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Gov't, donors scale up humanitarian response to north Ethiopia

• Gov't takes significant share in aid provision

BY ESSEYE MENGISTE

ADDIS ABABA - The government and humanitarian partners have continued to mobilize resources to scale up the humanitarian response in northern Ethiopia and war-affected areas, prioritizing the most urgent needs, the UN OCHA Ethiopia said.

According to the report issued jointly by the Ethiopian government and humanitarian partners, between 9 and 15 January, over 353,000 people in Tigray assisted with food, about 195,000 people in Amhara, and over 138,000 people in Afar.

Convoys of humanitarian supplies and staff continue to regularly arrive in Afar, Amhara and Tigray states through all corridors, including by air. At least 2.5 million people have so far received food assistance in Amhara under round 3 allocation; over



936,000 people received food support in Afar under round 3 as well, which is 100 % of target; while over 3.4 million people received food support in Tigray under rounds 2 and 3 allocations following the peace deal between Ethiopian government and TPLF in November.

Meanwhile, the National Disaster Risk Management (NDRMC) Public Relations Head Debebe Zewde told the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) that in the period up to January 16, 29 foreign partner organizations and the government provided 149, 496. 33

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Diaspora engagement in dev't of homeland gaining momentum: EDS



Wondwosen Girma

BY BETELHEM BEDLU

ADDIS ABABA - Owing to the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement (CoHA) between the government and TPLF, the Ethiopian Diaspora's engagement in the development of their home country has been tremendously intensifying, the Ethiopian Diaspora Service (EDS) said.

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Lemi Square broadens options for people living in peripheral areas of the city

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"The wise man learns from the mistake of others"

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Ethiopia's uncompromising stance in putting the kibosh on external pressure

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Ethiopia in good position to achieve health SDGs

• 70 percent of pregnant women attend hospital follow-ups

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News



Ethiopia secures 301 mln USD from horticultural exports

BY MISGANAW ASNAKE

ADDIS ABABA - Ethiopia has secured over 301 million USD exporting flowers, fruits and vegetables from Oromia state alone during the past six months of this fiscal year, local media reported.

The Oromia state Investment and Industry Bureau restated that during the last six month, the state has enabled to earn the country over 301 million USD from horticultural exports .

The Bureau Investment, Promotion and Communication Representative Seyoum Hailu said over 2,000 investors with initial capital of 95 billion Birr have entered and investing in agriculture, manufacturing, agro industry and services sectors in the state.

The horticulture business has so far created jobs for, 77,839 fellow citizens in Oromia.

Likewise, Ministry of Agriculture Horticulture Development Sector Head Abdela Negash said the government is undertaking reforms in the field and is moving with special attention.

He stated that it was necessary to use this opportunity as there was an organization to solve the problems that had a negative impact on the efficiency of the sector.

Ethiopia has planned to obtain more than 770 USD million from the horticulture sector in the 2022/2023 fiscal year.

Ethiopia's green culture to fight climate change

• *Creates over 750,000 green related jobs*

BY ASHENAFI ANIMUT

ADDIS ABABA –Ethiopia, is the second most-populous country in Africa, is trying to create a green culture to win the fight against climate change.

At Abu Dhabi Sustainability Week held recently, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed said that Ethiopia is one of the most vulnerable countries to climate change, but now it is doing its best to mitigate this effect.

At the event, premier Abiy stated that: “We are committed to living in a sustainable and climate-resilient Ethiopia for the new generation. Green related jobs have been created across the country through various environmental initiatives.”

Ethiopia’s Green Legacy initiative has helped create over 750,000 jobs mostly for women and young people — since 2018.

“The initiative has helped plant 25 billion seedlings within four years, equal to removing 64 million petrol-powered cars from the road for one year,” he indicated.

“The Green Legacy initiative, therefore, is



our bold action, which has created national awareness on climate change and enabled the creation of green jobs and is making a positive impact on our ecosystem,” the Premier underscored.

Premier said: “We are inspired by UAE’s success in building institutions that bring the best of global good practice for accountability. As such a strategic investment of the government of Ethiopia, the Ethiopian Investment Holdings is working closely with multiple institutional investors of the UAE to explore opportunities across renewable

energy, real estate, agriculture and others.”
 “Although we are at the mercy of high emitters, we are nevertheless committed to do our part,” Abiy said.

“In this regard, Ethiopia has developed its long-term net-zero and climate-resilient 2050 strategy, which will enhance our ability to plan for decarbonisation of the economy.”

The world needs a just and inclusive energy transition that supports the needs of developing nations while ensuring a more sustainable future for us all.

Indian, Russian investors show interest to invest in Ethiopia

BY YESUF ENDRIS

ADDIS ABABA - Industrial Parks Development Corporation has announced that investors from India and Russia are interested to invest in Ethiopia. The Corporation has conferred with Indian and Russian investors recently.

During the Forum organized by Ethiopian Embassy and IPDC held at Chennai, Indian Investors have disclosed their deep interest to engage in pharmaceutical, textile, garment and other manufacturing sectors.

According to IPDC, over 60 investors and manufacturers have participated in the forum. They have been oriented with detailed information about investment opportunities and contemporary facts of Ethiopian Industrial Parks.

According to Indian Embassy in Ethiopia, Indian investors are the second largest



trading partners of Ethiopia accounting 10.2 % of its global trade. The bilateral trade between Ethiopia and India stood at 1.8 billion USD in 2021.

On the same topic, IPDC CEO, Aklilu Tadesse has discussed with Russian Companies group leader [this week].

“Detailed information about the infrastructure and investment opportunities in the 13 industrial parks that IPDC has built and managed in the past 7 years was presented during the discussion.

It has been stated that the companies that have shown interest will come to Ethiopia and make important pre-investment observations at the industrial parks,” *The Ethiopian Herald* learnt.

During the discussion, “common directions were set on how the project will continue to help IPDC by making Dire Dawa Free Trade Zone effective, through training and consulting, and by increasing investor satisfaction and attracting investment,” it was stated.

Ethiopian to commence new flight to Atlanta

ADDIS ABABA (ENA) - Ethiopian Airlines announced that it has finalized all preparations to commence a new service between Addis Ababa and Atlanta, USA.

Ethiopian will operate a four times weekly flight to Atlanta (ATL) starting from 16 May 2023.

Commenting on the launch of the new flight, Ethiopian Airlines Group CEO Mesfin Tasew said: “We are truly delighted to open our sixth gateway in North America with the new flight to Atlanta.”

“We have been connecting the U.S. and Africa for 25 years now and the new service

will help boost the investment, tourism, diplomatic and socioeconomic bonds between the two regions,” he stated.

He added “As a pan-African carrier, we are committed to further expand our global network and connect Africa with the rest of the world. We are also keen to better serve the U.S. by increasing our destinations and flight frequencies.”

Atlanta Mayor Andre Dicken said on his part Ethiopian Airlines’ new service to Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport is yet another win for the City as



it continues to develop and expand our air service to Africa.

“As we celebrate the new connection of the rich and dynamic cities of Atlanta and Addis Ababa, we look forward to a strong and successful partnership with our new

partners in Ethiopia,” he elaborated.

Hartsfield-Jackson, Atlanta International Airport General Manager Balram “B” Bheodari said as the world’s busiest and most efficient airport, our mission is to deliver excellence while connecting our community to the world.

This new partnership with Ethiopian Airlines expands that connectivity and access for our passengers and further solidifies our position as an industry leader. “We are thrilled to welcome Ethiopian Airlines to ATL.”

Ethiopian Airlines currently operates more than 130 international passenger and cargo destinations.

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Editorial

Prolonging tourists' stay in this wonderland of ours

It could hardly be denied that Ethiopia a land of bounty as showcased by Blue Nile and a land of plenty as exemplified by its over 80 ethnic groups has a huge tourism potential that begs for tapping for nation's socioeconomic deliverance.

The saying goes variety is the spice of life. True to this adage, Ethiopia boasts a multitude of both tangible and intangible heritages some of which have common denominators as can be witnessed in the Christmas celebration in Lalibela or the ritual to Shake Hussien Mosque.

Beauty out of diversity is the salient issue one can bear witness to when crisscrossing the nation or when one tunes to the songs of different ethnic groups and attends their grooving styles on special events like *Timeket* or Nations and Nationalities Day.

Feasting eyes on the outdoor festivities like *Timket* and *Irreechaa* pays off since their religious and cultural significances aside the events are mood uplifting.

The unmatched peaceful coexistence of the faithful of the two major religions Christianity and Islam as well as Judaism is stunning. Despite religious differences, citizens mix like milk and water to the surprise of many foreigners. Muslims and Christians lend hands to make each other's events peaceful and blissful as can be witnessed in Epiphany and Eid al-Fitr. This superb harmony is exemplary to others specially those often bickering on religious lines.

Ethiopia which has tall mountains like Ras Dasha is singled out for housing earth's nadir Denakil Depression where one can witness a live volcano Erta Ale and its environs which could be taken for an earthly paradise portraying a spectrum of colors from earth's disgorgements.

This land of 13 months of sunshine has the right mix of climates that allow it tick all of the boxes of tourists.

From the historic perspective, Ethiopia is seen a beacon of independence to suppressed and colored people. That is why it is chosen to be the seat of OAU and latter AU. Moves are also underway to run a Pan African university

in the Historic Town Adwa. This could draw the attention of students and researchers worldwide to Ethiopia.

A cradle of mankind (also referred to a land of origins as attested by archeologists) Ethiopia's being a research center for archeological studies could not be gainsaid.

Apart from its panoramic landscape, Ethiopia has also endemic animals like Walia Ibex, Red fox and Chilada Babbon as well as almost innumerable birds typical to Ethiopia. Its broad array of plant species, some of which are medicinal, attract researchers across the globe.

In this light, an influx of tourists comes to ancient Ethiopia whose history stretches beyond Axum civilization. Hence, if aggressive advertisement works are done it is possible to push the influx to its pinnacle. The fact that the nation is hard-pressed for hard currency makes the task exigent. Conducting researches on ways of multiplying over tourist destination with the required infrastructural facilities, attracting additional tourists and prolonging their stays here rendering them cozy enough are crucial.

Mindful of this key task the government has brought into play a number of parks and botanical centers. At this juncture it suffices to see the parks born into life here in Addis and also a palace-turned-touristic spot which traveler tourists could drop in to visit while on stopovers. Such spots are playing quite a role in boosting domestic tourism, which also needs.

The Koysha and Gorgora parks could also be mentioned as a thrust towards the looked-forward end.

Ethiopia also sticks out for time-old tranquility and resilience from unglamorous unfolding. Despite divisive wedges by external elements Ethiopians, now, are seeking each other with love ironing out their differences.

Thus it goes without saying Ethiopia is a high-heaven for tourism and investment. Leaning on our virtues of clicking each other with the mentality of siblings, we Ethiopians have to break away from poverty brushing aside belaboring on minor differences which could be resolved by brainstorming.

Opinion

Challenges, potentials of tourism, hospitality industry in Ethiopia

BY SOLOMON DIBABA

Ethiopia has huge potentials in the tourism industry; but the tangible and intangible, natural and manmade heritages are not fully documented, preserved and utilized for the economic development of the country.

Some perceive tourism industry and emphasize on the tour aspect of the industry without establishing the internal connection of the industry with other economic, cultural and social dimensions. Tourism is not only about site seeing or excursions.

The sector is linked with education, peace development, various branches of science and technology, health, history, anthropology and other forms of knowledge. On the other hand, these sectors and branches of knowledge could have contributed to the development of the tourist industry in the country. The sector has continued to suffer from institutional, structural and operational setbacks and bottlenecks.

On the other hand tourism is vaguely understood as something that has to do only with foreign travelers totally ignoring the importance of domestic or inland tourism. Some Ethiopians take tourism as the duty of lazy moneybags or the do nothing loafers and spindrifts who idly roam around and spend money. Except on some occasions, public servants, students, journalists and local historians do not make frequent

planned travels in Ethiopia either for education or for other purposes.

The participation of the private sector in tourism is very low in this country. On the other hand, tourism is put into focus mostly on special religious or secular outdoor festivals and not as an important national task that should be up scaled throughout the year.

Over the last four years and more particularly the last two years, tourism was forced to hibernate due to sporadic conflicts and the war in the northern part of the country that plagued the nation.

Although Ethiopian Airlines Group caters to foreign and local tourists, logistic facilities on land and railway travels and cozy boats specially designed for tourism development and hospitality industry are either not to standard or not adequately available. More high class hotels have already been commissioned in the country but given the future prospect of tourism, more quality service needs to be in place.

Ethiopia lacks highly qualified tour guides who are well trained but for now most of them either communicate in pigeon English or French without mastering more languages that are easily understood by tourists.

Lack of adequate financial backing, modern management systems, poor level of

technology, lack of proper documentation and compilation of national data on tourism and poor level of promotion have remained the weak links in the development of the industry. Prior to 2005, tourism was managed only by the government but since then, a new Ministry of Tourism and Culture was instituted to oversee the development and promotion of tourism in the country. The private sector was invited to participate in tourism but this was limited only to the formation of few tour operators and hotels that were gradually flourishing mainly in Addis Ababa and some regional towns.

As stated above, lack of all rounded professionals to manage the industry and less attention provided by the universities and higher learning institutes in the country prevented the swift growth of the sector.

In several African countries like Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda, tourism is closely linked to the development of national parks that played an important role to attract more tourists, researchers of all types but in Ethiopia the available parks are poorly managed and have always been subjected to human intervention for so many reasons.

On the other hand, except for conference tourism which is showing some level of growth, medical tourism is still unknown in the country.

Compared to other African countries like Egypt and Kenya, Ethiopia possesses far

more tourist attraction natural and historical heritages; but the revenue that the country has generated to date never surpassed 2 billion USD even at peak years. Egypt for instance generates more than 8 billion USD from tourism while Kenya generated 2 billion USD on the average.

Ethiopia, now known as the Land of Origins has rich tourist potentials. The unique nature, culture and history merge to form a timeless appeal. Ethiopia comprises many high mountains and most of the longest rivers, highest plateaus and plains in Africa. It has spectacular alpine terrain including the Simien Mountain National Park (4543 m above sea level) and the lowest place on earth in the Danakil depression (121 m below sea level).

Across the country from north to south, east to west, Ethiopia has ancient historical and cultural heritage, wildlife resources, natural attractions and attractive geographical sites. These resources vividly indicate opportunities for tourists and other visitors to experience Ethiopia's ecology and natural beauty. Ethiopian cultural tourism attractions include historical monuments

See *Challenges.potentials ... Page 7*

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

News

Ethiopia in good position to achieve health SDGs

• 70 percent of pregnant women attend hospital follow-ups

BY HAILE DEMEKE

ADDIS ABABA – The number of women attending pregnancy follow-ups in Ethiopia has significantly improved; the Ministry of Health (MoH) said, adding the success advances the country's achievements of health Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

MoH Health Program Senior Expert Etenesh Gebreyohannis told the Ethiopian

Agency (EPA) that Ethiopia has always placed emphasis on improving the delivery and use of a comprehensive package of maternal health services. Accordingly, the number of pregnant women who are following prenatal health conditions has grown to 70 %.

Previously, the pregnant woman had checked prenatal pregnancy health condition four times and it has now increased to eight.

Currently, prenatal pregnancy follow-up

has been provided across the country in all health posts and hospitals and the service is also being provided by health extension experts. Currently, 70 % of Ethiopian mothers receive the first, fourth, and eighth prenatal pregnancy in hospitals and health posts.

The expert further stated that awareness creation activity has been intensified and health professionals have been supporting and encouraging pregnant women to follow their health conditions. "Ethiopia is among

countries with high maternal death and we have been working to reduce the ratio by designing viable strategies and alternatives.

Ethiopia is one of the country's working to ensure that every pregnant woman and newborn receives good quality care throughout pregnancy, childbirth and the postnatal period. Accordingly, the ministry is working in conflict-affected areas to protect maternal and health of the newborn thereby providing necessary health facilities like ambulances, Etenesh elaborated.



Gov't renews commitment to strengthen public diplomacy practices

ADDIS ABABA - Public diplomacy activities will be reinforced and continue to protect the national interest of the country, Ambassador Dina Mufti said.

A member of the Foreign Relations and Peace Affairs Standing Committee of the House of Peoples' Representatives, Ambassador Dina Mufti told ENA that public diplomacy activities will be reinforced and continued.

In particular, diplomatic activities are being carried out to promote and create proper awareness of the current peace efforts and other issues in the country, he elaborated.

To this end, Dina added that public diplomacy efforts are also exerted, mainly, by Ethiopia's diplomats, various institutions of the country and individuals as well as by the parliament.

Moreover, he indicated that efforts are being expended to promote a positive image of Ethiopia ensuring government to government relations become effective thereby safeguarding the national interest of the country.

In particular, activities are being undertaken by parliamentary diplomacy as it plays paramount importance to strengthen relations with various countries of the world, according to the ambassador.

Furthermore, he explained that the creation of parliamentary friendship committees with various countries will continue on a large scale.

Dina added efforts are being undertaken by the public diplomacy with particular emphasis to protect Ethiopia's political,

economic, cultural, military and other interests.

Noting that it is not left to one side to protect the national interest of the country, Ambassador Dina underlined that it is appropriate to inform everyone at every level of the activities bring undertaken to bring about sustainable peace in Ethiopia.

He urged that Ethiopians living abroad, higher education institutions, civil associations, religious institutions, and prominent individuals should embark on activities which center on maintaining the interests of the country.

Public diplomacy activities which are aimed at strengthening people-to-people relations in Africa and at international level will continue, Dina said.

Diaspora...

EDS Public Relations Director Wondwosen Girma told the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) that the participation of the Diaspora community in the national issues back home has been thriving due to the enactment of the truce.

Apart from their integrated engagement towards the realization of development goals, Ethiopian Diasporas are sending foreign currency through legal channels thereby supporting the overall economy. "The Diasporas have so far contributed over five million USD to rehabilitate citizens and rebuild war-ridden areas."

Ethiopians in the Diaspora have also made concerted efforts to keep the rehabilitation restoration activities all over the war-impacted communities and areas. The media wing of the Diaspora meets weekly to view the performance in this regard, according to the director.

After the peace deal, some members of the Ethiopian Diaspora have offered leadership training to officials working in various managerial positions in Addis Ababa. To transfer technology and knowledge, computer programming training is currently being provided to secondary school students whilst similar capacity-building programs will be offered to government officials in near future.

Wondwosen further stated that the Diaspora community has also discharged active participation in the implementation of CoHA in a bid to support efforts to restore peace and realize Ethiopia's prosperity.

"Ethiopian Diasporas' understanding of the challenge their home country has encountered and some interest groups' unwarranted pressure are the main reasons to drive them to play a leading role in revealing the facts on the ground."

Gov't, donors scale...

metric tons of food and non-food aid materials, 1,562.76 metric tons of medicines, and 4,154.94 metric tons of nutrients were sent to the northern part of the country.

The director further stated that the items sent to the area were food, nutritious food, medicine, and educational and agricultural materials. Fuel and cash are also being sent

by the government.

Noting the government is providing support in areas where the partners cannot cover it, Debebe indicated out of the total amount of aid being provided to war-affected communities, the government has a share of over 15,000 metric tons of food and non-food related materials and 1,113,953 liters

of fuel.

"The government has also sent 1.3 billion Birr in cash to Shire and Mekelle to be used for operations in the Tigray State. The funds are distributed from the cities to the local areas and used for services and operations."

The humanitarian aid was transported by

land and plane and while 3,745 vehicles were used to transport the aid by land, a total of 38 flights were made to transport medicine and cash. The humanitarian aid is being transported in four corridors namely, Semera-Abala, Kombolcha- Alamata, and Gondar- Humera- Shire as well as Gondar-Addi Arkay- Mai Tsebri and Dima, he remarked.

Opinion

The Significance of the Proclamation of Civil Society Organizations and the Activities of the Civil Societies Support Programme

Phase Two (CSSP2)

BY SELAMAWIT MENKIR

Following the nationwide reform in 2019 in Ethiopia, enacting proclamation No. 1113/2019 which replaced proclamation No. 621/2009 of Civil Society Organizations was among the swift moves made by the Federal Government of Ethiopia.

Revising the law not only brought an end to a law which restricted the space for human rights advocacy but also created a conducive environment for civil society organizations (CSOs) to enhance their engagement on the advancement of civil, political, socio-economic and cultural rights. This has resulted in increase in the registration of CSOs. In addition, it enabled CSOs to contribute their part to the advocacy of rights of various sections of the society.

The newly adopted proclamation encourages CSOs to become development partners and create an enabling environment to serve communities. It comprises relevant articles advocating the rights of communities. It has made it possible for CSOs to engage without any restriction in climate change, environmental protection, human rights, peace and community development, democratization, election and related endeavors benefiting the youth, women and people with disabilities. The revised law allows international and local CSOs to form consortiums, and CSOs working on development issues to form consortiums with those working on governance/human rights issues.

The proclamation has created favorable opportunities for CSOs, communities the CSOs serve, the government, development partners and support providing entities such as the Civil Society Support Programme phase two (CSSP2).

CSOs have been able to organize and operate as per their preference in building democracy, good governance, and advocating citizens' rights. In addition to engaging in an agenda they are in favor of and raising the funds they need to carry out their activities, they were able to establish the Ethiopian Civil Society Organizations Council (ECSOC) and work closely with the government.

The establishment of the council created an opportunity for CSOs to be autonomous entities and transformed the role of the government from merely being regulatory to becoming a support-providing partner to CSOs. Furthermore, it has enabled the sector to adopt its own code of conduct for CSOs in operation.

The new proclamation has not only created an enabling environment for the government to work more closely with CSOs but it has also helped to raise hard currency from international development partners and donors due to the lifting of the restrictive law on generating funds.

The fact that most board members of the Authority for Civil Society Organizations (ACSO), the governmental institution established to support and regulate civil society organizations, are from CSOs themselves, is believed to build collaboration and trust between CSOs and the government. It has also paved a way for communities to inquire about their rights through CSOs and seek solutions to shared problems and challenges.

Development partners and institutions such as CSSP2 which design programs in order to provide support in specific thematic areas have made significant contribution in building the capacity of CSOs, bringing the government and the public closer, and in bringing transfer of knowledge and skills.

CSSP2 has been operating since 2018, particularly focusing on capacity building

of CSOs and creating an enabling atmosphere for government institutions and different sections of the society to work closely. It has been providing support for CSOs to engage closely with the public, the public with the government and the government with CSOs. Moreover, CSSP2 played a vital role since the beginning of the process of changing the law by holding consultative meetings with CSOs and key government stakeholders and obtaining inputs for the draft civil society law. It played a decisive role in facilitating various consultation meetings held with CSOs in Addis Ababa and different regional states.

CSSP2 works in partnership with CSOs focusing on women, young people, persons with disabilities, and hard to reach sections of the society. It is exerting tremendous effort towards ensuring equality and participation of women, young people, persons with disabilities and their organizations in political, social and economic sectors, preventing and strengthening comprehensive response to gender-based violence, addressing women's land ownership issues, helping women exercise their rights to vote and to be elected in the electoral process and providing equal opportunities for men and women.

CSSP2 also partners with organizations that focus on persons with disabilities to ensure that they are included in the government's policy agenda, that they have access to services that they work in an accessible and inclusive environment that legal frameworks properly include disability issues and that organizations plan and work with them in mind.

Adopting a legal system to support the re-integration of ex-offenders into the community is underway. Efforts are being made to facilitate the active participation of young people in the political and social realms and to provide training

and create suitable job opportunities. Awareness raising campaigns will be held to fight substance addiction. CSSP2 is already working with local CSOs and the government to draft restrictive laws in this regard. Some work has already been done with regards to prohibiting the presence of 'khat' shops nearby schools and enacting other laws to protect the young people/adolescents and children. As a result, some improvements are being witnessed in various places.

CSSP2 provided capacity building and financial support for about 200 CSOs during the last three years. Though this support is immense as far as the scope of the programme is concerned, it is minimal considering what is expected to be achieved as a nation.

CSSP2 supported projects are supported to strengthen their engagement and downward accountability, to strengthen constructive engagement with duty bearers, to become exemplary and sustain even in the absence of CSSP2 support without any difficulty.

Considering the current situation in Ethiopia, CSSP2 has recently incorporated a new thematic area that focuses on conflict and peacebuilding to support CSOs in conflict-affected areas to enhance CSOs' resilience so that they can respond to the needs of their communities.

Selamawit Menkir is a team leader at the Civil Society Support Programme Phase Two (CSSP2), a capacity development programme which is financed by the governments of England, Ireland, Sweden and Norway and is managed by the British Council, Pact and Social Development Direct.

For more info: www.cssp-et.org

Challenges, potentials of tourism, ...

like the steles and obelisks of Axum, the rock hewn churches of Lalibela archeological sites in Afar, battlefields like the Battle of Adwa, religious buildings like Saint Mary of TSION Mariam, museums including the National Museum, festivals including Meskel, Timket, indigenous architecture, dress, artifacts and handicrafts; they also include intangible components and feelings such as fantasy, nostalgia, pleasure and pride which are presented through various cultural manifestations and interpretation of physical cultural attributes.

Owning the largest number of UNESCO registered World Heritage Sites than any other African country (including Egypt), Ethiopia is a hidden gem that is overlooked by many travelers. With such cultural diversity, archaeological pedigree and natural beauty, there's a good reason why it is so high on the Wild Frontiers travel list.

Most of the land mass of the country indeed embraces a tantalizing tourist attraction centers. Ethiopia, despite the low level of income it received from tourism is a unique

country made for tourism itself.

All diplomatic missions abroad, the local mass media, owners of hospitality industries in the country, tour operators, all concerned ministries, universities in the country must work together to promote Ethiopia's tourism industry in a more coordinated, modernized and technology oriented manner.

The private sector must vigorously involve in developing tourism in Ethiopia through provision of modern logistics, hospitality

facilities like star hotels, quality lodges with their natural and cultural acceptable facilities in and around tourist attraction centers.

Universities in the country need to open departments and faculties that train highly qualified experts to manage the industry in a more internationally accepted standards.

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

Business & Economy

Ethio-telecom continuing to provide the best services, generate revenue

BY DANIEL ALEMAYEHU

It has been more than a century since the Ethiopian Telecommunication Corporation started providing its services to the people of Ethiopia. It is one of the oldest telecommunication operators in Africa. Through the course of a century long service, the corporation had taken a number of actions in improving its capacity and quality of services it is delivering. The government-owned company indeed, had upgraded its services in those years. In the past few years, Ethio-telecom has been striving to bring the best experience to its people regarding technology and telecom.

For better experience, Ethio-telecom has taken a decisive action to privatize a portion of its share. To this end, the operator sold 40 percent of its share to the well-known African telecom company, Safari-com. Such decision has blessed the people of Ethiopia with a unique experience of getting services from two different telecom companies.

Ethio-telecom has introduced plenty of new platforms to its customers as a new beginning and makes life easy. In the past few years, the company has developed services like the mobile money platform 'telebirr' to make transactions easier for its customers. Besides, the company has agreed to work with many local banks for money transfer and other related services. The company has also launched a 5G mobile internet service in some selected areas.

After some times, the state-owned company has scored better achievements regarding securing better profit in short period. For instance, in the 2021/22 fiscal year, Ethio-telecom reported that the company raised its annual revenue to 8.5 percent compared to the previous year. It secured a profit worth 61.3 billion Birr. In the same report, Ethio-telecom hit 87.6 percent of its revenue target set for the last budget year.

Lately, the state-run company, Ethio-telecom presented the first six-month performance in the 2022/23 fiscal year. On the event, the company's CEO Frehiwot Tamiru presented the company's performance report in detail. The CEO stated that the company has secured some 8.18 billion Birr net profit within the first six months of the current fiscal year. Also, the total revenue scored 33.8 billion Birr.

Frehiwot remarked that the total revenue of this year's six-month has accelerated its performance when it is compared with the same period last year exceeding by 20 percent. By doing so, as to the CEO, the operator also achieved 96 percent of its set target.

The company has increased its services to the next level bringing more customers and providing better services. The CEO stated that different services have contributed their own shares on the revenue that the company acquired. The mobile voice service has 47



ethio telecom
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percent contribution to the total revenue. Not only that, the data and internet service also contributed 28 percent of the total profit. Further, international business shared and value-added services have contributed 8.4 and 6.5 percent respectively. Infrastructure shares 2.2 percent and the 7.5 percent of the total revenue is acquired from other resources.

It is the fact that the country is very much in need of foreign currency. The nation is trying to get the best out of its services to curb the shortage of foreign currency seen in the country.

To support the above raised idea, Ethio-telecom has been taking part in relation to supporting the country's foreign currency earning. As a result, it was reported that it has generated 64.8 million USD from international business. This figure is 90 percent of the total set target to generate.

Though the company has been competing with its counterpart, the number of its subscribers and customers has been scaling up. According to Frehiwot, the operator stepped forward to reach the subscribing customers to 70 million. The figure is 98.6 percent of the expected number of customers in terms of subscribers. The number has 15.1 percent of increment compared with the same period last year. The operator has got additional 9.2 million customers in the first six months of the current fiscal year.

Accordingly, it was reported that the company's mobile voice subscribers exceeded to 67.7 million; the number of data and internet subscribers reached 31.3 million. Fixed service and fixed broadband subscribers stretched to more than 862 thousand and 566 thousand respectively. The company's density has reached 65.7 percent.

Frehiwot further explained that such accomplishments have been achieved because of works on network expansion and optimization works which aims to uplift the customers' experience and satisfactions. The company also offers a total of 91 local and international products and services, of which 50 are new while the rest are revamped.

"A total of 228 project works that would

help expand and strengthen Ethio telecom's infrastructure, increase network coverage and capacity are carried out enhancing the capacity to serve five million additional customers," Frehiwot added.

In addition, Ethio-telecom, as to Frehiwot, has also launched its pre-commercial 5G mobile service in Adama City. This step will be an enabler for critical service missions and the realization of technologies, it was reported.

The CEO further disclosed, "Through the implementation of a cost-saving strategy which aimed at making the company more efficient and productive by avoiding unnecessary costs, we are able to save 3.5 billion Birr, and achieving 134 percent of the plan."

In the report, the role of the digital payment system 'telebirr' has been discussed. The digital system has incorporated over 27.2 million customers. As a result, through the platform, a total of 166.1 billion Birr was transacted by the customers in the last six months. Besides, the system has generated more than 82 million Birr income to the company in the period.

Expanding its telebirr remittance services and creating link to international money transfer institutions, people in 44 different countries, where the service is reached, have the chance to transfer money easily to their home land. Therefore, in the last six months, the company received more than 700 thousand USD through the platform, Frehiwot reported.

On the other hand, the report has also incorporated the challenges that the operator has encountered during the report period. The CEO listed the major challenges. Service outages due to security instability, fiber and copper cable damage and commercial power interruption are some of the challenges that have been barged in the operation. Regarding the company's expansion, as to the CEO, delay in land acquisition in relation to new site deployments has created hindrance.

Frehiwot further disclosed, "Given the challenges posed to provide and expand telecom services and the fact that it is obtained amid competitive market; the achievement is considered remarkable."

"Given the challenges posed to provide and expand telecom services and the fact that it is obtained amid competitive market; the achievement is considered remarkable."

Planet Earth

Lemi Square broadens options for people living in peripheral areas of the city

BY EPHREM ANDARGACHEW

Addis Ababa, the capital city of Ethiopia, is found on a well-watered plateau surrounded by hills and mountains. The city is the center of everything where historical education centers, various Museums, Palaces, notable obelisks, monuments, and so on are found.

The city is the home of international organizations such as the African Union, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, and over a hundred Embassies and Consular offices. It is also the economic nucleus of the country where the city residents involve manufacture textiles, shoes, food, beverages, wood products, plastics, and chemical products. Most of Ethiopia's service industries including Banking and insurance are located in Addis Ababa. The nation's major newspapers are also published in the metropolis.

Despite its relevance and significance, Addis Ababa has faced numerous economic, social, and infrastructure challenges. The infrastructure investment of the Federal and city administration over two decades has assisted to decrease poverty, inequality, and unemployment. Nevertheless, a significant number of the city residents have serious housing, basic services, and sanitation facilities problems.

These and other related factors have motivated the incumbent government that assumed powers in mid-2018 to take various measures to redecorate the city. The federal government and the city administration have prepared and implemented projects to beautify the city and clean its rivers, public spaces and parks, bicycle paths, and walkways. Especially, rivers and riverside projects are slowly making the city green. Addis Ababa, as one of Africa's developing tourist destinations, is starting to align its accommodation option with the rest of Africa. Because the city has comfortable and clean accommodations.

According to Ethiopian Prime Minister Dr. Abiy Ahmed, the projects that are implemented in Addis Ababa are expected to beautify the city as the name indicates "new flower." The project is running along two of the largest rivers of the city, stretching a total of 51 kilometers, all the way from the mountains of Entoto through the city to the Akaki River.

Meskel Square is another significant project which upgraded the city's profile and it is also taken as a must-see landmark in Addis Ababa. The square is the place where locals celebrate Meskel known as the founding of the true Cross of Jesus Christ celebrated every year on September 27th. It is also a prominent venue for mass sports, and peaceful demonstrations. It serves as a good point of reference for local transportation and for getting into the center of the city.

It is also a place for public gatherings,



demonstrations, and festivals. Concerts, parades, and various government and public events are also held there. In addition, people have been using the square to watch either local or international sports and tournaments. Most often, English Premier League is popular and people watch in the evenings.

Although Meskel Square provides several services, it is the only one of its kind. The people have been forced to come a long way to participate in any events that are prepared in Meskel square. So, these and other related factors force the city administration to plan and build another square.

Addis Ababa City Administration Mayor Adanech Abiebie stated that Meskel Square is the only and the most iconic public gathering space that has been hosting several cultural, religious, political, entertainment, and sports activities for more than 60 years.

Nonetheless, following the country's political reform, the government has designed various projects that will be implemented across the country. The city administration also allocated over 2.6 Billion Birr to beautify Addis Ababa. Especially, the Meskel Square-Addis Ababa City Hall Project that renovated the square contains iconic things. Because the building of the square is not only focused on time but also better technologies, innovation, quality, and trans-generational issues.

Since the city necessitated other squares for various purposes and activities, the city administration launched the construction of the second square namely Lemi Square in Lemi Kura Sub-city. This is the second grand project next to Meskel Square with a budget of 1.3 billion birr.

According to Mayor Adanech, "when we look at projects in other countries, we used to wish for our country, but we don't get results by wishing only, we need to work. The project will provide a place like Meskel Square not only to those in the center but also to the people who live in the peripheral areas of the city.

Indeed, during the inauguration of Meskel Square, Ethiopian Prime Minister Dr. Abiy Ahmed said that Addis Ababa needs more centers like Meskel Square. Taking this message into account, the city administration laid the foundation stone of the '2nd Meskel Square' project to fulfill the Premier's remarks, she added.

As stated by Mayor Adanech, to broaden alternative squares, Lemi Kura Sub-city is chosen for Lemi Square since the New Africa International Convention Center is being built there and the area needs more services and related facilities.

"We cannot change our city with old or outdated thinking. We can change our city by having new and timely thoughts and ideas. Hence, the participation of the private sector is key in filling the gap of the government to complete this project in a short period," she stated.

The Lemi Square project will be built on 14 thousand 400 square meters and has public space, parking lots, recreation areas, gyms, a conference hall, a sports venue, a park for weddings and other services, supermarkets, offices, bookstores, and so on.

During the construction period, this project will create 1100 temporary and 400 permanent job opportunities for citizens. However, the work is supposed to take 18 months but the city administration is ready to complete it in 10 months by working day and night without rest, Mayor Adanech said.

In fact, currently, beautifying Addis Ababa has been given greater emphasis. Various projects are under implementation and construction is continuing. Especially, apart from beautifying Addis Ababa, urban development such as parks, urban agriculture, street greenery, housing, and garden as well as the provision of social, and health services are visible reforms that are carried out in the city. As part of this endeavor, the government has seriously taken the task of constructing the second Meskel Square called the Lemi Square which broadens the options for people living in peripheral areas of the city.

“

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Art & Culture

“The wise man learns from the mistake of others”

BY KFLEEYESUS ABEBE

For all Ethiopians to get benefitted from universal knowledge and world experiences, it is essential to have many masterful translators. Luckily, many translators are emerging these days and are daring to bring timely and significant issues for readers. Tatek Kebede who is an experienced journalist and communicator is another person embarking on translation with a timely subject. Tatek wanted Ethiopians to talk about and address the alarming trend of growing hatred, intolerance and toxic media before it is too late. To make his point clear and powerful, he translated the book “An Ordinary Man : An Autobiography” as written by Paul Rusesabagina.

It is personal story of Paul Rusesabagina who dared to save people from the Rwandan genocide in 1994. It tells how things unexpectedly went wrong to result in cruel mass killing of people who lived together for years sharing common nation. But there is Paul Rusesabagina who maintains his sanity and dared to save people. Paul was a hotel manager and his heroism has inspired the film Hotel Rwanda. He is nicknamed the “Oskar Schindler of Africa”--refused to bow to the madness that surrounded him. Confronting killers with a combination of diplomacy, flattery, and deception, he offered shelter to more than 12,000 members of the Tutsi clan and Hutu moderates, while homicidal mobs raged outside.

In his translation, TATEK changed the book’s title to “Tikur Adagn” meaning Black Savior. Black in Ethiopia symbolizes a stranger, the unknown or the unexpected. By choosing this word TATEK must have described Paul as “a Good Samaritan”.

The launching of this book on January 15th brought artists, journalists, public figures and government officials together. It was a colorful ceremony creating atmosphere for discussion. Speaking about the book’s significance, TATEK appealed to Ethiopians to consider the looming threat of bloodshed as the social bond has continued to be eroded by blind hate, false propaganda and extremism.

“The book is just all about awakening Ethiopian people and stopping them going down the wrong path. It is letting people learn from Rwanda’s mistake. Rwandese had a terrible history of killing each other. Ethiopians shouldn’t repeat that. We should never kill each other. A wise man learns from the mistakes of others. We know we are in a difficult situation. There is conflict, hatred and use of unnecessary words. It is then essential to know where this could lead us. It is when we know our path is drastic we turn our face to peace, harmony and tolerance. This book shows the consequence of hatred, and by every means we should stop haterade from growing and destroying us.”

In order to avert the looming threat of violence and mass killing, people should refrain from hate speech, while media should embrace

professionalism. Democratic institutions should be strengthened, TATEK pointed.

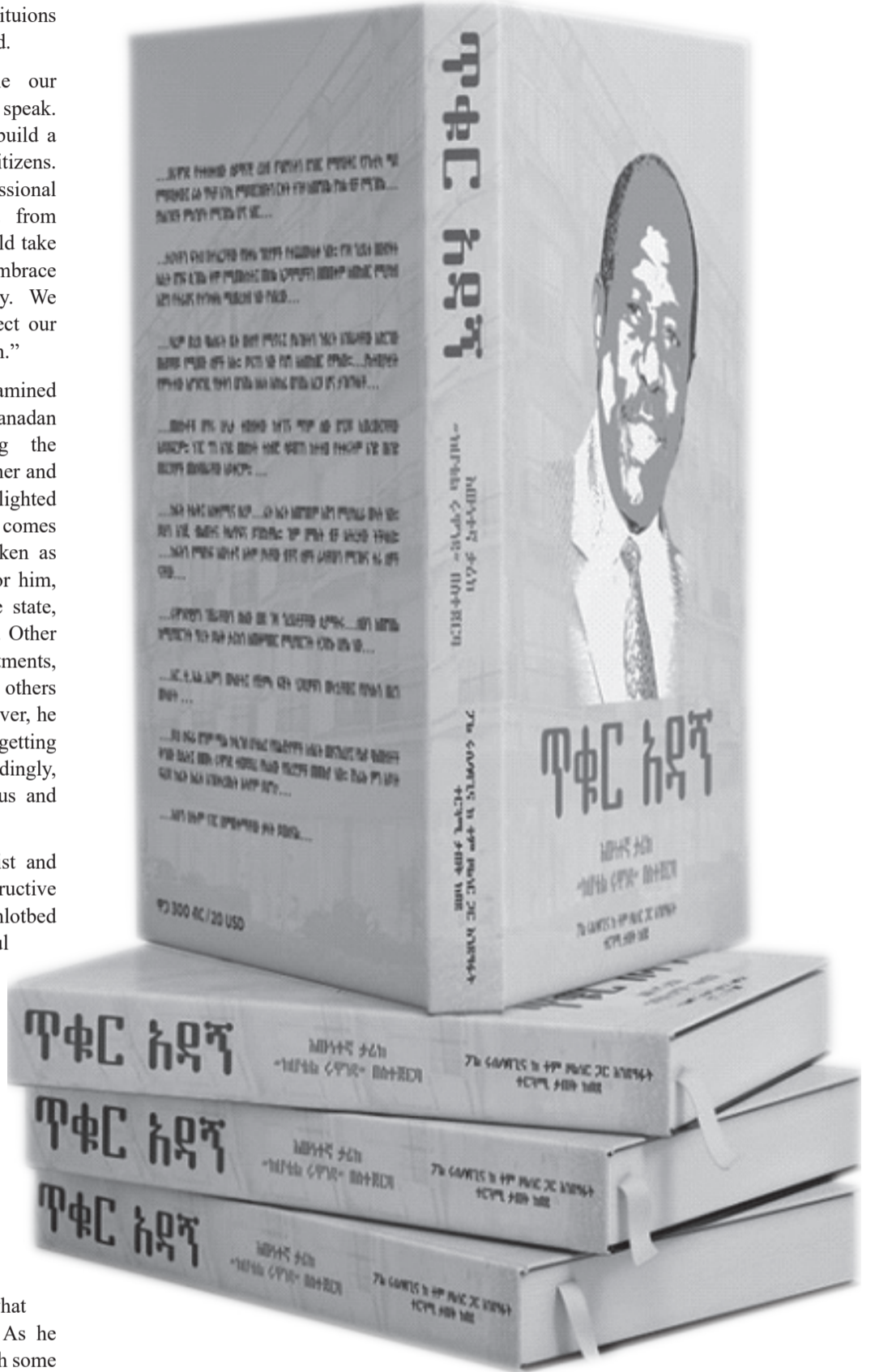
“To begin with, we should tame our tongue. We should know what we speak. Our tongue should be used only to build a nation; to improve livelihood of citizens. We can observe the result of unprofessional and inappropriate usage of media from Rwandan case. Ethiopian media should take a lesson from that incident and embrace professionalism and have objectivity. We should also build institutions to protect our peaceful coexistence and shared vision.”

Panelist Birhanu M. Lenjiso (PhD) examined the similarities and differences of Rwandan and Ethiopian community during the discussion. Birhanu, who is a researcher and currently government official, highlighted that Ethiopia’s multitudeness when it comes to religion and ethnicity can be taken as opportunity and comforting news. For him, Rwanda, being basically a two tribe state, was at two extremes with no pacifier. Other things like narratives, historical resentments, competition over dominance and others make the two countries similar. However, he stressed there needs to be national forgetting on some of controversial issues. Accordingly, the nation will have strong consensus and thrive.

Netsanet Hailu, experienced journalist and media operator, discussed the destructive role of Rwandan media in creating a hotbed of genocide. As media is a powerful tool reaching large audience, it must be practiced with caution, Netsanet said. Coming to Ethiopian practice, he expressed his concern as the media is being exploited by interest groups. Hence Netsanet urged professionals to struggle and retrieve media professionalism.

The other crucial element in preserving harmony and peace among people is religion. Wakuman Kudama, experienced journalist and theology graduate, attempted to find what role the church in Rwanda played. As he exemplified his critics of the book with some direct quotes, he puts observed cruelty among the faithful to the extent of exposing and even killing their church members. “Pastors started killing their church members and church members killed pastors. Husbands killed wives. It’s a bizarre situation no one can describe.” Therefore, catholic church in Rwanda failed to live up to its doctrine. They were expected to protect their church members, to be the voice of a reason and pacifiers but the clergy themselves were blinded by hatred and fear. There is a similar trend in Ethiopia too. Some religious fathers in Ethiopia are seen inappropriately gulped by political discourse. But, religious fathers should be loyal to their doctrines and guided by religious principles only, Wakuman stressed.

State Minister of Peace, Taye Dendea was also a participant of the book launching and discussion. Taye took the opportunity to



urge people to be bold to condemn hate speech and expose false narratives and false propaganda. Taye reflected Rwandan genocide could have been averted if people with knowledge and reason have spoken. But they chose to be silent fearing criticism.

The attendees appreciated the translator’s effort, skill and thoughtfulness as he used his talent to the noble cause. The book will continue to ignite discussion as it travels across the nation. This is a rare experience for Ethiopian authors to travel and launch their book. Given the topic many people are expected to buy the book, appear in the launching ceremony and brainstorm on raised issues and forward own outlooks during the discussions.

In this age of technology, people across the world have become close to each other.

They can buy goods and services, communicate and most importantly exchange wisdom. They discuss relevant matters such as preserving peace, harmony and brotherhood among people. Thanks to our translators, the larger segment of Ethiopian population have become beneficiaries of this discussion. They can celebrate the good and learn out of the terrible experiences of human history. Along with the world, they have condemned the agony of Jewish people reading “The diary of Anne Frank.” They got courage, comfort and vital lessons through such books. The hope and the effort of translators like TATEK Kebede is that Ethiopians would also learn from stories of Rwandan genocide. To reign over emotions, to have professionalism, principle, kindness and humanity are the messages of the book the author and the translator want to be heard loudly.

Society

Maternity waiting homes to save lives

BY SEMIRA BERHE

In developing countries, like Ethiopia, complications, associated with pregnancy and childbirth are more common than developed countries. Especially, in areas where access to maternity care (throughout pregnancy, during childbirth and in postpartum period) is out of reach; and there is no a skilled attendant during childbirth, the risk is the highest.

According to a research conducted in 2017 by World Health Organization (WHO), globally 295 thousands of mothers lose their lives every year during pregnancy, delivery and postpartum; which is 810 in a day. Sadly enough, out of this, 94 percent of the deaths occur in developing countries.

For instance, in developing countries, while the rate of maternal death is 462 per 100 thousand births, in the developed countries the rate is 11 per 100 thousand births.

When we come to our country, 14 thousand deaths occur annually; and 38 deaths occur daily due to pregnancy and childbirth related complications, as to documents.

Among the causes of mothers' death, heavy bleeding during pregnancy and childbirth, high blood pressure, infection and obstructed labor, are said the common ones. Especially, in rural areas delays - to go to health posts during labor; and receive the required care are highly contributing to maternal deaths and complicated health problems.

The first delay is recognizing the need to seek care. This means mothers do not have adequate information about getting clinical services, and have wrong attitudes about the service. Aside from that, mothers' decision making capacity in the family being low is also impacting their wellbeing hugely.

The second delay is infrastructure related challenges. The health facilities being far from areas where the villagers are residing; and absence of suitable transport system are also contributing to the delay which results in complications during pregnancy and childbirth.

The last delay to mother's death is shortage of medical equipment in the hospitals, professionals and others.

To contain such risks that come to happen due to preventable causes, therefore, January is dedicated as the month of "Safe Motherhood Month" to raise the awareness of the general public about preventable causes of maternal death, increase access to quality maternal health services, thereby preventing the risk of a woman dying due to pregnancy and childbirth related challenges.

Currently, the month is being commemorated throughout Ethiopia for the 17th time with a theme "Let's end preventable maternal death together by conducting various awareness raising activities focusing on mothers' from pregnancy to due date and after giving birth.

As part of this effort, several undertakings



including mentorship and supportive supervision activities as well as exploring hospitals in rural area are ongoing.

Among the major initiatives carried out to curb mothers' death is the establishment of maternity waiting centers close to hospitals or health centers in all states of Ethiopia. So far, more than 2 thousand maternity waiting centers are prepared for mothers to stay there two weeks before their due date and after delivery as needed.

Maternal Health Desk Coordinator with the Ministry of Health (MoH), Zamzam Ahmed said that the idea of establishing maternal waiting centers was first initiated about a decade ago to support the society who live in rural areas; far from hospitals.

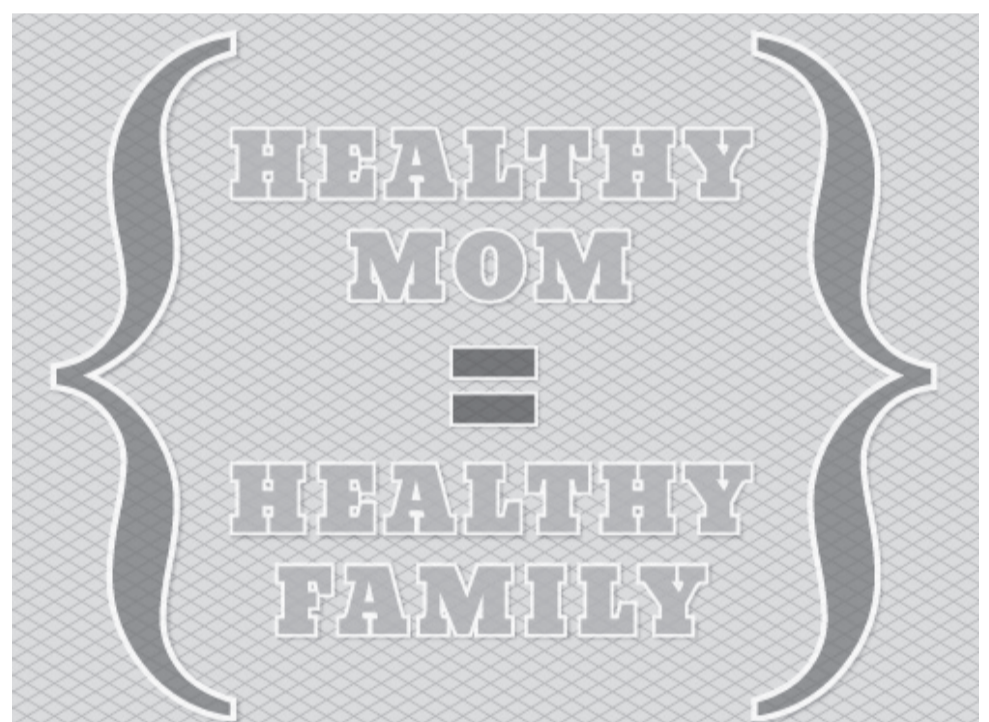
As to this same study conducted by WHO in 2016, from all health centers located across the country, 54 percent of the institutions have maternal waiting center and at this time, the number has increased by 64 percent for the reason the centers are instrumental to decrease mothers' death in rural hospitals while giving birth.

As she explained, the maternal waiting centers are community owned facilities built by the community. Owing to this, they represent the society's culture; which allows mothers to feel at home.

Mentioning that each center has two parts: prenatal and postnatal rooms; and a kitchen, she said that the centers also stuffed with the collection of essential supplies and items for the mothers like food from the community.

For instance, in places with high production of coffee, the coffee donated by the society would be sold and substituted by other essential products for the mothers.

Senior Public Health Expert and Maternal Health Case Team Officer with MoH Shelmew Bominesa said that the pilot project of maternal waiting center was first tested in the southern part of the country, Arba Minch and Gedio Zone hospitals. After it showed encouraging result, the experiences



were scaled up to other parts of the country. He added that the scheme is community participatory program. The initiative is managed by the committee organized in the health center. So, the communities have a big role in taking care of mothers in the centers.

As to him, pregnant mothers stay in the center before and after delivery in accordance with their health status and the distance of their home from the health center. The waiting center in Silte Zone has bought auto rickshaws with the money donated by the community to be used for income generation and transportation for the mothers.

The other exemplary activity in some community is that they have a chief. After completing their stay in the waiting centers, midwifery nurses visit mothers and the newborn babies door to door on daily and weekly basis.

The MoH has prepared the initiative program, standards of the center and give training to the district administrators and health center professionals to work together.

He added that there are many challenges mothers face despite having interest to come to the waiting centers. One of the main challenges is limitations in family planning system. Mothers are always overburdened with household chores including caring children. Since they have to look after the other children too, they fail to visit waiting centers.

The professionals said that waiting centers have two important lessons. The first one is encouraging mothers to institutional deliveries; and breaking the old trend of mothers giving birth at home; and the other one is minimizing maternal deaths during prenatal and postnatal time.

The United Nations set a plan to cut maternal mortality to less than 71 per 100 thousand live births by 2030.

In Ethiopia, the MoH is striving to reduce maternal deaths to less than 140 deaths per 100,000 live births by expanding health centers, improve ambulance service and creating awareness to mothers about maternal health and building a healthy family.

Law & Politics

Ethiopia's uncompromising stance in putting the kibosh on external pressure

BY ADDISALEM MULAT

It is common knowledge that in the course of the war that lasted for two years in the northern part of the country, Ethiopia in several occasions managed to fend off external pressure. In point of fact, some entities have tried every now and then every trick in the book to meddle in the internal affairs of the country and breach its territorial integrity.

In good truth, it is widely known that Ethiopia's arch-foes have been going to great lengths to encroach on the sovereignty of the nation by masterminding a considerable amount of intrigues going behind closed curtains under the guise of multifarious lame reasons that do not demonstrate in black and white the existing circumstances on the ground.

In actual fact, on the basis of the firm stance of the people of Ethiopia, Ethiopian ambassadors, missionaries, Ethiopian Diasporas, the country managed to stave off external pressure in an organized and exemplary way at the earliest possible moment. They left no stone unturned to fend off unwarranted foreign pressure during the #No More Global Movement that turned out to be the talk of the entire world.

It is interesting to note that Ethiopian Diasporas have played an extremely important role in averting external pressure by working in close coordination with Ethiopian allies residing in every corner of the world. It must be kept in mind that during the #No More Movement several nations worldwide were able to stand by the side of Ethiopia to put the kibosh on unwarranted external pressure.

It is important to highlight that in the course of the conflict Ethiopians at home and abroad bend over backwards to defend the sovereignty of Ethiopia by playing a part in a diverse range of campaigns. At that moment in time, quite a lot of nations worldwide have taken part in showing solidarity with Ethiopia in the battle against external pressure that emanated from external forces.

Frankly speaking, the positive developments taken by Ethiopians in staving off external pressure have received a pat on the back from several countries all over the world. In the aftermath of Ethiopia's arch-foes' conspiracies to dismantle the country, Ethiopia was backing itself into a corner. However, through the passage of time, Ethiopia's efforts ended up bearing fruits and yielding results in keeping off the hidden conspiracies.

Even though the move taken by some entities on several occasions has drawn criticism from a diverse range of Ethiopians at home and abroad and friends of Ethiopians, Ethiopia's adversaries were not in the position to lend their ears and distance themselves from their evil deeds. They were time and time again getting themselves engaged in a smear campaign against the positive achievements



blossoming in every nook and cranny of the country.

Dejectedly though some entities know the fact that Ethiopia is a sovereign nation, they have been many a time and oft sparing no effort to twist Ethiopia's arm and accomplish their goal going behind the scenes.

It is no secret that during the conflict in Northern Ethiopia, the disgraced international media outlets had been disseminating bogus stories intending to mystify the wider international community and besmirch the positive developments surfacing all over the country. It is sad that as opposed to making conversant the global community with the self-evident truth and turning the tide, they were persistently upping the ante and raising the stakes.

In the wake of the imaginary stories of the discredited international media outlets, some international organizations and nations without authorization were making a supreme effort to intrude on Ethiopia's territorial integrity. But no matter how hard they attempted to achieve their target, all their attempts turned out to be a wild goose chase.

It must be remembered that since the start of the conflict, some media outlets have been engaged in the information war against Ethiopia.

On the subject of the issue, in times past, the renowned Ugandan investigative journalist Daniel Lutaaya, disproved the fake propaganda of some media outlets and lethal journalism against Ethiopia. He tweeted that "In Adama now but there is nothing, no bullets, no tension, bars are open, no roadblocks. There is more Military presence in Kampala than in Addis Ababa."

It should be recalled that during the war, quite a lot of nations showed solidarity with Ethiopia in different platforms.

In the latest memory, Uganda Pan-African Movement National Executive Chairman,

Daniel Rugarama (Ph.D.) told the local media that the situation in Ethiopia is not just an Ethiopian case, and what is happening in Ethiopia is directly a matter of Africa. "We consider an attack whether it is internal or external on the Ethiopian soil, as an attack on Africa. An attack and dismantling whether ideologically or geographically on Ethiopia is indeed an attack and a very bad example to Africa. The historical importance of Ethiopia is beyond debate."

Apart from demonstrating the fact that Ethiopia is a symbol of emancipation, the country has shown its symbol of liberation in repulsing external pressure through an extensive range of international platforms organized by Ethiopians residing in every corner of the world.

After passing through many ups and downs, Ethiopia turned out to be fruitful in forestalling external pressure and restoring peace and tranquility.

On the heels of the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement signed between the federal government and Tigray People Liberation Front (TPLF), the whole thing in the northern part of the country has been returning to normal.

As the incumbent has set his sights on ending conflicts, it has been engaged in several effective strategies that can restore peace in addition to helping noncombatants breathe a sigh of relief. Given the current circumstances, Ethiopia's arch-foes have embarked on commending the positive moves unfolding in the northern part of the country.

It is crystal clear that as things stand at present, the federal government has been engaged in smoothing the path of the delivery of humanitarian assistance, restoration of social infrastructure, and other things of a similar kind. Instead of distorting facts and confound the global community, the discredited international media outlets should make every possible effort to familiarize all and sundry with the

honest truth.

By the same token, in recent time, a senior diplomat said the strong and coordinated effort made by Ethiopian ambassadors, missionaries, the Diaspora community, and other relevant stakeholders constitute the country's success to withstand the intensified and unwarranted pressure of some interest groups.

Speaking to the Ethiopian Press Agency Ethiopia's former Permanent Representative at the UN in Geneva Ambassador Zenebe Kebede noted that the north Ethiopia conflict had dragged intensified attempts of meddling and pressure from some global forces. The country overcomes all these challenges through cooperative efforts made by ambassadors, diplomats, and the diaspora community.

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.

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 #NoMore movement to protest some interest groups' unwarranted attempts to meddle in Ethiopia's domestic affairs and to show solidarity with the government.

Speaking to local media, a member of the platform Kiya Negash, who lives in Italy, said that the Diaspora has to support Ethiopia and stretch helping hands to the effort geared towards rehabilitating communities that were affected by the north Ethiopia conflict.

Misinformation and disinformation about Ethiopia were rampant in Italy and even radio, television, and other mainstream media cast the country in a negative light. However, following the relentless effort of the Diaspora, it was able to change the mindset of Italians and informed the latter about facts on the ground in the East African nation.

"When our voice is overshadowed by that of a few, we tried our best to defend our country via organizing rallies, arguing with the media and some officials as well as revealing the truth about our country. Of course, the media were talking negatively about Ethiopia, but when we revealed the truth about Ethiopia, they changed their mind at the end of the day. Our effort has been bearing fruit."



Ephrem Endale
Contributor

Between you & me

“Go Find Your Own Table!”

Some guys recently found themselves in a very offensive environment at a restaurant the name of which they chose to keep with themselves. The three of them chose to have lunch at that place not for any special reason which had anything to do with culinary choices but because there was an open parking space nearby. They've already sat and their orders taken when three very smartly dressed men and a pretty lady dressed like she was about to go on the runway come in. Now they say, "...don't judge a book by its cover." But as the three-some narrate the story the newcomers had all the making of self-crowned VIPs so many of which seem to be popping up all over the place these days. They look at the place where our three-some were firmly placed and waiting for their orders to be served.

The self-crowned VIPs summon the headwaiter and mumble something to him. The headwaiter comes rushing to the table of the three-some and tells them to relocate to another table nearby. Now as they tell it, he wasn't asking for their cooperation anything humble enough. The fellow practically ordered them. Now these fellows being some of the wittingly smart guys in town realized the newcomers were behind the whole thing. That offended them even more. Please note they were dressed in the most casual way like they always did, though all of them were highly paid guys. Their answer left no room for doubt, "No we're not moving!" The headwaiter ends up with a multifold forehead maybe to warn them he meant business. They just ignored him and went on with their lively chat.

It was then his tone, his everything go into

a U-turn and starts pledging saying the newcomers were regular customers and liked that particular table. The three-some got really pissed and one says, "We wouldn't move. You can call the police if you like!" That did the trick. The headwaiter glides back to the newcomers like a cat with its tail between its legs and says something to them at the same time trying to take them to another table in the half-empty restaurant. They left! And the headwaiter's glare at the three-some meant anything must have missed a very mouth-watering tip opportunity.

Look, speaking of such types, meaning the self-crowned VIPs some parts of the town are awash with them. You know if these guys wrote some letter to us I think it would sound something like this;

"This letter is to whoever thinks he/she is concerned about things that have to do with us. I've been told that you are running your mouth all over the place. They tell me you're saying a hundred and one things about my new three story residence. At least, you've come close to the truth when you say it cost thirty million birr; it actually cost thirty-five million. But what's it to you where I got that much money! You'd probably throw yourself under a train or something if you knew how much I'm actually worth. I know you guys are bleeding inside due to jealousy. Let me give you a piece of advice; if you insist on being jealous be jealous about something you could at least see in one of those Gordon Gin-induced dreams. All of you down there are so jealous you wouldn't come anywhere to places where a million people live let alone acquire a

million birr! Keep on gritting your teeth until you have none left!

"As if the gossip about the money wasn't enough you're also telling pole I'm close to powerful people in high places. So what! Poor you, anyone who tells you that having people in high places has something is doing you a disservice keeping from going anywhere to one. of course now I'm not your moron; I wouldn't in a thousand years guess you have any chance getting anywhere close to people in high places; But then if you've known what having people in high places meant you wouldn't have been foolish enough to accuse me of having quite solid walls to lean on. Yes they've helped me here and there and they will keep on doing so. Where do you think I got the money from, you moron! But there is no sinning or any crime getting closer to people in the right places. That's wisdom you good-for-nothing....!"

"And about lunch some of us had a couple of weeks back; Every time you open your mouth you're showing people the emptiness of your pea-sized mind. Yes a few of us chartered a small plane and went to Djibouti for a Sunday lunch? And I can tell you it was one of the most sumptuous lunches I ever had. What's wrong with that? Why are you shocked? What if I told you my current girlfriend goes to Nairobi to have her hair made! You people never wake up, do you?"

But I'm something. Maybe not for you, but for many I'm something."

What I admire about you people is that you seem to pride yourself over the most trivial things. And I'm not saying there's anything

wrong with that! In fact it's nice as it keeps you from losing your minds seeing at how we are living. Just because you have a one thousand birr pair of shoes on your feet you think that's some 'breaking' news; well, for you it is! Smiling all the way to your ears over a thousand birr pair of shoes! You guys are real works of nature to show us even there are people for whom worst of the worst is God-sent miracle. Well I have to admit there are things better than going on bare feet, like a thousand-birr pair of shoes. Look, if ever there comes a time when I'd be forced to buy shoes costing less than ten thousand birr I'd consider it I'm already in hell on earth! No offense but some of us aren't cut out for that sort of life!

"By the way you have also been a cursing me for not giving to charity! Why the hell should I! Let me tell you the fact that the likes of me are found in your midst is charity by itself. The only thing is you don't have the onslaught to face reality! The moment we're out of the picture would be placing your lungs out for us to get back into the picture; and you have the guts to accuse me of not giving to charity! Take this advice from me; don't waste your breath over such things because you don't count!"

If you readers think there aren't souls who could be so blunt then you're missing out on changing times. All kinds of stories are being played out in places where the self-crowned VIPs frequent and you only discover about such things if you find yourself in those places by design or accident!

And when a group of that breed demands you change tables tell them; "Go find your own table!"

Rising up to the Challenge!

A few days back I was watching a video entitled "Why are American Men Weak?" They say research has shown that the men of yesteryears and current ones differ in strength and forget the WWE human giants and the average males are getting weaker. Oh, where art though John Wayne! For example they say the men of yesteryears could make more barbell bench presses than the current ones. They talk about the sperm count of men in the rich countries declining. (What the hell is going on!) And also the birthrate decreasing and all that. In the migrant controversy currently gripping the US we heard one politician saying that as many migrants as possible should come in so that the declining population would pick up. Of course, in the migrant debates as the genuine concerns of safety there is also pure racism in play. Sometime back we've heard in a couple of decades the white pollution in the US would be a minority. And this fact by itself is scaring the hell out of many!

Now when it comes to Africa the narrative takes a new look. "Don't these people have anything to do than making children!" that is the purely racist stance sugar-coated with overpopulation concern narrative. "We've to send them more contraceptives! If they

refuse to play by our rules hit them with sanctions. Hold back the wheat and all that!"

But then we never hear them talking about the fact that much of Africa's fertile land is lying untouched. You never hear them saying "We have to help them in any way we can so that the fertile African soil would be utilized and they will free themselves from importing shiploads of grain. Practically close to the entire raw material resources remain below the ground intact and they never tell you Africa would have been in a much better place had these resources been properly developed. No; what you hear them saying loud and clear is "Africans can't feed themselves!" The underlying message is that Africans couldn't feed themselves because they don't have the will to do so and also because they have become so dependent on imports and handouts they don't want to work for their meals! Really is it because we can't feed ourselves because we don't work for it or because we are not wanted to feed ourselves by our own labor!

When you hear all these stories about a one world government and a new world order you can read between the ones. Like they did in Berlin carving out Africa and dividing it among themselves like a giant pieces of

cake it wouldn't be 'crazy' to think there might already be some behind the scenes illicit understanding as to which part goes to which side! "Preposterous!" the innocent might think; But then it is the things once upon a time thought to be 'preposterous' to think that are messing up this world! And what a mess we're in! When all of a sudden the world's makers and breakers "fall in love with Africa..." you smell fish... even if you had never experienced the smell of fish!

I think as time goes by there would be an avalanche of currently 'secret' narratives about coordinated efforts to make Africa stay poor and messed up. I mean of course it's not about only macho gung-ho politicians we are talking about. More and more, much of the mainstream western media being 'politically affiliated' it'd be very challenging for Africa to beat back the frontal and secret onslaught. The cultural invasions seem to have borne fruits in quite a number of places with issues taboo to highly religious countries like Ethiopia increasingly crowding the newspaper pages and the television screens. This is not about being pessimistic but about what actually has been going on for decades and shows no sign of abating.

Reporting about Davos 2023 WEF meeting one media said about one thousand and forty private jets have touched down in that resort town. These are filthy rich billionaires and multi-millionaires who seem to have taken the task of reconfiguring the planet. "The Great Reset;" isn't that what they call it! In better days it would have been something which could have prompted a million "Wow's!" Not anymore. I mean with the good, the bad and the ugly all meddled up it is impossible to see real pictures these days. But then the rhetoric is the billionaires think they are the ones to save the world, as if there has been some divine intervention to bring them together. Here is what John Kerry said; 'When you stop and think about it, it's pretty extraordinary that we select group of human beings because of whatever touched us at some point in our lives, are able to sit in a room and come together and actually talk about saving the planet.'

And here is the real killer; 'It's so... almost extra-terrestrial to think about, "saving the planet."'

But then to save Africa there's no need for anything extra-terrestrial but only realizing what actually is going on and rising up to the challenge!

Notice

• “AFRICAN RELIEF COMMITTEE (ARC)” has applied to the FDRE Authority for Civil Society Organization to register as a Foreign Organization. Any individual or organization opposing the name is hereby requested to report to the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Authority for Civil Society Organization, United Insurance Building, 4th floor office n°. 407, until January 26, 2023 at 9:00A.M.

AUTHORITY FOR CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS

Notice

“ETHIOPIAN MEDICO-LEGAL ASSOCIATION /EMLA/” has applied to the FDRE Authority for Civil Society Organization to register as Association. Any individual or organization opposing the name is hereby requested to report to the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Authority for Civil Society Organization, United Insurance Building, 4th floor office n°. 407, until January 27, 2023 at 9:00A.M.

AUTHORITY FOR CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS

Invitation for Bid

TENDER Ref. NO. NCB/OCC-008/2023

Oromia Construction Corporation (OCC) has intended to invite eligible bidders for the procurement of sublet Pile Foundation at Arjo-Dhidhessa Spillway and Right Intake Construction project works to be subcontracted in local currency. Therefore, interested bidders are invited to participate for the works mentioned above on the basis of the following conditions.

1. Those who owned renewed relevant license, Supplier's Registration Certificate, VAT Reg. Certificate, TIN Number & Tax Clearance letter can purchase a complete bidding document upon payment of non-refundable Birr 400.00 (Four Hundred) in cash.
2. Obligatory to provide bid security of Birr 500,000.00 (Five Hundred Thousand) in the form of C.P.O or unconditional bank guarantee.
3. Bid will be closed on February 07/2023 G.C at 2:00 P.M. and opened on the same date at 2:30 P.M.
4. OCC reserves the Right to Accept or Reject Partially or the entire bid.

Address: Procurement Directorate at Kality

Road in front of Drivers Training Center near CCRDA

+251-11-439-04-78 FAX. NO. 0114396476/0114390546/0114396594

OROMIA CONSTRUCTION CORPORATION

Invitation to Bid

Procurement reference Number:

MOND PD/OT-01/2023B

FDRE Ministry of National Defense Procurement Directorate invites all interested and eligible bidders by this International competitive Bid (ICB) for the procurement of 50 & 70 TON TRUCK CRANE.

1. Bidding will be conducted in accordance with the open tendering procedures contained in the public procurement proclamation of the Gov't of the FDRE.
2. A complete and detail set of bidding documents prepared in English can be purchased by interested and qualified bidders at the address below (a) upon payment of a non-refundable fee Birr 200.00 (Birr Two Hundred) .The method of payment will be in cash.
3. The tender document will be sent by any means and have to be delivered to MOND-PD in the bid box available up to the deadline for the bid submission. No liability will be accepted for loss or late delivery of bid documents.
4. Bids must be delivered to the address below at or before 10:00 A.M: Feb 28, 2023; all bids must be accompanied by a bid security of 8,000 USD OR in equivalent amount in convertible currency in the form of unconditional bank guaranty or CPO from certified Ethiopian bank.
5. Bids will be opened in the presence of the bidders' or legal representatives who choose to attend at the adders below at 10:30 A.M: Feb 28, 2023;
6. MOND-PD has right to reject or accept this bid partially or fully.
7. a. Address documents will be issued from
b. Address Bids will be delivered to & Opening

MOND-PD

Tel: 251-113-722 -870/842

Fax: 251-113-722-834

Block 1, Room No 22

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

MOND-PD

Tel: 251-113-722 -870/842

Fax: 251-113-722-834

Block 1, Room No 22

In front of Armed Forces Hospital/MOND/

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

**MINISTRY OF NATIONAL DEFENSE
PROCUREMENT DIRECTORATE**

Open tender OBU-ONT-15-2015

1. The Oda Bultum University has found a budget for the construction Finishing Work of existing T-4 Block [LOT. D], And [LOT. E] Two Block Condominium for 2015 budget year. Therefore, Oda Bultum University now invites BC and GC Grade 5 (five) and above eligible contractor who can fulfill the following mandatory documentary evidence for compliance.

* A. the bidder must have registered and renewed construction trade license valid for the year 2015 E.C.

* B. The bidder must have VAT registration certificate issued by the tax authority.

* C. The bidder must have a valid tax clearance certificate issued by the tax authority.

D. the bidder should be able to provide the necessary Legal, Professional, Technical, and Financial Requirement.

2. A complete set of bidding document may be purchased by interested eligible bidders at the below office described under up on payment of a non-refundable fee of birr 250 Birr (two hundred fifteen) birr only.

3. The period of construction is three month excluding 10 (ten) day of mobilization.

4. The Bidder limited to buy only one LOT among [LOT. D], And [LOT. E]

5. The bidding document consists the finishing of existing condominium.

6. The bidder shall submit three envelope “technical proposal”, “financial

proposal “and “bid security “separately sealed and the three envelopes should also be sealed in an outer single envelope dully marking the envelope as “ORIGINAL”AND “COPPY” THESE envelopes containing the original and the copies shall then be enclosed in one single envelope.

7. The evaluation is to be carried out in four stages 1.legal, 2. Professional, 3. Technical and 4. Financial qualification.

8. Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information and inspect the bidding document at the Oda Bultum University at the address given below from 8:30 to 12:30 AM and 1:30 to 5:30 PM from Monday to Thursdays and from 8:30 to 11:30 AM and 1:30 to 5:30 PM on Friday.

8. Bid must be delivered to the address below at 21 day beginning from first announcement date and bid closed at time of 10:30 AM of last day.

9. The bidder shall submit bid security of 100,000 (one Handerd thousand) Birr in the form of CPO or unconditional Bank Guarantee;

10. Late bidder will be rejected. Bid will be opened in the presence of bidders or bidder's representative at the address below on time 10:30 AM.

Oda Bultum University Finance and procurement directorate office

P.O.B 226,

Tell: +251 255 510 878

Chiro, Ethiopia

11. Oda Bultum University reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids.

**Oda Bultum University Finance and procurement
directorate office**

International

Kenyan saccos join National Payment System to lower cost of credit

BY JAMES ANYANZWA

Kenyan savings and credit co-operative societies (saccos) are set to join the National Payment System (NPS), which will allow them to clear cheques and begin lending to one another in a bid to lower the cost of credit.

The plan, which has been adopted by President William Ruto's administration as part of its financial inclusion agenda, seeks to reduce saccos' over-reliance on banks for funding and other commercial services such as cheque processing and issuance.

If successful, the policy shift would impact banking institutions, which have relied heavily on saccos for third party business such as issuing of cheque books, processing of personal cheques and trade finance services. Saccos also rely on banks for treasury management, electronic funds transfer (EFTs) and real time gross settlements (RTGS).

Banks will also face a hit on their loan books as saccos begin lending to each other through the Central Liquidity Facility (CLF), an equivalent of the interbank market.



According to Kenya's Sacco Societies Regulatory Authority (Sasra), externally borrowed funds are often expensive and subject to changes in interest rates.

The process of incorporating saccos into mainstream financial services has dragged for close to seven years, largely due lack of a consensus among industry players.

The EastAfrican has learnt that the Ruto administration has prioritised admission of saccos into the National Payment System as part of the government's financial

inclusion agenda. Discussions on the modalities of implementation are currently going on between the National Treasury and the Ministry of Co-operatives, Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) Development.

According to the regulator, the vision for an inter-sacco lending is still 'valid' and the progress is 'encouraging'.

"It is something that the saccos have really pushed and we are hoping the new government can actualise that vision,"

Sasra's chief executive Peter Njuguna told The EastAfrican last week.

On January 14 during the 47th annual general meeting, Cabinet Secretary for Co-operatives and MSMEs Simon Chelugui told members of New Fortis Sacco in Nyeri County the government is set to establish a Ksh1 billion (\$8.13 million) Central Liquidity Facility for saccos in a bid to ease access to financial services and deepen inclusion. The CLF is expected to be in place within a year or earlier.

About 50 saccos out of 890 have committed to the establishment of the facility and there are efforts to admit more.

"Getting the consensus around the industry is never easy because this is an industry that is growing and some of the players are very far ahead while others are far behind," said Njuguna.

The CLF allows saccos to team up and develop capacity to serve their members.

The sacco sub-sector contributes close to seven percent to Kenya's GDP.

Source: The EastAfrican

African blocs discuss challenges to realizing single currency territories

BY MARY WAMBUI

Africa's main regional economic blocs say monetary unions will raise the value of trade and shield them from fluctuating exchange rates and are pushing to establish single currency territories.

Gathering in Nairobi under the African Union, representatives from various member states of regional economic blocs (RECs) said exchange rates should be considered a barrier to trade and addressed with urgency.

Some of the RECs such as the East African Community have identified a monetary union and a single currency as one way of boosting integration and eliminating the exchange shortfalls that routinely befall traders across the borders.

Kenya's Industry, Trade and Investment Cabinet Secretary Moses Kuria told the meeting that seven in 10 African economies face serious challenges related to foreign exchange, but blamed part of the problem on procrastination.

"We have debunked the myths about Africa being a continent of darkness, centre of disease, and it is now time to debunk the myth that there is no hurry in Africa," CS Kuria said.



"Other regions and continents have caught up and are interested in Africa, but Africa is still dragging its feet. The only way to do this is to establish linkages and bridges within Africa."

In integration, some blocs have made progress. The EAC, for example, allows citizens to travel across borders using national IDs, even though some member states have not implemented this. The EAC has further constructed and launched 12 one-stop border posts, easing the movement of people and goods.

The elephant in the room, however, has

been the monetary union. In the EAC, Kenya and Tanzania are still battling over hosting rights of the East African Monetary Institute, the presumptive regional central bank.

At this week's Nairobi meeting, AU Commission chairperson Moussa Faki said that as Africa has the world's largest free trade area — 1.2 billion-person market — it must create an environment where its own resources fuel trade and prosperity.

"The economic prospects for Africa look promising, Africa is coming out as resilient and is bound to transform the

three major sectors of economic activities into a much more sustainable economic model; the extraction of raw materials, the manufacturing sector and the service industry," he said.

EAC Secretary-General, Dr Peter Mathuki, said the bloc is working hard to remove non-tariff barriers to regional trade.

"They have now dropped from almost 250 last year to four, and we shall work to see how to remove the remaining ones to ease trade between countries," he said.

"We will look into how to improve this so that intra-Africa trade can rise to at least 50 percent. Transporting goods from East Africa to Central Africa takes approximately two months, yet Central Africa is so near. We will engage in discussions on infrastructure to allow faster and easier movement of goods from one country to another," he added.

The single currency dream will, however, take a while to achieve.

The blocs must address inflation rates, forex reserves to cover at least four months' imports and fiscal deficits averaging 3.5 percent and avoiding borrowing more than 50 percent of their respective GDPs.

Source: The EastAfrican

Magnificent celebrations of *Timket*

BY DARGIE KAHSAY

The Ethiopian orthodox Tewahdo Church last Thursday celebrated *Timket*, Ethiopian Epiphany; a holiday that commemorates the baptism of Jesus Christ at the hands of John the Baptist at Jordan River. To honor the actions of Jesus who headed to Jordan river to get baptized, the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahdo Church annually kicks off the celebration on the eve of *Timket*, named *Ketera*.

Timket is marked on 19th of January annually and the celebration usually starts on *Ketera*. It is a place where *Tabots*, replicas of the Arks of the covenants, carried by priests, cluster leaving their respective churches and marches to the nearest water sources where communal baptism is to take place. Natural rivers and lakes are selected or artificial ponds prepared for the purpose.

There the *Tabots* stay the whole night until the next day near the water. Different religious

ceremonies and practices continue the whole night including praying, singing and other activities. In a similar fashion, the practice ripples across the whole churches throughout the country. A uniform practice takes place across the whole churches.

On the 19th of January this year here in Addis, the *Timket* celebration started with a morning mass. Then the patriarch, archbishops, priests and clergies blessed the waters and sprinkled the holy water from the holy bath on

the crowd comprising the orthodox faithful. Then, the *Tabots* started the return route to their respective churches. Priests, Sunday school youths and the whole faithful tag along ululating, clapping, singing and praying all along the streets to honor the *Tabots*.

Timket promotes, peace, unity, harmony, cultural and spiritual values of Ethiopia and the celebration is common and uniform across the whole churches of Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahdo Church.



Patriarch, Arch Bishops blessing the baptismal water at Jan-Meda

The above shot was taken during the *Timket* celebration of 2023 at Addis Ababa's Jan-Meda *Timket* center. Jan-Meda is known for its colorful celebration of *Timket* festival annually. On the eve, Twelve *Tabots* leave their respective churches to stay for the whole night gathered at Jan-Meda *Timket* center found around Sidist Kilo area in the heart of Addis Ababa.

The Patriarch of the Ethiopian orthodox Tewahdo Church annually presides over the Jan-Meda *Timket* celebration and lead the whole ceremonial celebration of the church. The patriarch this year too led the praying, blessing and other religious activities including blessing the holy water and sprinkling the holy water on the faithful.

The above picture was taken while Patriarch of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahdo Church Abune Matiyas and Arch Bishops of the church blessing the waters readied for baptizing the faithful. The blessing of the water comes next to a morning adoration of the Almighty God. Then the whole people attended the ceremony baptized by the holy water. After baptism, everyone started the return journey accompanying the *Tabots* back to their respective churches with religious songs, praying, chants and traditional dances.

Gondar colorfully celebrated

Timket festivity

Though celebrated across Ethiopia by Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahdo Church colorfully, *Timket* celebration is unique in the historic city of Gondar. Gondar is a symbol of unity, togetherness, patriotism and compassion in Ethiopia. *Timket* celebration is something unique in this beautiful, historic and hospitable city.



Forty four *Tabots* are found in Gondar and its environs and the celebration of *Timket* in Gondar is something magnificent. The ceremony takes place in the historic castle of Fasiledes. The water used for baptism is the bathing pool of King Fasil, which was built in the 17th Century.

The above shot was taken during this year's *Timket* celebration at Gondar. The faithful are seen swimming in the bath following priests' blessing of the water. It is not just a swimming practice. It is rather a baptism and this activity is becoming an annual tradition since the 17th century.

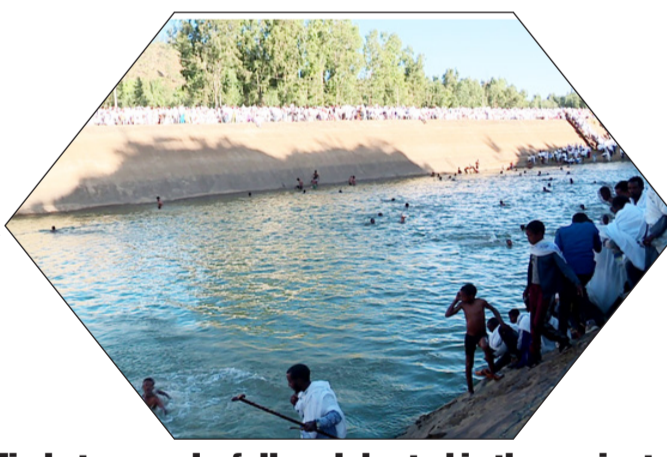
The area is filled by the faithful wearing traditional white clothes. Similarly it is decorated by Ethiopia's tricolor referencing the unity and peace of Ethiopia and the prices forefathers paid for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the country.



Timket beautifully celebrated in Adama

This shot was taken during *Timket* celebration in Adama city. Faithful youths are seen in the pictures waiting for a holy water to be sprinkled by the priests.

Adama is also among the places where *Timket* is celebrated colorfully. The religious practice is common in all areas. The above picture indicates that the youth are waiting on the outer flank. Women, children and the elderly are on the front to get baptized first. This helps to control stampedes and thronging, and the youth are waiting behind. This is a beautiful picture to showcase reverence and humility.



Timket was colorfully celebrated in the ancient city of Axum thanks to restored peace

Axum is the ancient city of Ethiopia and the base of the ancient civilization of Axumite Kingdom of Ethiopia. It is believed that Christianity entered into Ethiopia during the Axumite civilization through Axum. The holy city of Axum is also believed to be the home of the Ark of the Covenants.

Timket in Axum is annually celebrated at May-Shum, a center prepared to celebrate *Timket* since the Axumite civilization, *Timket* celebration is among the magnificent ones in May-Shum.

It was risky to celebrate *Timket* during the past two years due to the war in Northern Ethiopia. The faithful of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahdo Church of Axum celebrated this year's *Timket* festival colorfully at May-Shum, thanks to the restoration of peace and stability following the Pretoria's Agreement between the Federal Government of Ethiopia and TPLF.

The above shot was taken during this year's celebration of *Timket* at May-Shum. The faithful are seen swimming in the bath while others quad up waiting their turn to be baptized by the holy and blessed water. The spiritual ceremony is common across the whole churches.



Timket colorfully celebrated in Batu city

Though the spiritual ceremony is similar across the whole churches of EOTC, the *Timket* celebration in Batu is somewhat unique and magnificent to attend. Batu is found around 160 KM from the capital, Addis Ababa and is replete with natural lakes.

The *Timket* celebration in Batu includes the tours of *Tabots* by boats to bless the waters of the lakes. Faithful celebrants are seen in the picture above by the sides of the beautiful lake, Hara Dembel Lake.

Following the *Tabots* march to the lake and the priests and clergies' blessing the waters of the lake; celebrants use the waters to baptize. The religious practice, religious songs, chanting, praying and dancing included beautiful traditional songs that went on the whole day until the *Tabots* arrive their churches.