghana is now one of the most affected by the crisis in the region, and that's heavily felt for those who rely on imports and depend on the dollar to obtain their products.

"The amount you will use to import let's say one container; these days, you have to double the amount. The same goods, the same quantity but the amount has been doubled," said Obeng Krampah, a businessman from Accra who imports used home and office furniture from Europe and America to sell in Ghana,

"I have used dollar to buy the goods, paid freight, and then calculating duty in dollar for me to pay so when the goods is out, definitely I have to factor everything inside, so the final consumer is bearing the whole cost," he added. But for the consumers the situation is also difficult, less people spend in non-essential things, and that's felt by the shopkeepers and business people in the



capital of the country.

Mary Sarfoa is an entrepreneur that has worked for more than 30 years importing used sofas from Europe.

"Previously, the longest time I would take to sell my wares is within one or two months then I go back (to Europe to buy) but this time, it's been four months since my last import and I have only sold three sofas," she said, "If you look behind me, we have so many packed sofas, even the container is full, the economy is not going well," she complained, showing her products. The Importers and Exporters Association of Ghana have been reeling over challenges leading to months of uncertainty.

Samson Asaki Awingobit, the Executive secretary of the association, said that like Sarfoa and Krampah, the situation is affecting a lot of business that have either been forced to shut down or stopped importing.

"Every businessman that is in this country has lost sales, month by month over 50%," he said. "Many people are winding up or stopping from importing into this country."

Ghana's government blamed the pandemic

and the war in Ukraine as some of the drivers of the economic crisis, but analysts think that the poor performance of the country to help investors to make business is also a factor to consider.

Louis Yaw Afful, an international trade analyst, said infrastructure development, the energy prices as well as business governance - how simple it is to do business in the country - influence the decision of investors.

"Once we (Ghana) ignored those sides for some time and we are underperforming, they (investors) will look for the competitive country that has all these as a one," he said.

Ghana's cost of living has risen exponentially with inflation reaching almost 40%, one of the highest levels in the last years.

Last week the government said it has agreed on a debt management strategy with the IMF as the country faces high risk of debt distress.

The country's finance minister, Ken Ofori-Atta told the parliament that to deal with the crisis; Ghana will freeze hiring of public and civil servants among other measures.

*Source: Africa news*



### Nigeria police chief: General Usman Alkali Baba sentenced

The high court in Nigeria has sentenced the country's police chief to three months in prison for disobeying a court order. The ruling followed a lawsuit by a police officer who was fired in 1992. The officer challenged his forced retirement, and his dismissal was later quashed in court.

The high court ruled that Inspector General Usman Alkali Baba should serve the jail sentence, unless he reinstates the police officer. So far the police force has failed to comply.

In a statement, police spokesman Olumuyiwa Adejobi described the decision to punish his boss as "astonishing". He said the police force was studying the ruling to decide on what action to take.

"It is instructive to note that the case in point concerns an officer who was dismissed as far back as 1992, a few years after the current IGP joined the Nigeria Police Force," he said.

*Source: BBC News*



# Ensuring quality education

BY MENGISTEAB TESHOME

**A**reru Addesa served as a teacher for the past 38 years in various schools. He taught at elementary, secondary and high schools at different schools at different times. To mention some, he used to teach at the North Shoa Zone of Amhara State and at the capital, Addis Ababa. And throughout all the years, he has accumulated extensive life experiences that can give lessons to others in a number of issues.

Areru, while talking about ways how to improve the quality of education, he suggests that quality is an activity that demands rigorous effort and the participation of all actors, not only professionals in the area; but also the society at large.

The Ethiopian Herald had a short stay with Areru Addesa to have his say how quality education is ensured. Excerpts!

## How do you explain quality education in the context of Ethiopia?

In my view, quality education is a dynamic phenomenon that should be addressed as per the development of a given nation. In our context, the problem stems from the policy and the strategy.

The then Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) led Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) education policy was the source for all the undesirable outcomes of the nation's human development. The policy was designed to serve the political goal of the TPLF rather than producing competent workforces and improving the livelihood of citizens.

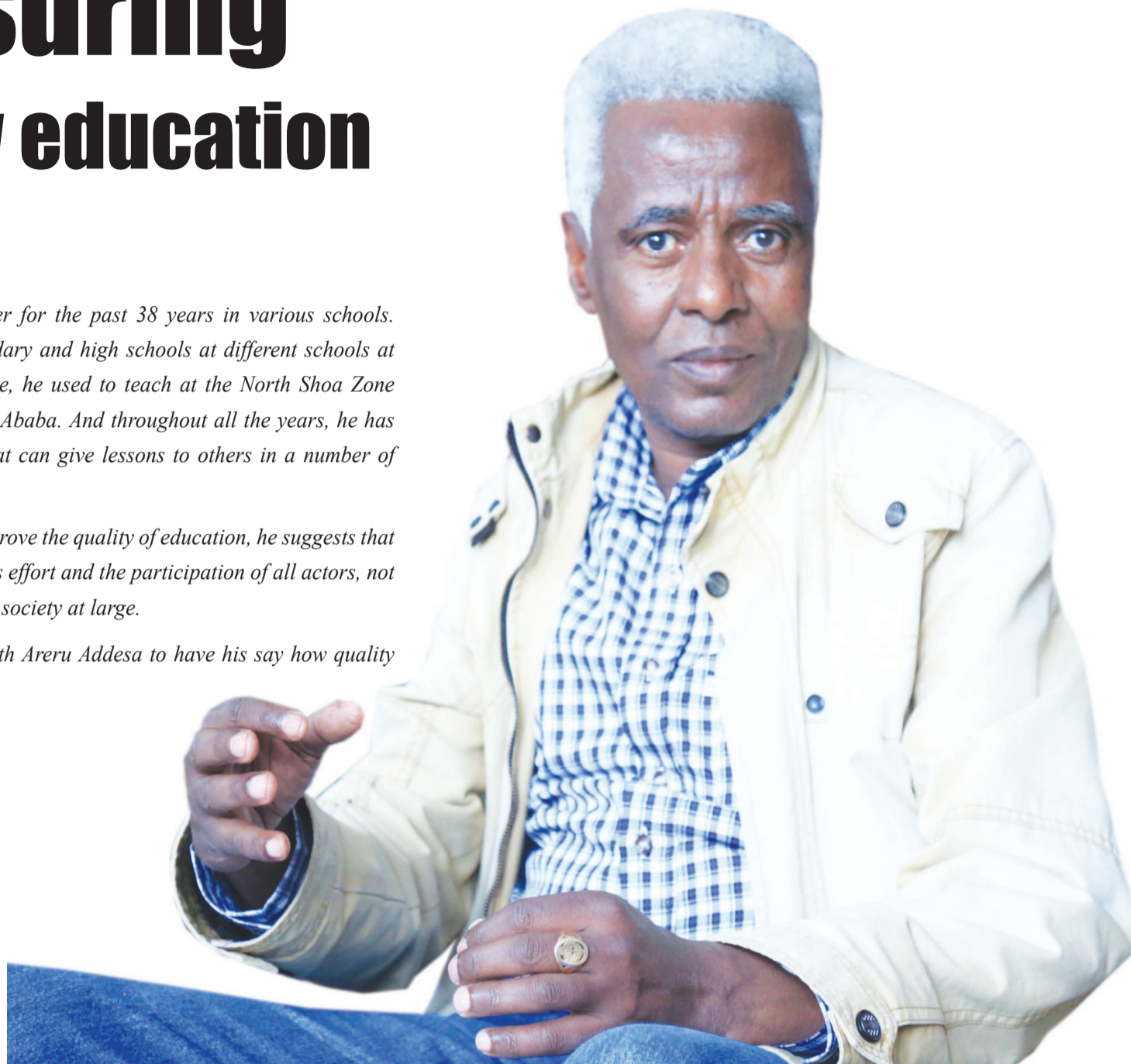
We are witnessing that the reform undertaken in the education sector to address the gaps and put in place some adjustments in various areas are promising. New trends that could shape the skill and knowledge of the posterities are incorporated. Personally, I believe that this could benefit in ensuring quality education.

The other point that I had learnt is that there are intentions imposing will and experiences of international donors without considering the local situation and context. It is advisable and academically feasible to customize to our nation.

What is more, there is poor participation of pertinent stakeholders' in ensuring quality education that is getting dwindling in urban and hinterlands.

## Please elaborate how to ensure quality education in the nation's education system?

In my view, the bedrock to ensure quality education stems from developing a well-established education policy; as policy is the document that defines a nation's realities



Areru Addesa

and frames ways to undo the challenges and consider the potentialities to achieve goals in the ladder of human development effort.

At the same time, organization and managements' effort, development of personal skills, academic support are also the important factors that contribute a lot for the quality education.

Besides, allocating resources; developing a system to generate high performing graduates who are enthusiastic to join the teaching profession as well as putting in place incentives are of utmost importance. Equally, enhancing efforts and commitments to address special needs education to communities in need is critical.

## What is your opinion with regard to history education practices?

In my view, history is the knowledge and study of the past. It is the story of the past and a form of collective memory. History is the story of who we are, where we come from, and can potentially reveal where we are headed.

History is important to study because it is essential for all of us in understanding ourselves and the world around us. Moreover, it gives us a very clear picture of how the various aspects of society such as technology, governmental systems, and even

society as a whole worked in the past so; we understand how it came to work the way it is now. I hold history is a non-negotiable aspect of better citizenship. I believe this is one of the main reasons why it is taught as a part of school curricula. Yes, people who push for citizenship history just want to promote a strong national identity and even national loyalty through the teaching of individual and collective success.

The former policy was downplaying history subjects not to be offered at schools. As a result, it has blemished the social cohesion of the society and blurred the true pictures of relations among various ethnic groups. In sum; it has eroded the moral values that kept Ethiopian people united and compassionate to one another.

Now, I am sure that history subject has regained its place in the revised curriculum.

## The Ministry of Education has put in place General Education Quality Improvement Package for Equity (GEQIP-E). What can we say about the program?

The program has six sub programs that aspire to ensure quality education. But it was framed to ensure access to education rather than quality.

School education systems are complex and vary greatly across the country. And the same

is true of the quality assurance mechanisms. The program does not consider the gaps. It is believed that one model of quality assurance cannot fit all systems; therefore it is more appropriate to explore the role of different stakeholders and the processes they follow at national and/or regional level.

In my view, policy makers should learn from the experiences of respective states and come up with working system to ensure quality education.

## Finally, if you have anything you would like to pass to our readers.

The flagship effort and commitment of the Ministry of Education should be ensuring quality education through promoting education for all programs. .

Last but not least, building strong education institutions in all areas, and assigning professionals- leaderships and instructors-based on merits should be practiced. Within the context of the Ethiopia and national quality frameworks, systems should focus on learning outcomes of students.

Similarly, parents and the general public should play role in terms of supporting the Ministry and discharging their own responsibility as improving education quality can be achieved through the concerted efforts of all actors.