



The Ethiopian Herald

Vol. LXXIX No 102 7 January 2023 - Tahesase 29, 2015

Saturday

Price Birr 10.00



Religious fathers assure prayers for Ethiopia's peace, unity

BY MISGANAW ASNAKE

ADDIS ABABA - Ethiopian religious fathers have assured their prayers for Ethiopia's peace and unity.

Conveying religious messages in connection with this year's Genna /Christmas celebration, the religious fathers also urged all faithful in particular and all citizens in general to extend unreserved support to the ongoing peace efforts in the country.

For his holiness Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Church Patriarch Abune Mathias,

the journey of peace that has been started should not be reversed. "To ensure this, the government and general public should work in a responsible and proper manner to make it well rooted."

"I call on all of you to lead the responsibility so that the glimmer of the peace that has started will grow into absolute trust and confidence. When we have to share what we have in our hands to the poor, birth of Jesus Christ day will be real." Abune Mathias said.

In his charismas message, Ethiopian

Catholic Church Cardinal Berhane Eyesus Demerew also urged faithful to work hard for the realization of the peace deal and help victims enjoy a happy life.

"We have to start a new chapter and this needs the coordinated effort of all of us. It should be sustained in the long run. The Christmas celebration will be well, when we share our feelings to the poor and elders. Christmas also helps us remind the society's life status during holiday in order to create good relationship between the faith followers and other people."

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Foreign Minister underlines sport, cultural diplomacy significance

• Holds sport competition in connection with Ethiopian Christmas

BY HAILE DEMEKE

ADDIS ABABA- While sport is the hallmark and ability of Ethiopia's diplomacy, culture is one of the foundations of it, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Affairs Minister Demeke Mekonnen said, calling for the ambassadors' engagement in the two areas.

The Deputy Premier made the above remark yesterday in a sports competition that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs held for ambassadors in collaboration with the Ministry of Culture and Sports under the motto "Our culture is the basis of our diplomatic ties" in Sululta town.

Demeke, who elaborated on the many manifestations of diplomacy, indicated the diplomatic influence of Ethiopian runners' victory in global sports competitions is so enormous. Sport is among the key part of Ethiopia's diplomacy in which the flag of



the nation waves high globally.

"Along with this, Ethiopian Airlines is our key brand of diplomacy and there is a need to greatly coordinate, connect and feed our

diplomatic work with institutions that have a cross name, reputation, and foundation."

Culture and Sports Minister Kejela Merdasa

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Christmas reminds us to put aside hatred, animosity: Premier

BY MENGESHA AMARE

ADDIS ABABA- The Birth of Jesus Christ reminds faithful and the public at large to forget hatred and animosity via passing down love and friendship to the next generation, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) said.

In a message he conveyed to the Christian faithful in connection with the Ethiopian Christmas yesterday, the Premier stated that the obsession with separation and

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Some 35 industries in Kombolcha resume operation

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Investors who see Ethiopia's potential will not be shaken by temporary situations

Kishen Raval

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The mammoth role of Ethiopian Diasporas in fending off foreign pressure

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Happy Genna!



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News



ETHIOPIA COMMODITY EXCHANGE

ECX to bid mining, industrial products online

BY YESUF ENDRIS

ADDIS ABABA-The Ethiopian Commodity Exchange (ECX) announced that it has developed online trading system aiming at bidding mining and industrial products.

ECX Compliance Officer Shimelis Habtemariam told local media that ECX has received legal certificate to exchange industrial and mining products and it is working on coming up with preconditions in reference with the legal certificate issued to ECX.

Recently, ECX introduced new items to be supplied on its online trading system and has discussed the partners on the ways of exchanging wheat and other agricultural products in Gondar town.

Accordingly, ECX is researching mechanisms to supply the indicated products. Mining products like sapphire, emerald, opal and industrial products including cement are identified to be supplied by ECX, he said.

“The inclusion of those industrial and mining products in the online trading system will support government strategy of fighting contraband and to generate tax income.”

This year, new agricultural products such as wheat, rice, Gibto, bean and korerima will be supplied through the ECX’s online trading system.

ECX Gondar Regional Online Trading Center Head Bayelign Zeray said that over 350 million Birr worth agricultural products including sesame, soy sauce and Masho have been exchanged via electronic trading system.

Accordingly, ECX has supplied 308 billion Birr worth products during the past 14 years.

In addition, seven million metric tons of agricultural products have been exchanged through ECX’s online trading system.

Ethio Telecom, GETFACTet ink agreement to boost students’ digital skills

BY ESSEYE MENGISTE

ADDIS ABABA -Ethio-Telecom and GETFACTet Ethiopia have signed a cooperation agreement to implement an educational program called “Brighter Generation” to provide various trainings to secondary high school students using digital learning centers.

During briefing media on Thursday, Ethio Telecom CEO Frehiwot Tamru said that projects such as digital education programs are instrumental in efforts to realize digital Ethiopia.

Frehiwot pointed out that Ethio Telecom is toiling to make such digital projects successful using the full potential of technology and working to increase access to education.

She promised that her company is ready to work together with Ethiopians living abroad if they come home with similar nation-building projects.

GetFact Ethiopia Founder Birhanu Bulcha said that the “BruhTwuld” (roughly meaning “brighter generation”) platform is the first foundation for the Diaspora community to help their country.

The statement stated that the agreement will play a major role in bringing about the transfer of knowledge involving Ethiopian individuals and scholars living in different



parts of the world so that the centers can achieve the purpose for which they were established.

The “Brighter Generation” program targets to improve the digital skills of high school students with the involvement of professional Ethiopians living abroad.

The two sides will collaborate to provide various training in digital centers that Ethio Telecom set up in high schools across the country. Apart from boosting students’ digital skills, the partnership will pave the way for technology transfers.

As per the agreement, the GETFACTet will coordinate Ethiopians in the Diaspora to provide various short-term and dynamic

training sessions to students in homeland.

The classes will focus on communication, language, critical thinking, leadership, and computer programming. Ethio Telecom, on its part, will provide the required expertise and technical support to facilitate the training both virtually and in person.

As per the agreement, the telco and GETFACTet will also work together to fully equip the training centers with materials required for learning.

GETFACTet Ethiopia is an organization established by Ethiopians and Diasporas living abroad with a view to promoting the good image of Ethiopia.

USAID Kefeta festival kicks off to support youth empowerment

• *Around 1,500 youths take part*

ADDIS ABABA – The USAID-supported Integrated Youth Activity, Kefeta, a “Youth for Peace Festival” has kicked off to support youth empowerment in Sidma State.

In collaboration with the Federal Ministry of Women and Social Affairs (MoWSA), Regional bureaus and Hawassa City Administration, USAID Support “Youth for Peace Festival” has been organized in the aforesaid state.

Opening the festival, MoWSA State Minister Muna Ahmed called on all actors to involve actively in the social and economic development of the next generation.

Some 1,500 young people from Hawassa, Bishoftu, Adama, Shashemene, and Dilla participated in a variety of activities. For instance, a 3 KM “Youth for Peace City Run,” peace foray and dialogues, a music concert, sports and games, talent show and a market took place.

The “Youth for Peace Festival,” is a 3.1 billion Birr USAID project launched in March 2022 to lift-up millions of vulnerable youths across Ethiopia. The five-year initiative will help youth in 18 cities across Ethiopia find meaningful jobs and ensure better access to essential services.



Kefeta organized the festival with USAID support to empower Ethiopian youth to champion positive change and to become agents of peace and stability in their own communities. The festival promoted intercultural understanding and created a platform for increased private sector engagement and civil society support for youth development.

Kefeta is remodeling over 50 such youth service outlets in selected youth centers, health centers, higher learning institutions,

and industrial parks to expand access to essential services, including banking and healthcare.

The festivals will engage young people in meaningful dialogue, arts and culture, sports, and games to inspire them to contribute to positive change in their communities. Activities like festival engage young voices and empower the next generation to take part in Ethiopia’s resilience and peace-building processes.

News



Some 35 industries in Kombolcha resume operation

BY TSEGAYE TILAHUN

ADDIS ABABA - Having recovered from the damage incurred during the past conflict, some 35 industries have resumed operations in Kombolcha, the city's Industry and Investment Bureau announced.

Speaking to The Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA), Kombolcha Industry and Investment Bureau Head Habtamu Haile stated that the government's commitment in providing support for investors whose properties were damaged and looted during the conflict has played a key role in the success.

In the 37 days of conflict, Kombolcha incurred a 10- billion- Birr loss due to the immense destruction and looting of manufacturing industries and other public and private properties. Now, law and order are restored in Kombolcha and apart from the 35 industries that resumed operation, there are other firms in the pipeline and they have conducted discussions with banks and other relevant institutions to this end.

Noting the high investment inflow to

Kombolcha, Habtamu indicated the town is one of the preferred investment destinations in Amhara State and the country at large. Currently, 131 companies with an aggregate capital of 53 billion Birr have been investing in various sectors whilst the manufacturing industry, which permanently employed 8,200 citizens, takes the lion's share.

As to him, the presence of the Kombolcha-Woldia-Hara Gebeya Railway project, air transport, and other transportation systems coupled with the town administration's commitment to supporting businesses constitute a share in this huge investment inflow.

Accordingly, due attention has been given to attracting private investments in the manufacturing industry and improving the town's competitiveness by providing export incentives, customs duty exemption, income tax holidays, and offering land at competitive lease prices.

The bureau head further noted that 200 hectares of investment land are prepared to transfer for potential investors that will come with the desired knowledge and expertise thereby contributing share to Ethiopia's economic dynamism.

Religious fathers...

Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus President Yonas Yigezu (PhD) said regarding this year's Christmas day that the Jesus Christ birth day teaches and reminds the wisdom of seeking peace and reconciliation so as to create good atmosphere for fellow people.

The peace agreement that has been started should be carried out well via ceasing war, supplying aid, medical supplies to the needy and carrying out other relevant activities, he underlined.

Ethiopian Evangelical Churches Fellowship President, Pastor Tsadiku Abdo on his part said that: "The birth of Jesus Christ always remembers us love, joyful and gift exchanging between the public. We should always be alert to support and share what we have with the poor and provide them with what they demand. We will assure prayers for the successful implementation of the peace agreement as peace is the source of every good thing in this planet let alone in our country."

Foreign Minister ...

on his part emphasized the need to have cultural attaches just as there are economic and military attaches in countries where Ethiopian missions are located. "The importance of sport to diplomacy is strong and our culture should also do it because it has a great role in the unity of countries and the mutual strengthening of peoples.

It is one of the soft power with little cost and plays a significant role in the exchange of ideas, information, art, language, and other aspects of culture among nations and their

people to foster mutual understanding, he added.

The minister urged everyone who goes abroad to represent Ethiopia to promote the country's traditional sports.

The event, which was held in connection with Ethiopian Christmas displayed different kinds of traditional sports including Christmas hockey (Ye Gena Chewata in Amharic), football, volleyball, and others.

Wollega university scholar to receive int'l award

BY MISGANAW ASNAKE

ADDIS ABABA -Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award (PBSA) announced that Kannan Ambalam (PhD) an Indian scholar from Wollega University (WU) will receive Indian Award for his comprehensive community welfare work in Ethiopia.

The Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award (PBSA) institute highlighted that Kannan Ambalam will receive the award at the 17th edition of the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention to be held in in Indore, India on 8-10 January 2023.

Kannan Ambalam (PhD) is Associate Professor at WU in the Department of Public Administration and Development Management.

According to the statement from the institute, along with his teaching responsibilities, he actively engaged the students and local communities in addressing the pressing problems of rural infrastructure through construction of bridges and developing water springs.

"Since 2013, he has constructed 93 low cost bridges, revived 55 water springs, constructed toilet in one school, built 2 check dams and facilitated the electrification of 1 village. Most of his projects are in East and West Wollega zones."

Recently, he constructed a bridge on the outskirts of Asko in Addis Ababa in collaboration with India Business Forum, Ethio Cement and Abyssinia



Steel.

He also revived two water springs near Hosaena that provide clean water to the surrounding communities.

As to the institute, these projects have major impact on improving the livelihoods of rural communities and enable a better rural-urban connectivity for the local communities.

Accordingly, the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award is the highest honor conferred on overseas Indians. PBSA is conferred by the President of India as part of the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention on Non-Resident Indians, Persons of Indian Origin or an organization established and run by the Non-Resident Indians or Persons of Indian Origin in recognition of their outstanding achievements both in India and abroad.

Christmas reminds...

destruction that is prevalent here and there today is not the nature of Ethiopians. "It is not a reflection of who we are and it is the result of the seeds that have been planted by eternal and foreign enemies."

Noting some people think this is the time when the evil seed has grown and there was no such thing yesterday, Abiy stressed that the December harvest is sown in July. "The seed was germinating underground, but we didn't have any trouble as the mustard grew and started biting the legs."

He continued: "Let us come to the new age, to the new light. Let's come to the new identity, the new chapter. As we create a new shared history. Yesterday's story brings us together. When we start a new path, we will not lose the path of

yesterday. When we enter a new age, the past does not separate us. If we rise with a new purpose, yesterday's purpose will not bother us.

"The point is, are we going to be accused and blamed by history, or are we going to be praised? Will we make history like the sebasegel who came from far and met the Messiah, or will we raise a sword against the innocents to destroy history like Herod?"

Like the holy angels, do we herald a new good news for a new history, or like the Jewish elite of the time, are we planted in history and push the opportunity presented to us with disdain?"

The way is to be reborn with a new identity that is suitable for the new Ethiopia and will survive for its people, PM Abiy remarked.

Opinion



DR. MAULANA KARENGA
Guest Columnist

Righteous reflection on being African: A Kwanzaa meditation

Kwanzaa is a time of celebration, remembrance, reflection and recommitment. It requires these practices throughout the holiday. But the last day of Kwanzaa is dedicated to deep reflection, meditation on the meaning and measure of being African and how this is understood and asserted for good in the world in essential, uplifting and transformative ways. This re sharing of thoughts in this article on the practice of deep reflection during Kwanzaa reaffirms its essentiality, not only to the practice of Kwanzaa, but also its indispensability to achieving and living a good and meaningful life. I speak of a life in which we think deeply and continuously about critical issues on a personal and social level and act accordingly. And as the honored ancestors of ancient Egypt taught, it means deep thinking (djaer) about what is good for the people and beneficial to the unfolding and flourishing of the future.

During this Kwanzaa, as always and as our honored ancestors centuries before us, we gather together again to celebrate and share the good we've gained and garnered; to remember in reverence the sacred names, noble deeds and enormous sacrifices of our ancestors; and to recommit ourselves to our highest values and most exalting visions, and to an ongoing practice that proves their worth and brings into being the good they embody and ensure. And we gather too to reaffirm our rootedness in our own culture, to reinforce the bonds between us as African people and to meditate on the expansive meaning and awesome responsibility of being African in the world.

As Kwanzaa draws to an end and the old year meets and merges with the new, we are, as always, obligated and urged by ancient custom and ongoing current concerns to sit down and seriously engage in righteous reflection on being African in the world. To speak of righteous reflection is, in an Ebonics sense of the word righteous, to talk of thought that is real, ethical and excellent. That is to say, thought that is free from the artificial, false and formulaic and comes from the heart as well as from the head. What is aimed at here is thought which is informed by an ethical sensitivity to the subject under consideration. And this holds true whether in our concern for each other or for the health and wholeness of the world; for the loss of human life or the mutilation of historical memory; and for the deprivation of material needs or the denial of dignity and rights due everyone.

This process and practice of righteous reflection culminates on January 1, *Siku ya Taamuli*, the Day of Meditation. Here we are to focus even more so and think deeply and continuously about our lives and the world, about critical issues that confront us and the world and our responsibility to understand and engage them. Indeed, we are to measure ourselves in the mirror of the best of our history and culture

and ask ourselves where we stand as a representative and embodiment of the best of what it means to be African and human in the fullest sense.

This cultural measurement and mirroring is achieved through asking and answering three fundamental questions. Building on the insights of Frantz Fanon, these Kawaida rooted questions are: who am I; am I really who I am and am I all I ought to be? Now to ask who we are is both a personal and communal question which cannot be righteously separated. For we are anchored and embedded in a definite community and culture and reflect the strengths or weaknesses of that community and culture even unintentionally.

To answer the question of "who am I?", we must embrace an expansive conception of our identity, rejecting racist conceptions that problematize, indict and distort our sense of Blackness or Africanness or diminish or limit its root understanding as an expression of excellence on every level. This means embracing a conception of African that defines our identity way beyond the given names and assigned numbers on our birth certificates, licenses or social security, insurance or other identity cards. It means understanding the personal in the context of the communal and the cultural, for inherent in the history and culture of our community is the source and answer of who we are and must become and be. However else we see ourselves, our conception of who we are must include at least three foundational identities forged in the crucible of critical periods of history and struggle. These identities are: fathers and mothers of humanity and human civilization; sons and daughters of the Holocaust of enslavement; and authors and heirs of the Reaffirmation of the 60's, i.e., Reaffirmation of our Africanness and social justice tradition. And these leave us clear lessons and legacies which pose social struggle; moral grounding; human dignity, durability and adaptive vitality; and a profound commitment to excellence and achievement as indispensable to defining the best of what it means to be African and human in the world.

Now, to ask "am I all I ought to be?" is to recognize the many ways our identity and the excellence it demands are eroded, undermined and otherwise damaged in the fire and furnace of oppression. Indeed, it is Fanon, again, who reminds us that in the belly of the beast of oppression, those less able to withstand the acidic toll it takes on the human person, often go through four stages of psychological disintegration. Thus, they: doubt themselves; deny themselves, i.e., their identity; condemn themselves and then mutilate themselves both psychologically and physically. Fanon

notes that in such a context of severe and savage oppression, they "wear the mask", desperately seeking relief from the racist reality surrounding us. And he rightly argues there is no relief or remedy except in struggle on a personal and collective level to defend one's humanity and free oneself from oppression and from the pathology it represents in the oppressor and reproduces in the oppressed.

It is knowing who we are in the most expansive sense and reaffirming it in thought and practice that we can answer the question and honor the ethical imperative of being all we ought to be. Indeed, to be all we ought to be is to join in struggle to create a context of freedom, justice, well-being and peace in the world which aids us in realizing the fullness of our humanity and flourishing as persons and a people. To ask and answer the question "am I all I ought to be?" then, speaks to the interrelatedness of our identity as both African and human and the awesome responsibility this places on us to repair and radically reorder the world.

It is clear from the teachings of our ancestors and our long experience in history that how we conceive and conduct our personal lives shapes and even determines the well-being of our families and people, society and eventually the world. Our responsibility, then, is in expanding concentric circles from family to the whole of humanity and the world. It is in this understanding that the *Odu Ifa* teaches that "doing good worldwide is the best expression of character". And the *Husia* instructs us that we are morally obligated to seek and speak truth in high and low places; to demand and do justice everywhere; to protect and provide for the poor and vulnerable in every place; to do and spread goodness throughout the land; and to constantly repair, renew and remake the world, making it more beautiful and beneficial than we inherited it.

Ed.'s Note:

Dr. Maulana Karenga, Professor and Chair of Africana Studies, California State University-Long Beach; Executive Director, African American Cultural Center (Us); Creator of Kwanzaa; and author of Kwanzaa: A Celebration of Family, Community and Culture, The Message and Meaning of Kwanzaa: Bringing Good Into the World and Essays on Struggle: Position and Analysis, www.AfricanAmericanCulturalCenter-LA.org; www.OfficialKwanzaaWebsite.org;

www.MaulanaKarenga.org.

cultural measurement and mirroring is achieved through asking and answering three fundamental questions. Building on the insights of Frantz Fanon, these Kawaida rooted questions are: who am I; am I really who I am and am I all I ought to be?



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

The Ethiopian Herald

Established in 1943

Published daily except Mondays
By The Ethiopian Press Agency



Office of the CEO

Tel. 011-126-42-22

Fax. 251-011-156-98-62

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The Ethiopian Herald

Editorial

Hope and optimism renewed

The followers of Christianity in Ethiopia today celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ. The Three wise men, biblical magi, went to Jesus' birthplace with gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Some religious scholars say particularly frankincense originated from East Africa. And probably, one of the wise men is from Ethiopia. The wise men's gifts also have their own religious interpretations. Overall, they announced the end of a dark era.

As Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (Ph.D) said it in his message in connection with the Day, "hatred, separation and destruction are not of ours." Of course, the true hallmark of we Ethiopians is the wisdom that always decorates us. History has already registered in golden ink that the shared wisdom of Ethiopians helped to ignite the engine of freedom and independence among the oppressed.

Ethiopian Christians, this year mark Genna, the Ethiopian version of Christmas Day, in a unique way. The northern war that left a dark spot in the country's history concluded with the signing of a peace accord in Pretoria. Since the eve of the celebration, hundreds of thousands of domestic and foreign tourists and the followers of Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido are assembled in Lalibela town to mark the Day in an awe-inspiring way. The colorful grand celebration at the Rock-Hewn Churches of Lalibela is yet another indicator of the reign of peace in Ethiopia.

The clergymen of all the 11 churches of Lalibela, dressed up in attires embroidered in gold and a unique cloak chant 'Beza Kulu Alem Yom Tewelde' literally means 'behold the

savior of the entire world is now born'. Of course, this season could be taken as one of the peaks for tourists because another such sort of celebration would follow in the historical city of Gondar in about two weeks to mark the baptism of Jesus by John the Baptism.

Today Ethiopians are nurturing reconciliation, peace and the rebuilding of the country. The dark spot is being removed. What comes next is sitting together and harnessing the Ethiopian wisdom that has been with us since time immemorial. The National Dialogue would start in the coming March and we would use it to undo our major problems.

True, the news released from Pretoria that heralded the peace talks were ended in full agreement of the two parties' warmed the hearts of everyone. Consequently, the information aired through different media channels was changed from breaking news of the war to good news of peace, rehabilitation, reconstruction and aid provision for the needy. Over and beyond, it unveils the wisdom of Ethiopians before the eyes of the world.

The peace agreement, in the actual state, is a great accomplishment that proved the effective efforts of Africans to settle Africa's problems with African solutions. As of the date the agreement was reached, both parties; the government and TPLF have shown keen interest in the fulfillment of all contents of it and the outcomes are commendable. The days ahead show us more about the consolidation of peace and reconciliation in Ethiopia. Ethiopia continues to ascend to the next height.

Opinion

How much does peace cost, where is it found?

BY MENGESHA AMARE

Neither military muscle nor vast societal mob could bring about peace and tranquility, as the latter is entrenched in the minds of the generation from epoch to epoch.

Needles to state, either indescribable material wealth or orchestrated conspiracy can bear peace and grow peaceful coexistence. Every ounce of serenity, calm communal air and sigh of relief is absolutely found in the minds and hearts of the wider community and each citizenry.

Yes, nothing is more appealing and lucrative than living in a harmonious way with people of the world let alone with fellow citizens and compatriots sharing the good and bad scenarios at home and being homed together.

It is really highly timely to extend peaceful coexistence to the cosmopolitan horizon across the nation via consolidating collaboration, harmony and sense of fraternity and generosity, fairness and good will.

As no one benefits out of turmoil, cruelty, sense of jealousy and destructive efforts except those who are born and grew up in the atmosphere chock-full with diabolic

spirit and devilish mission in one way or another garner benefit at the expense of the precious lives of the poor, nurturing peace has to be all weather lyric of human beings on earth, on other planets even if life exists. How headstrong and inimical conflict entrepreneurs are!

I am always surprised when I have heard that these segments of the society or these factions are giving hard time to this one or that one or attack others to have material wealth or something to quench the thirst what they don't know well, but intrinsically suffer as peace is the only abstract perception merely garnered from peaceful mind and hallowed deed.

The world is now excellently stirred and succinctly interrogated by its 8 billion population as it has housed only some individuals with sacred mind reciting the Biblical verse that is also widely known as the Golden Rule: "In everything, do to others what you would have them do to you." (Matthew 7:12) and internalizing the saying goes, 'Clear mind is a comfortable pillow.'

Ethiopia is a great nation to which people of the rest of the world can come in search of jobs and for the sake of living in if its sons and daughters develop coexistence and start working for its development and

real change bridging polarized attitudes and corrosive mentality.

Those who could hardly comprehend Ethiopia's enormity and capacity to do anything whatever it would love having citizens wholeheartedly working for its real change are working day in and day out to weaken this great nation.

The scope is large, open and a range of actors and institutions including the general public can drop whatsoever contribution to the effort exerted towards making Ethiopia prestigious and ideal.

Peace matters the most. It has to be nurtured in the minds of the new generation—the little ones who will take over this loveable nation with its future. Surprisingly, peace is nowhere except in our palm if we are eager to employ it from the bottom of our heart as serenity and harmony help procure fondness and tranquility.

Yes, being the most ethnically diverse nation in the continent of Africa, Ethiopia has to well capitalize on peace and peaceful coexistence as these are the fundamental weapons to make a complete country, not physical artilleries puffing bullets to make human being vanish.

For how long can the country be labeled

as poor swimming in the ocean of paradox—a rich poor state—following either lack of real citizenry working for it or the rife bad governance it is exercising. If we know the real root cause of our poorness, lack of peace and state of stepping back, devising the solution to all problems could by no means be out of our reach.

Since the effort to come up with peaceful atmosphere which all citizenry are perfumed and the issue of peace leaves no boundary, Ethiopians from every nook and cranny of its territory have to move in unison to declare lasting peace and root peaceful coexistence among the entire community.

Assuming that the issue of peace could not be left only to some actors like the judiciary comprising police, judges, attorney and prosecutors or any other government body as it requires the combined effort of all, we all have to be prominent peace ambassadors. Live harmoniously and let others enjoy living in harmony, hatred, peace-loathing and snatching other's peace is not Ethiopians culture! Every one of us has had immeasurable share towards peace!

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

Art & Culture

How to celebrate holydays in a mood?!

BY KFLEEYESUS ABEBE

Holydays are special and handful days when people stop monotonous day to day life and give time for things they give high value or just for themselves; to rest, to realize, to entertain, to get together with people, to visit, to go pilgrimage or to enjoy every bit of life. Usually, holydays are related with religious festivals but according to Encyclopedia Britannica, in modern times, a holyday is “a day of either religious or secular commemoration.” Victory day, Independence Day, and New Year’s day/festival are some of secular commemorations that can be mentioned. For Americans, holiday can just mean vacations. Whatever the definitions, it is expected and it is very normal people to be in joyous mood during holydays. But sometimes these festivities, the frenzy gets out of hand and make holidays depressing or regretful times. For that not to happen, it is advisable to take some preparations and precautions.



Among the things that could affect moods of holydays is our eating habit of dining. In times of holydays, there is always plenty foods and drinks prepared and served. Overeating and eating foods that we are allergic to can change all the mood of the holyday. You might spend the rest of the holyday or even days after the holyday treating yourself. So, it is very essential to be careful about what we eat and drink. We should know what our limit is, and identify what foods and drinks are healthy to our body. For Ethiopians whose holydays usually come after long periods of fasting, it this is very necessary to have a good holiday. Most Ethiopian foods are spicy and have fats so it is mandatory to watch what and how much we consume.

much in holydays.

Holydays could also be some crazy days if they don’t have purpose. It is good to know the goal of the holyday and identify “what to do” and “what not to do” during holidays. Otherwise, you may do something opposite and dishonor the holyday you intend to respect. For example, Christmas is annually celebrated to remember the birth of Jesus Christ, who Christians believe is the Son of God. While celebrating the holyday it is vital to remember the birth of Jesus in a ways that you can. It might be listening to spiritual songs, reading Christmas stories in the scripture, reciting your prayers, talking about the birth of Jesus to your families and friend or praise or worship God. Humility, love and sacrifice are some of the take aways from this holyday.



Holyday extravagance can also undermine the beautiful holyday celebrations. It can erase or replace bad memories instead whenever we remember the holyday. Thus, celebrants should have a budget of holyday expenditure. It is expected to spend more than the usual time but it must be affordable to our lives. If not, by the next day we might get ourselves in debt.

Religious holydays have some protocols and customs in common. One of these is to forgive. Holyday is a joyous and free time so how could it be full spirited unless people get rid of their anger, grudges and let go of resentments. So, make sure that you have forgiven people if you have been with such feelings. And, if there are people you have hurt you should also ask for forgiveness or else holydays will miss the whole point.

problems, the sick or people who are in prison. It is good and truly spiritual to do these activities during holyday times. So by doing one or all of these activities, we can achieve the goal of religious holydays. The Holy bible for instance says the following.

during holyday celebration is to get together with family, friends, and community at large. Holydays are usually reserved for hanging out with friends and family members. Not following this tradition might ruin the holydayvibe. Therefore, it is so important to be with somebody than spending holydays alone. You might visit your grandmother or grandfather. It is a great time for grandparents to meet their granddaughters and grandsons and cheer. It is also an important time to know your neighbors. The hectic life may not give you the chance to connect with your neighbors and surrounding community. But holydays create this opportunity; either you invite them or you get invited and you will know neighbors. For Ethiopians, holydays are also times to have multicultural merriment. Tasting different dishes, and performing cltural dances and having conversation can create an extra atmospheere to the holyday.

During holyday, people engage in various activities. There are bustling markets, commotion of people and traffics. These inadvertently creates incidents such as loss of property as pickpokets, robbers, and burglars take market placest safehavens. Because we might be in so much activities that could result in electric shock and fire, car accidents. Similar tragedies may affect your mood. So, it is important to take note of this and be mindful in times of holydays. Not just that you involve in accident or cause accidents but you might experience if you don’t take proper care. For instance, three years ago I was almost hit by car that was being driven by a tipsy driver. Since then I don’t get out

Holydays are times of showing gratitude to God. In Ethiopia, people thank God for letting them see this auspicious day by using the phrases, “enkuan adereseh/adereshe” (Felicitate for the Almighty allowed you to witness this day), and the reply enkuan abro aderesen (The feeling is mutual. Both of us owe the Almighty a Happy and grateful day for the lord kept us alive and together to see this day).

For I was hungry
and you gave Me something to eat;
I was thirsty
and you gave Me something to drink;
I was a stranger and you took Me in;
I was naked and you clothed Me;
I was sick and you took care of Me;
I was in prison and you visited Me.’

Though generosity and charity are expected to be practiced in every day life of religious people, they are very needed in times of holyday for many reasons. For one thing, people in need shouldn’t feel they are left out while most people are having good times. Because we have time, it is easier to be generous and charitable more than any day or time of the year. Many religions also encourage followers to be mindful and reach out people who are in need.

Another integral part of holyday celebrations is comforting the saddened; people who are grieving, people who are in different

Last but maybe the most important thing

In conclusion, preparation, caution, being guided by principles and having goal makes holyday worth it. If not, it would be devastating. There are instances people got in trouble after holydays. To avoid this problem, it is now we prepare ourselves for productive and joyous holyday.

Myself

BY SENAIT G/HIWOT

Should i smile when i feel sad
Should i plead when i feel mad
Should i adjust to what they think
So i may not be perceived as weak

I am my own self and not anyone else
I shouldn't feel like i should please
Everybody that comes my way
I feel like i should stay
True to myself in every sense

So i can live my life with ease
I will never be good enough for some
And for others i will be
This is the way the world works
And things are as they should be

Investors who see Ethiopia's potential will not be shaken by temporary situations

Kishen Raval

BY GIRMICHEW GASHAW

Today's guest Kishen Raval is an Indian businessman / industrialist in East Africa. Raval, a father of two is born in Kenya. When he was a secondary school student, Kenyan schools were closed due to the post-election riots in 2007. Consequently, he was forced to leave the country to complete high school education and join university on time.

He went to Australia as it was the only country in the world providing completion of grade 12 within five months. He then completed the full year education in five months with a fast track course. Therefore, he joined Australia's University of Melbourne and earned a first degree in finance and management. He then received a second degree in Exchange finance and investment from Netherlands Rotterdam School of Management.

He is now managing director of the Habesha Steel Mills PLC, a company established in 2007, manufactures different sizes of ribbed bars. The Ethiopian Herald had spent a few hours with him so as to understand investment experience of the company, challenges and the way forward. Have a nice read.

Would you tell us how and when did the company start the steel production business in Ethiopia? What inspired you to do so?

We started steel production in Ethiopia as of 2010. First and foremost, we had assessed the market and resource potential in the country in terms of steel production. As per our assessment, we found that Ethiopia is the second most populous nation in Africa after Nigeria, and still the fastest growing economy in the region. The people are very welcoming. There have also been good government policies and big investment projects in the country.

So, we believe that infrastructure was the backbone for any growth and Ethiopia is the right place for the manufacturing of steel bars. By and large, we found the aforementioned points as good factor for a potential investor to come and invest here.

In Africa, there is a low level of infrastructure. So, in a place where there is a good government and excellent democratic gesture, we believe infrastructure will be the priority. As we have seen since then, the country as well as the city has changed as there have been so many investments coming up. So, we invested in steel manufacturing considering that it is the driver for the economic growth for any country. We are right now producing reinforcement bars for the construction industry. Very soon, we will also be producing wire rod



nails, angles, flats, Z's and various kinds of Steels including steel tubes. We are going to expand the business within a very short period introducing it to the market.

How do you evaluate the overall performance of your company in terms of producing and supplying steels?

Over the years, we have increased our capacity almost in 10 folds. In the next few years, we will produce more than that. We are one of the largest producers here in Ethiopia and striving to keep the momentum.

Our market has been producing for only domestic consumers due to cost of production, raw material and some of the bureaucratic harms we faced here. This doesn't allow us to produce steel to our level of capacity. Due to this reason, what we produce is not enough to export for neighboring countries. Hopefully, once the economy is improving, the production volumes of the company will also be mounting and hitting the vision of producing 90 to 95 per cent plus. At this point, we will be competitive to export steel to other countries as well.

You are facing challenges related to COVID and others. So how could you deal with this challenge and be able to succeed in the business?

COVID was a serious problem that the world faced as a whole. During COVID, our focus was more on the community and our employees. We believe that we were in a good position till COVID. Fortunately, thanks to God, we passed all

the bottlenecks and stood in the position where we are today. During COVID, we focused on the community. We had given three meals a day to more than 500 people, for many months, as many of them didn't have work.

Realizing the absence of oxygen in the struggle to save lives of the patients affected by COVID, we provide oxygen for all government hospitals. In those days, we created some better systems for the people and the company. I believe we have evolved through this and come out stronger on the other side.

What will be the plan of your company in terms of expanding the supply of steel for the international market and increasing foreign currency income?

As we are producing bars for local capacity, we are already saving a huge amount of foreign currency to the country. Hence, we try to strengthen the effort further as we can save up to 300 million USD foreign currencies by consuming local raw material and adding some value in it. Ethiopia is a country that has good factors of production abundant manpower and raw material, too. Accordingly, we are trying to convert local raw material to finished products.

I believe this is a great advantage for local industries as they are importing finished products. We are in expansion of steel right now. Given the current situation, we will be quadrupling our capacity in the next five years via increasing our product ranges.

Since the economy and industries in Ethiopia are still working at low utilization capacity, it will take some time for Ethiopia to be economically viable for the export of steel. I think the primary focus should be given to convert local material for local consumption. Then after, it is better to think about exporting goods after fulfilling the local demand. Without fulfilling the local demand, I don't think it is viable to compete internationally yet.

How many jobs have been created for Ethiopian citizens? Do you have a plan to increase this number while the company starts to produce in its full capacity?

So, we have currently employed 3,000 employees and indirectly more than 15,000 people. By the end of 2030 when the expansion project reaches its completion, our company is targeted to place more than 10,000 employees within our group.

How do you explain the relationship that your company has built with stakeholders working in this area?

I believe we have established a wonderful relationship with our stakeholders i.e. the

“ Hopefully, once the economy is improving, the production volumes of the company will also be mounting and hitting the vision of producing 90 to 95 per cent plus. At this point, we will be competitive to export steel to other countries as well ”



Herald Guest

community, the local government since they perceive what we give back to the community as the company is growing. They recognize that we always take the community together with us. We give employment references to people from the community. We also have built more than 150 houses for displaced people. Apart from building schools for the local community, our company equips it with the right infrastructure. Over the last seven years, we have been educating 30 students in a private school in Dukem town of Oromia State.

We have assured them as long as all students are from poor family backgrounds where their parents cannot afford school fees. They don't have the ability to buy books, bags and other stationary equipment necessary for schooling. We are increasing the number of students year to year choosing exceptional students who have excelled in school but are not able to pay the fees.

We have provided water for the community. So we are giving back a lot to the community and I believe this is the way business should happen. As a result of this, the community looks at all the things very positively.

In addition to this we have also built a park for the community in Dukem, this park is developed and managed by Habesha Steel Mills PLC as part of the Green economy drive by the Prime Minister Dr Abiy Ahmed. In this park, we have created many traditional coffee and kiosks which was handed over to the local youth who can develop this as a business opportunity to further support the community.

Is this how the company is discharging its social responsibility?

I believe so. It is a responsibility people should do out of their goodwill. It is not considered as a requirement pressured by the government right now. The government is open. The private sector can do as they want. I believe the private sector needs to step up its support and do a lot for the community as it is the right of the society to get back from the progress of the company. That way, if something went wrong in the company, it is the society that safeguards it. In the same fashion, when things are going well, the company should take care of the society.

Potential investors found the rest of the world has aspired to invest in Ethiopia. If one of these investors asked you about the investment opportunity what would be your response?

Unfortunately, Ethiopia has had some bad image in the last few years. However, I believe that this is changing now. The potential in Ethiopia is huge. And the government has made significant efforts to minimize the bureaucracy for new investors eyeing the investment potential of the country.

Even if the progress is good, there is still a lot of work that remains to be done. The businessman, investors who see the potential in the country will not be shaken by temporary situations. In the long term

investors are looking at a 20 – 30 - 50 years' timeline. Ethiopia will be in a very different place in this period. Therefore, I believe Ethiopia should not look for these investors who are not looking long term. And at the same time, we reduce the barriers to entry for newcomers.

Do you have investment in other parts of the world? How do you compare the investment activities of those countries with Ethiopia?

We have investments in Uganda and Kenya. We are also looking at a few other countries right now.

Kenya and Ethiopia are very different because both countries have different economic structure, culture and different strategy.

I think Kenya is much integrated with the global economy and has better linkage but Ethiopia has better resources and manpower. Ethiopia has a better GDP than Kenya however the per capita income of the country is low because the population is almost double.

And India and Ethiopia have many similarities to the culture of the people, the political structure of the countries, however Ethiopia has much to learn from India on economic policy & reforms and how to manage differences. What is important in Ethiopia is everybody should stand as they all are Ethiopian and work for mutual benefit to brighten the future.

What are the mechanisms that your company devised to produce quality steel products that meet the international standard?

You raised a very good point as it is a very critical parameter that we agreed upon at the startup of the project. We've done grade 60 productions. Since the day of inception, we have always focused on quality. We have used German technology so as to ensure the quality of the process. We have a license to apply German technology in Ethiopia. Therefore, we were also the first producers of grade 60 and 75 in the country. We believe quality is very important and we will be introducing a grade 100 in the market as well.

What do you recommend to further develop the steel manufacturing sector? Would you tell us about the hindrances, if any?

Of course, infrastructure for the industry is very important in terms of the quality of the power. Secondly, Ethiopians work force should have the right skill. A lot of students come up with degree but they do not have industry know how. Thus, universities and industries linkage should be strengthened so as to address the challenge observed. So, the students that are coming out of universities with undergraduate degree should learn the skills required in industry. A lot of them are coming with high caliber, designing but there is a gap in terms of changing the theoretical aspect to the real object.

Even if it is a country wide issue, foreign



currency is one of the big problems so as to continue the production. This will not be a continuous challenge as the government has been taking policy measures so as to address it.

If you want to add more points please take a chance?

I believe there is a lot to be done in Ethiopia and the government is aware of this. It is now time for bureaucracies to facilitate investment opportunities. The economy should shift from state driven to private sector driven. There is a need to go quicker and the resources need to be made available for the private sector to fairly complete one another.

There is huge resource potential in Ethiopia. In order to unleash this potential, the private sector has to do its part. I think this was very important. The other point that I want to mention here is, the participation of the private sector within the economy should further be intensified with less government control.

Last time I heard that the government reduced the control in the cement sector. This is a very sound measure as it is geared to the private sector to engage in competition. Earlier, the previous government had impeded investment in the cement sector for foreigners. And this creates a problem that we observed today where there is huge shortage of cement and also one of the highest prices of cement on the continent which inhibits infrastructure growth.

So, certain interventions with a good intent are imperative. On the other hand, some other interventions may not bring positive outcomes at the end of the day, The door of investment should be open for the private sector to compete with one another on a fair basis. If this is so, the business competition will allow the economy to boost as the investor goes to the next trade opportunity. Finally, the private sector would be the driver of the economy.

Thank you very much.

Don't mention it please.

Unfortunately, Ethiopia has had some bad image in the last few years. However, I believe that this is changing now. The potential in Ethiopia is huge. And the government has made significant efforts to minimize the bureaucracy for new investors eyeing the investment potential of the country

Law & Politics

The mammoth role of Ethiopian Diasporas in fending off foreign pressure

BY ADDISALEM MULAT

Ethiopians for almost years have been a victim of unwarranted foreign pressure that aimed at interfering in the internal affairs of the country and imposing external interests. For the sake of truth, Ethiopia's enemies and special group interests have been at all hours of the day and night making a supreme effort to encroach on the sovereignty of the nation by orchestrating many conspiracies going behind closed curtains.

As a matter of fact, in the course of the conflict that rocked the northern part of the country for two solid years, Ethiopians has been fighting a proxy war against the domineering strategies of the modern-day imperialists. However, in the fullness of time all their endeavors proved to no avail.

In the aftermath of the unwavering stance of the incumbent and the people of Ethiopia, the country managed to foil a diverse range of barefaced political pressure in tandem with other even-minded nations worldwide. On the grounds of this, they ended up making history at the earliest possible time with Ethiopia's allies residing in all parts of the world.

In good truth, in the course of the war, they have made history in harmony with Ethiopia's friends residing throughout the entire world. It should be borne in mind that the #No More Global Movement stole the attention of Africans and foreign nationals despite the challenges were not as easy as taking candy from a baby and falling off a log.

It would not be an exaggeration to say, quite a lot of Africans have stood in solidarity with Ethiopians to ward off unwarranted pressure for good and all as per the fact that the movement turned out to be the benchmark of the anti-imperialism struggle by turning aside the continuous external pressure and interference. It must be remembered that in the course of the conflict Ethiopians at home and abroad left no stone unturned to protect the sovereignty of the country by stand together.

At that specific point in time, a broad spectrum of nations from South Africa, Somalia, Kenya, and other parts of the world have stood by the side of the government to forestall external pressure by taking part in a wide range of campaigns. Apart from demonstrating their solidarity with Ethiopia in the struggle against the snooping of external forces, they have been on several occasions signifying their companionship with Ethiopians.

They tried every possible course to make evident their fellowship with Ethiopia in its struggle against the meddling of foreign powers. In point of fact, the move taken by Ethiopians in fending off external pressure has received much appreciation from various nations worldwide at the earliest possible moment.

It appears clear that on the heels of the conspiracies of some foreign entities in Ethiopia, the country has passed through twists and turns. No matter what the challenges, Ethiopia embarked on harvesting the fruits of accomplishment in restoring peace and tranquility in the length and breadth of the northern part of the country.

For the sake of truth, in the course of the



war, Ethiopia has proved the fact that it is an emblem of liberation conquering external pressure that emanates from diverse interests. Added to that colonialists have been going to the ends of the earth to knock off the balance of the country and making the continent of Africa dependent on them.

In this regard, it is worth mentioning that Ethiopian Diasporas have played a huge role in thwarting external pressure by working in close collaboration with friends of Ethiopia.

They have as well played a paramount role in taking part in several campaigns prepared to forestall external pressure and defend the country's interest in an extensive range of international platforms.

Speaking of which, the #No More movements campaign has won the hearts and minds of the wider international community in addition to giving valuable lessons to other nations worldwide to follow suit. Honestly speaking, some of the discredited international media outlets have been time and time again mystifying the whole world with their usual bogus stories. However, the firm stance of the government ended up foiling the conspiracies of Ethiopia's adversaries making an attempt to dismantle the country and accomplish their concealed motives.

Ethiopian Diasporas have been standing up for their home nation to fend of external pressure and now are engaged in supporting the implementation of the peace deal signed in Pretoria. The Diaspora community has served as Ethiopia's soft power in influencing the political decision-making of their country of residence for the benefit of the homeland in 2022, the Ethiopian Diaspora Service (EDS) said.

EDS Communication Director Wondwosen Girma told The Ethiopian Herald that during the just concluded year, the participation of the Diaspora community in the national issues back home was so immense. The Diaspora played a unique role in making the voice of their home country be heard at the international level and serving it as a bridge with the outside world.

Most importantly, Ethiopians in the Diaspora

have staged numerous demonstrations in major cities across the globe and denounced the undue pressure some interest groups exerted in their home country. Accordingly, over 70 public rallies were held in 40 global cities in which hundreds of thousands of Ethiopian Diasporas participated.

The director further noted that the Diaspora launched the #No More movement to protest some interest groups' unwarranted attempts to meddle in Ethiopia's domestic affairs and to show solidarity with the government. Besides rallies, the Diaspora community has been aggressively participating in public diplomacy activities in their countries of residence.

"The Diaspora community from all walks of life demonstrated overwhelming participation in public rallies, discussion with political representatives, sent petition letters and other forms of campaigns to fight the unfair pressure."

Apart from informing the global community about Ethiopia's sovereign right to solve internal problems on its own, the Diasporas have also done commendable jobs in refuting the coordinated media lies and disinformation campaign.

Commenting on the issue, Dejen Ras, a writer who published several articles in The Ethiopian Herald, stated that the disinformation against Ethiopia and its people in 2022 mainly focused on breaking down the unity among the people, Diaspora, and leadership. It was optimized by the #No More Movement. The momentum created had much effect beyond the borders of the country and resonated across the African continent into the world.

"Hence, the country's enemies designed a strategy to break the unity; we started to see a huge rift among the Diaspora even in the first quarter of 2022. By that time, the leadership had also followed a calculated move that they thought was crucial to bring an end to the country's multiple, coupled, and intense problems. That too created division among the defenders of disinformation against the country."

Those who create disinformation have

penetrated every diaspora group around the middle of the year. They used the different events in the country as a showcase for each diaspora group to go its way instead of staying unified against every situation, circumstance, and adversity. Robust systems that could synchronize the diaspora were not in place ahead to resist such forces of distraction.

For his part, Ethiopian American Civic Council (EACC) Political Strategist, Asqual Teferi, said most of the Ethiopian Diaspora living in the United States of America are very enthusiastic about the peace agreement.

The peace agreement and the ongoing implementation process is a step towards peace and the Ethiopian Diaspora is enthusiastically looking forward to reconstruction, she added.

According to a local media report the recent visit of government officials led by House of People's Representatives Speaker Tagesse Chafu to Mekelle is a really exciting event, Asqual said.

"We all deserve peace, she noted, adding that giving peace a chance is an admirable step."

Asqual further noted that since war has a cascading and long-lasting effect on a country, most Ethiopian Diaspora in the US want to galvanize support for the peace agreement and its implementation.

Peace and reconciliation allow us to focus on the reconstruction and the rehabilitation effort, the political strategist stated.

There are countries that have become successful in bringing peace and reconciliation, South Africa being one, she said, adding that we can mimic their success using our own culture, ways and understanding.

The Ethiopian Diaspora has played a very effective job during the war, Asqual pointed out, adding that the Ethiopian Diaspora is also now engaging itself in supporting the rehabilitation of war-torn places. The peace agreement will lend itself to galvanizing more support from the diaspora, including in the reconstruction and rehabilitation effort, she stressed. The Ethiopian Diaspora is very smart, strategic, and highly organized, according to the political strategist.

Happy Genna!

BY TEWODROS KASSA

“When I visited Lalibela for Christmas celebrations this past January, the altitude—8,600 feet above sea level—and the crowds took my breath away: the tunnels and passage ways connecting the churches were crammed with devotees bumping into and even shoving one another in their rush to get from one church to another,” wrote Paul Raffaele, a Journalist, who got an opportunity to celebrate Genna, Ethiopian Christmas at the mysterious holy site of Lalibela, in the northern Ethiopia famous for monolithic rock-cut churches; and one of the holiest towns centers of pilgrimage.

Its 11 monolithic churches—carved out of the red volcanic stone in the 12th century, and now a World Heritage Site—are thronged by pilgrims every Christmas. Because of differences between Western and Ethiopian calendars and traditions, Ethiopians celebrate that holiday on what Westerners know as January 7, the journalist further elaborated in his article presented in the Smithsonian Magazine.

True, Lalibela, which is also known as the “Second Jerusalem,” is a place where hundreds of thousands of Ethiopian Orthodox Christians celebrate the annual festival of Christmas on January 7.

Today, the festival of Genna, (The Ethiopian Christmas) is being celebrated warmly and



colorfully across the country. Especially at Lalibela, the day is marked stunningly in the presence of hundreds of thousands of local and international pilgrims. On the eve of Ethiopians Christmas, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed extended his best wishes for Ethiopians. The Premier said that the Birthday of Jesus Christ is considered the beginning of reconciliation among Christians. The celebration demonstrates the fact that unity has been maintained.

As to the PM, the Birth of Christ turned the age of redemption into mercy and united human beings with eternal reconciliation. Celebrating the festival is important to

uniting those who were at enmity with each other. The current division and enmity being witnessed among us is not our real behavior, but it is salt of conspiracy orchestrated against us, he underlined.

Stressing the need to further forge unity despite the efforts of few against it, the Premier said that Ethiopians would be beneficial if they are able to draw lessons from the story of the Birth of Christ with a view to making the future Ethiopia better.

He also urged all to stand together and work in unison to see the new Ethiopia we want. Religious fathers from various

institutions have also extended best wishes and messages to all Ethiopians.

According to them, since the Birthday of Jesus Christ is the foundation of love, courtesy and considerateness, Christians should interpret these values into practice by loving and respecting each other.

Respecting each other and living in peace and love with a sense of fraternity is God’s commandment. “Owing to this, all of us who are in charge of various responsibilities—be it spiritual and worldly works—should obey God’s commandments and execute our duty accordingly,” they remarked.

God’s becoming to this earth as a human being is a clear indication of His love to all mankind. Thus, we should also show the love that God has demonstrated for human beings to fellowmen. Mentioning that the Birth of Jesus Christ has abolished the wall of hostility between God and mankind and brought peace, the leaders said that Christians understanding that the Christmas is the festival of humility and love, they should spend the day by being more considerate to those who are in need of help for various reasons and sharing what they have.

“We should follow the exemplary deeds of Jesus Christ and perform good deeds to fellow citizens,” they highlighted.



Published in cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture

Efforts on wheat production for food security, export

BY BAHIRU SETEGNE

The Ministry of Agriculture has conducted several activities to cultivate wheat widely both in autumn and summer (meher and bega) taking as a campaign. Wheat production in Ethiopia can be divided into two major production seasons: meher (rain fed) and Bega (irrigated) production seasons that wheat production and productivity is increasing in a good manner. Ensuring food self-sufficiency is comparing with our sovereignty. Now a day, the nation has been working in a hot mobilization to succeed wheat self-sufficiency as agricultural revolution.

Wheat production is one of the major ways of eradicating poverty that Ethiopia has emerged as an African country that has taken significant steps to achieve self-sufficiency in food production.

Nationally, it has already planned to harvest 153 million quintals of wheat (52 million irrigated and 101 million in rainy season) in 2015 Ethiopian fiscal year which will be doubled compared to last fiscal year. In fact, the productivity of wheat in most States of Ethiopia is promising as remarkable achievements are registered.



Increasing domestic wheat production is a national priority. Improved varieties provide an important pathway to enhancing productivity and stability of production. This shows that Ethiopia is on the right track through registering successful wheat production in a short period of time.

At this time, wheat production in Ethiopia is beyond food sufficiency (consumption) as it is to substitute the importing wheat and even it is expected to export. It is to reverse the nations’ annual import which used to 17 million quintals of wheat.

Oromia State is one of the major wheat producers of the nation. In the State, East

Bale Zone has wide and suitable fertile land (agro ecology) as well as levelled topography for mechanization utilizations. Wheat is one of the potentials of East Bale that has been cultivated widely in Agricultural Commercialization Cluster (ACC) approach.

Higher officials of the Ministry and Oromia State Agriculture Bureau visited wide clusters of wheat cultivation in East Bale Zone of the State.

On the occasion, Oumer Hussien, Minister of Agriculture, said wheat cluster development in East Bale has a large contribution in order to achieve the goal of

national economic growth. In East Bale, farmers are attracted in cultivating wheat utilizing different technologies computing positively with investors.

As to Oumer, 50 quintals wheat per hectare is expected as a result of the efforts of managements at each level that can be taken as best practice for other areas of the nation.

On the other hand, the minister stated that investors have significant roles in harvesting utilizing mechanization tools. As a result, investors who provide combiners to farmers should work beyond machinery rent as they are responsible to enhance the achievement of the national goals by harvesting crops keeping the quality.

Head of Oromia State Agriculture Bureau, Getu Gemechu on his part said special attention is given to cultivate 100 million quintals of wheat (60 million quintals in Meher and 40 million quintals irrigated) in the State in this fiscal year.

At last, wheat production in Oromia is beyond consumption that the region is to supply 15 million quintals of wheat for exporting purpose, Getu mentions adding that 3 million quintals of wheat will be kept for surplus.

Verbatim and Caption

Peace, unity, ideological supremacy- national pillars

A country is an idea and product of ideas. A country collapses when idea collapses. Peace prevails rooted in peaceful ideas. Peace, unity and supremacy are interrelated. If we ensure peace and unity then supremacy prevails since it is the sum total of the two. Peace means sympathy, love and harmony.

Peace, unity and ideological supremacy are pillars of a nation. We have to work on these pillars to build a robust, peaceful and developed country. We have to work on amending wrong ideas and narratives in our nation-building process to strengthen unity.

Dr. Mehret Debebe,

President of Africa Leadership Excellence Academy said at 13th "Sile Ethiopia" edition in Semera, Afar.



We have to scarify everything on the altar of peace. We have understood the value of peace during the past two years. We have to maintain and capitalize on the peace that exists this time. We have to work on sustaining peace in our country. If there is peace and unity among the people united people would keep national unity. A united people of one nation can create strong, peaceful and prosperous country.

Awol Arba,
President of Afar Regional said at 13th "Sile Ethiopia" edition in Semera, Afar.



To build a strong and peaceful country, all Ethiopians should act like the people of Afar. In Afar, there is no dispute between being an Afar and being an Ethiopian. All Ethiopians should learn this habit of the people of Afar. In addition, the people of Afar have strong discussion and communication culture. We have to capitalize on this culture. Peace, unity and ideological supremacy are pillars for nation building and to build strong peace, unity and supremacy, the whole of Ethiopia should act like Afar. To build a strong country, all of us have to learn from the people of Afar. By capitalizing these cultural and historical values, we have to direct our efforts towards promoting unity, peace and development for our country.

Muaze Tibebat Daniel Kibret,
Social Affairs Advisor of the Prime Minister said at 13th "Sile Ethiopia" edition in Semera, Afar.