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Ethiopia stands with Sudan in finding homegrown solution

BY STAFF REPORTER

ADDIS ABABA - Ethiopia stands in solidarity with Sudan in their current self-led political process, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) tweeted yesterday.

The premier's twitter message came while he was on one-day working visit to Sudan. He also appreciated General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan for the warm welcome.

During his visit, he discussed with

Transitional Sovereignty Council Vice President Lieutenant-General Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo.

In the course of the meeting Prime Minister

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Photo: Gebabo Gebrie

Telecom

operators driving force in regional economic integration: TMSS CEO

BY MISGANAW ASNAKE

ADDIS ABABA - Apart from the business outcomes, the Tele-Mobile South Sudan's (TMSS) operation in Juba will have paramount importance in bringing interconnectedness between the two countries and the East African region at large, the CEO said.

Speaking to *The Ethiopian Herald*, TMSS's newly-appointed CEO Andualem Admassie (PhD) stated that the involvement of the operator, which is owned by an Ethiopian investor Aysheshim Tekla, in South Sudan's telecom market would have far-reaching significance. Not only give the impetus for the already-in-good-shape economic interconnectedness between Ethiopia and South Sudan, but the move will also facilitate the economic integration of the East African countries.

TMSS the first of its kind that an Ethiopian investor engages in the telecom business and the firm is equipped with Ethiopian professionals with profound experience in the area. The license, secured from the South Sudanese government, is also the

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Photo: Eyob Teferi

Gov't recognizes 52 Diaspora Orgs for noble contributions

BY STAFF REPORTER

ADDIS ABABA- For their noble contribution to the national calls that have been made on various occasions, some 52 Ethiopian Diaspora organizations received recognition yesterday from President

Sahlework Zewde and Deputy Prime Minister Demeke Mekonnen.

It was stated on the occasion the organizations were awarded for their extraordinary involvement in various activities, including public diplomacy,

image building and resource mobilization, among others. The Diasporas have also exerted noble contributions in fending off the unwarranted pressure of some interest groups and promoting Ethiopia's objective reality among global actors.

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Invest Origins 2023 advances Ethiopia's global outreach

BY ESSEYE MENGISTE

ADDIS ABABA-The organizer of the "Invest Origins 2023" forum, which aims to promote Ethiopia's prevailing investment opportunities for domestic and foreign investors, expressed the aim to utilize the session to accelerate the country's global outreach.

The organizer of the forum and Land Bank and Development Corporation Director General Lensa Mekonnen stated that the conference aims to attract socioeconomically viable investments to raise Ethiopia's global outreach and

advance its development goals.

Commenting on the issue to *The Ethiopian Herald*, an economist and Global Chairman of Fairfax Africa Fund Zemedeneh Nigatu noted that following the peace accord, there is a growing demand among U.S. and European companies to do business in Ethiopia.

Remarking at the occasion, Health Minister Lia Tadesse (MD) indicated that the participation of the private sector is essential in helping the government's efforts to ensure effective health

See Invest Origins ... Page 3



News



Photo: Haadush Abriha

Ethiopia ready to welcome AU sessions participants

BY YESUF ENDRIS

ADDIS ABABA- Preparation has been finalized for the 36th Ordinary Session of the African Union and its 42nd Ordinary Session of Executive Council whereby collaboration across diverse sectors is in full swing, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) announced.

A National Committee composed of 30 institutions met yesterday to assess the status of preparations thus far.

Briefing journalists yesterday, the Committee Chairperson Ambassador Birtukan Ayano said that the government has carried out various activities to enable guests of the two summits to witness Ethiopia's long-cherished culture of hospitality.

Noting the successful conduct of the two sessions will build Ethiopia's image and its capability of hosting similar continental conferences, the chairperson indicated the strong collaboration that was formed between public and private entities to this end.

Having taken place when lasting peace and stability are restored in Ethiopia, the sessions will allow the global community to realize the country's objective reality. The business community and residents of Addis Ababa at large are expected to accord a warm welcome to participants of the sessions.

Ethiopia's Permanent Representative to the AU Ambassador Ayele Lire said on the occasion that the African Continental Free Trade Area is expected to be the major agenda of the two deliberations. The 45th Ordinary Session of the Permanent Representatives Committee which was deliberated for 12 consecutive days since January 16 identified the main agendas to be tabled for the ministerial session.

"Besides, we are working to host at least three concurrent meetings with other AU Member State leaders or ministers and Ethiopia will share its success in the Green Legacy Initiative with other African countries."

The representatives' committee has evaluated AU's past year's performance and implementation of various programs including Agenda 2063, Ambassador Ayele remarked.

While the 42nd Ordinary Session of the Executive Council (Ministerial Session) will be held from February 15-16, the 36th Ordinary Session of the African Union Summit (heads of States and Government session) will take place from 18 to 19 February in Addis Ababa.

The theme of AU's 2023 sessions is "Accelerating the Implementation of African Continental Free Trade Area," The Ethiopian Herald learned.

State working on boosting investment

• Launches *Ethiopia, Oromia produces* campaign

BY HAILE DEMEKE

BISHOFTU – Oromia Investment and Industry Bureau disclosed that it is working aggressively to attract more investors in various fields of investment and make the state one of the most preferable investments destinations.

The state has launched "Ethiopia produces Oromia produces" campaign, "which is part of government campaign aimed at boosting production of manufacturing sector.

In his opening remark Bishoftu town Mayor Alemayehu Asefa said that Oromia is one of preferred investment destinations for both local and foreign investors and the government is aggressively working on boosting the investment in the state and beyond.

He stated that investment is crucial for economic development by enhancing mobilization of resource thereby creating transfer of technology; creating job opportunities and increasing capital inflow through export oriented production. Accordingly, city administration and regional government are committed to provide all necessary support to the sector.

A number of Small and medium sized enterprises were promoted to investment which is commendable. The sector has created job for over 35,000 citizens planned to double it with about 16.4 billion Birr capital. Coordination among all concerning stakeholders including bank and other financial sector has crucial role in averting all rounded problems and achieving the desired goal.

Oromia Investment and Industry Bureau Head Ahmed Idris on his part said that Ethiopia has been importing a number of products costing billions of dollars which is affecting the country's economy.



Accordingly, Ethiopia has launched Ethiopia produce campaign aimed at improving production and productivity.

The state is attractive investment destinations for investors in diverse sub-sectors, including agro-processing, horticulture, textile and garment, hotel and tourism, among others, he stated.

He recalled that Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) launched 'Let Ethiopia Produce' campaign which aims at helping manufacturers boost production and productivity across the country. The campaign is part of the 10 year development plan for the industry sector and intends to address the challenges that producers at all levels confront during the manufacturing process, and increase the sector's contribution to the GDP. Accordingly the state has created over hundreds of thousands of jobs in 7,343 manufacturing industry with about 83 billion Birr capital.

He further stated that the campaign will be conducted in different cities across the region and aimed at identifying problems within the manufacturing industry sector, resuscitating defunct industrial centres, and attracting more investment.

Ministry of Trade and Industry (MoTI) State Minister Tarekegn Bululta said that having

abundant potential, the country has been still lagging behind in achieving the desired goal. The campaign is launched primarily with the objective of giving due attention to manufacturing industries, strengthening coordination among stakeholders and addressing the root cause affecting the manufacturing industries.

Following the campaign about 200 manufacturing industries have recommenced their operation which is commendable and working to open the remaining. The government is more than ready and committed to ease challenges related to finance, power interruption, input, infrastructures, and other related problems.

He said that it is important to draw lesson from the successful achievement of the agriculture sector in the manufacturing industry and the government would provide every support for the manufacturers. It is crucial to support manufacturers to meet the increasing local demand by substituting imports and saved billions of dollars since launched.

The campaign showcased exhibitions and recognition of exemplary manufacturing industries as well as other related programs. The campaign is organized by the region jointly with Bishoftu and Dukem town.

Diaspora keen to sustain support for Ethiopia

BY MESERET BEHAILU

ADDIS ABABA –The Diaspora community will continue contributing to the effort towards protecting the interests and sovereignty of the homeland using various mechanisms, so said a member of Ethiopian Diaspora.

Emebet Mengistie an Ethiopian origin living in the U.S. told local media that the Diaspora community has been contributing a lot to the effort exerted towards safeguarding national interest and sovereignty, particularly over the past four years.

As to her, the Diaspora community has been playing an indispensable role in supporting the country's construction process such as Abay dam and conflict affected areas, peace building, reducing foreign exchange crunch, avoiding the foreign pressures, providing different provisions to whom people in need of support, canceling the draft laws that were to impose on Ethiopia, collecting petition, and submitting the letter for the right body in a bid to ensure the national interests of



Ethiopian Diaspora in Washington D.C

the country thereby enforcing the external bodies to rethink their biased approach on Ethiopia.

"Though the members of the Diaspora community are not physically present in their country, they do not take their eyes and hearts off their country's affairs for a second," Emebet added.

She further stated that the Diaspora community will continue the support of the country through various mechanisms to realize country's glimmer of hope and

ensure overall development. In this regard, the Diaspora community has formal groups which help continue intensifying the necessary support of the nation.

By the same token, the Ethiopian Diaspora Service (EDS) announced recently that among the various significances that the country gained from the Diaspora including over four billion USD as remittance. Apart from this, the Diaspora community has been playing a crucial role in transferring technology, knowledge, experience, involving in investment, and the likes.

News



Ethiopian, Jamaican artists to host Royal Fest

BY MISGANAW ASNAKE

ADDIS ABABA - Ethiopian and Jamaican musicians disclosed that international music festival dubbed as the Royal Fest will be hosted jointly in Jamaica in near future.

The young Ethiopia and Jamaican artists briefed media recently that they would perform their music together in international Royal Fest in Jamaica, Montego Bay on upcoming May, 26-28, 2023.

Ethiopian Music Producer, Composer, Kamuzu Kassa said connect Ethiopian music with the rest of the world helps promote real image of Ethiopia and shift the wrong view of the world community regarding this great nation.

The Royal Fest is a great opportunity to

introduce the nation to world community too, he said.

As to artists, the main aim of international Royal Fest music is to further cement Ethiopia and Jamaica's historical relation and inspire again in new form of energy.

Artist Sami Dan on his part said: "We will present Ethiopian music in new energy and different lyric styles there. This international Royal Fest would inspire foreign tourist to visit the land origin of Ethiopia and would contribute a lot to Ethiopian artists."

Among young Ethiopian artists that will present their music in Royal Fest include Dawit Tsige, Lij Mikael, Sami Dan, Kasmase, Nina Girma, and Yared Negu whereas Jamaican artists Jesse Royal, Jason Panton, Miki Ginral and

Cishilacology.

Artist Jesse Royal during a press briefing said: "We Jamaicans and Ethiopian are sisters and brothers and have a lot in common such as cultural and religion. We see Ethiopia as our mother land. Thus, Ethiopia and Jamaica need to unify, develop together to create the better world beyond reinforcing their long historical legacy in good manner."

He said that he is happy to present his work in the Royal music Fest with fellow Ethiopian artists together

Artist Jason Panton on his part said: "The 1966 visit of Emperor Haile Selassie to Jamaica remind us and create the bond between the two nations. The Royal Fest would be organized in collaboration with Abyssinia and Nigus entertainment."

Ethiopia stands...

Abiy Ahmed encouraged Lieutenant-General Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo to tap into the abundant capacity of the Sudanese people in solving their own challenges.

The premier, moreover, held discussions with various Sudanese political parties

engaged in the ongoing political process as well as members of the trilateral mechanism.

During the discussion, he affirmed that Ethiopia applies its non-interventionist principle not only to its own experience but also to others as well.

Prime Minister Abiy has further encouraged the people of Sudan and all political parties to find home grown solutions.

The premier and his delegation have arrived in Khartoum, Sudan yesterday for a one-day working visit, according to the Office of the Prime Minister.

Gov't recognizes...

Over the past two years, the participation of Ethiopian Diasporas on different national issues has been significantly improved and they have played a unique role in making the voice of their home country be heard at the international level. The Diasporas have also served Ethiopia as a bridge to connect with the outside

world.

Ethiopians in the Diaspora have staged numerous public rallies 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.

Besides, the Diaspora community from all walks of life actively participated in discussions with political representatives in their respective countries of residence and sent petition letters and other forms of campaigns.

Invest Origins...

service delivery. "There is an untapped opportunity for the establishments of third and fourth level hospitals in Ethiopia and policy reforms and other activities are being carried out to encourage those who want to invest in the sector."

The minister further highlighted Ethiopia's enormous investment opportunities in the provision of vaccines, medical supplies, and building health infrastructure.

Apart from introducing Ethiopia's conducive business climate and the current policy reforms including telecom liberalization, the organizers also held an experience-sharing session with participants of the forum.

The forum participants, who are largely investors, economists and representatives of international companies, urged the government and other stakeholders to make extensive promotion of Ethiopia's untapped investment opportunities.

Telecom operators...

historical turning point for Ethiopians to be engaged in the telecom sector in a foreign country, Andualem added.

"As the two countries are landlocked, Ethiopia would serve as the gate of South Sudan and we would have a relationship with ethio telecom in this case. The telecom connectivity would also galvanize the two countries' import-export trade and facilitate their people-to-people ties and business undertakings."

As a latecomer in South Sudan's telecom market, TMSS has the advantage to deploy the latest technology and easing resource wastage and diversifying the cable network. Having the professional, technological, technical, and price edge, the operator is fully ready to become the market leader in South Sudan.

The CEO further noted that a strategic partnership agreement was signed with ethio telecom to work together in the areas of international internet gateways and communication lines, telecom infrastructure expansion, as well as provision of telecom services.

It is to be recalled that TMSS, the fourth largest telecom services provider in South Sudan after MTN, Zain, and Digitel recently appointed ex-ethio telecom CEO Andualem Admassie as its new head.

Opinion

Political marketers discouraging efforts of nation building

BY GETACHEW MINAS

Political marketers have discouraged the efforts of nation building in Africa. It is proposed by high ranking government officials in Ethiopia that such marketers should be prevented in time before they create havoc to the political, economic and social networks in the country. The trend of the political market seems to lead to a looming danger to the current all-inclusive nation building efforts. There is a need for an immediate and organized action to halt it. Recently, government officials have openly discussed the political market as an obstacle to socioeconomic development efforts of the country. These efforts have the noble goal of eliminating or reducing the rampant poverty observed in Ethiopia. The efforts of the government to achieve the objectives stated in the development programs of the country could only be achieved where there is a reign of peace, law and order.

The major obstacles to economic development are the various components of the political market including corruption and extremism that abuse rules and regulations of government institutions for personal interest. Government officials, including Dr. Fitsum Assefa and Dr. Eyob Tekalign, have revealed in their discussion the various features of the political market in Ethiopia. There are many invidious, offensive, horrible and merciless operators in the economy whose ultimate goal is self-aggrandizement through enrichment at the expense of the poverty stricken masses of the Ethiopian people. They always used illegal means of exploiting the national resources of the country. They chase, pursue and track the avenue to individual enrichment. In so doing, they evade their legal tax obligation to the government.

Of course, illicit operations avoid the legal means of economic activities. What is cancerous about operating in the illegal "Political Market" is that the youth are easily attracted to it. The youth are attracted by what they see on the ground where the political market seems beneficial. There is no need for some of these youths to go through the arduous educational path and help in pulling out their country out of poverty through hard work. Even if they go through the various levels of the educational ladder, they tend to prefer the short-cut to wealth by joining the political markets. The entry to this market is not free for all except those who have attachment or link to the illegal operators. These operators deal with anything that is illegal in Ethiopia as long as it is lucrative and beneficial. These Ethiopians do not make "profit" which is a sign of production and productivity. They do not produce but exploit the situation illegally.

Fair profit is an indicator of contribution to the national economy through generating employment by engaging the necessary factors of production. Internationally these factors are land, labor, capital, entrepreneurship and this is true for Ethiopia. The problem Ethiopia faced for several decades is civil war that eliminated the lives of thousands of innocent people. The operators in the political market of Ethiopia are using legal loopholes or illegal means for the purpose of profiteering, exploitation and abuse of power in war affected country. The political market is also used by those in power who operate in

the dark. Currently, the Ethiopian government is taking bold legal measures against these powerful operators who try to destabilize the system. If the government is stable they fear to be hunted and arrested.

Heavy handed approach by the government threatens the illegal political market operators. As mentioned earlier such operation is done with full cooperation between corrupt officials and illegal market operators. The desire to illegally operate ignoring the legal alternative is a manifestation of political market. It creates vagueness, uncertainty, elusiveness, imprecision and instability in the country. The political marketers elude, avoid, evade or dodge legal operation. Such operation exposes those engaged in the political market. Ethiopia, which is in transition or reform, is exposed to this market. On the other hand, those that are widely engaged in the political market fear the massive reforms undertaken by the Ethiopian government. These reforms fish out illegal economic operators, including alien elements that manipulate the market to thrive in the country.

In Ethiopia, political marketing may consist of a set of activities, processes, or political institutions used by political organizations. These organizations consist of candidates and individuals, who may create, communicate, deliver, and exchange promises of value to voters, political party stakeholders, and society at large. In other words, the marketing aim of a political party or candidate is to communicate and exchange party policies for votes. In this respect, traditional marketing and political marketing have similar objectives. While traditional marketing rarely inspires heated discussions, political marketing often fuels strong opinions. Thus, political marketing strategies aim to target not only voters' minds "but also" their hearts. Studies have revealed that political campaigns can elicit emotional reactions in voters.

A passionate approach to politics shows that voters have a clear image of the parties in mind. Thus, the significance of incorporating what constitutes value for the voter in the political trademark can be created for the voters. This is a priority the "political marketers" in Ethiopia must consider. Studies show that the utilization of "brand identity" provides a conceptual framework to establish links between the functional and "emotional" attributes of political parties. This provides the ability to impart the position of policy clearly. In order to be successful, political brands must achieve meaningful sense of community. These brands identify love and passion, self-reliance, connection, interdependence, commitment, intimacy, partnership, and nostalgic attachment as necessary for a good political relationship.

Political marketing is a hybrid discipline that draws on the traditional marketing and political science. Thus, there is a need to adapt and adjust to changes in the discipline of political marketing. Political marketing is the marketing of ideas and opinions, which relate to public or political issues or to specific candidates. In general, political marketing is designed to influence people's votes in elections. Notably, political marketers employ many of the same techniques used in product marketing such as paid advertising, direct mail, and publicity. In this regard,

political marketing is virtually synonymous with propaganda because its essential aim is persuading the public. It is concerned with communicating with party members, media, and prospective sources of funding as well as the electorate.

Political marketing is the process of communicating the values of party objectives, including policies, programs, and leader image to voters. These measures help to sell political stand and gain as many voters as possible. However, political marketing is much more than political advertising. It is argued that many terms used in conventional marketing, such as consumer behavior, market segmentation, image, brand loyalty, product concept, and product positioning, can also be used by political marketers. The link between politics and the marketing discipline is also reinforced by political advertising, effectiveness, segmentation, social policy, and political policymaking. In a wider perspective, political marketing is the process of applying tools developed for the commercial marketplace into the political field.

Political marketers offer systematic processes for evaluating the desires and needs of the masses of the people. They also provide specific instruments used to influence large groups of people as well as more focused markets. Thus, political marketers offer frameworks and methodologies to study the behavior of voters and strategies of parties. They also address governments in modern democratic countries. In this sense, political marketer influence target audiences to vote for a particular person, party, or idea. Several areas in political marketing require better understanding, including the stance and the positioning of a political brand and the factors affecting its desired and perceived positions.

In Ethiopia, the nature of political issues should be clear for the electorate. The processes and reasoning that a political party can face require a study of political market in Ethiopia. In the country, the effectiveness of a political strategy is highly influenced by ethnic, religious and other realities affecting Ethiopian voters. Political leaders should be able to effectively define the distinctive characteristics of their political goal and program. They should also understand, identify, and utilize the most appropriate mechanisms of communication to create an accurate perception of their political image. This should be linked to actual and real characteristics of their political goals. In the "process" of election, party goals and programs should not be changed to fit the opinion of individual voters during the campaign.

It is useful to have measurement of party progress and comparable results over time as a party trademark. However, there are risks associated with creating a trademark because of the risk of failing to meet promises made to followers. Most of the unfulfilled promises of political parties in Ethiopia have disappointed their supporters and cliques. The cliques are opportunists who capitalized on the success of parties during elections. This left the part brand or flag carriers exposed to considerable reputational risk. Political leaders must be vigilant regarding the effects of their mistakes or bad behavior which can extend beyond their personal image. In the political market,

Ethiopian entrepreneurs may gamble to win in an election with immense investment in the electorate. They invest in the ignoramus and blockheads just to win numbers without ideas.

The political marketers instruct their party apparatchiks to engage and recruit political imbeciles and idiots to spread party programs by word of mouth. The most common forum for such communication is the liquor house in the neighborhood. In this situation, there is confusion between personal and party interests. Some party recruits may be double agents, defectors, traitors or turncoats who may be serving the interests of contending parties. In Ethiopia, where personal identification is "rarely" checked or difficult to locate for several reasons, political parties may face risks. The political market seems to be full of entrepreneurs that are ready to engage double agents and defectors in pre-and-post election period. The truth is revealed only after the election fanfare and display is over. In the period of evaluation, political entrepreneurs make calculations of loss and gain as it will serve them in the next election period.

Evaluations may be conducted on the success or failure of a party that operated in the political market. This helps to learn lessons, identify and underline the differences between political gambling and sincere performance. It is only parties that are honest in serving the poor people of Ethiopia who will see success in their future endeavor. Past failures to win political elections are nothing but inputs for success in the foreseeable future. Of course, they face the danger of penetration by the political marketers whose interest is nothing but anarchy, chaos, lawlessness and disorder. The hiding places for these marketers are mainly the Ethiopian bureaucracy, the public enterprises and affiliated institutions, including academic and non-academic enterprises where they had full authority. Their power is far reaching and "terrorizing" to those who have information on the corruption and abuse of power. They have a net-work for stealing public property, including financial and material assets.

Those who have ample information on the embezzlement and theft of public property need to be "guaranteed" state protection. Such protection may, of course, not come from the corrupt officials who are ready to sacrifice the informants. So, public exposure of political marketers is a kind of operation which is a vicious circle of one action after another. If the individual who exposed to the state the process of corruption with evidence is "not" protected, then the evil is allowed to reign in its empire. In this quagmire, it may be difficult to trace, capture, arrest, prevent and avoid political marketers from engaging in "state capture" or systemic political corruption. The private interests significantly influence the state decision-making processes to their own advantage. They may go to the extent of influencing the political election process to their advantage. They can put in power a political party in Ethiopia that serves their interests only.

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

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Editorial

IMF's projection attests country's effective economic reform

Unlike the past two years marred by deadly war in northern parts of the country and other pockets of conflicts, Ethiopia is trying to restore peace and order and has shifted its focus to post-conflict recovery. From the Pretoria peace deal to the normalization of strained diplomacy, good news is in good supply in the country compared to the previous tumults years. The peace pact effectively silenced the gun in Tigray and other adjacent states as it also eased the dire humanitarian situation facing millions of communities.

The breakthrough deal turned calamities into opportunities with the incumbent throwing its full weight into the reconstruction of conflict-ridden areas and rehabilitation of war-impacted communities. The war of words has already been replaced with post-war plans. The signing of the accord also improved the country's severed diplomatic relations with other countries resulting in the normalization of ties with financial institutions and friendly countries. The positive move opened a window of opportunities for the country to rebuild itself.

In what could be said a defining development, the country's economy is set to see a leapfrog expansion in 2023, a leapfrog growth that makes Ethiopia among the top largest economies in Sub-Saharan Africa.

The IMF expects the economy of Ethiopia this year to expand by 13.5 percent on dollar terms. Indeed, this is the clearest indication that the country is pursuing effective indigenous economic reform. The nation has been registering considerable development regardless of the adversity conditions it experienced in the last few years. The government's reform agenda and its ambitious economic opening up are credited for the economic boom.

IMF projects Ethiopia's GDP to be \$126.2 billion Wahoro Ndoho, an economist and past director-general of Public Debt Management for the Treasury noted that Ethiopia has been on an upward trajectory owing to its aggressive industrialization and Chinese-like State capitalism where the government cherry-picks sectors and projects to be prioritized.

He also stated that Ethiopia's Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed's (Ph.D) unwavering stance for launching an ambitious reform drive aimed at opening up one of Africa's most closed economies is worth appreciating.

Wahoro, moreover, said that the ceasefire reached in November has raised hopes for the nation's economic momentum restoration. Ethiopia is among Africa's top recipients of foreign investment, becoming a magnet for manufacturers.

It is also reported that Ethiopia has done better in attracting foreign investments eyeing a population that has more cash to spend. These positive developments could serve as a springboard for the country to grow and aspire more. In fact, the economic expansion is attributable to the incumbent's handwork to open up the market and invest aggressively in key economic sectors. And, IMF's projection is testimony to this hard fact.

Because of the relentless commitment the government is currently demonstrating, the country is to fully recover from the effects of war and requires billions of USD for post-war reconstruction works. Sustaining the economic expansion will help the nation to lift millions of people out of abject poverty. To overcome these challenges, financiers and development partners should avail the required resource and closely work with the Ethiopian government.

Opinion

Portugal swaps debt for Cape Verde for environment fund: An example that others should follow

BY STAFF REPORTER

Developing countries are facing the brunt of the global climate crisis that is outcome of the massive carbon emission by the developed countries. Countries have agreed to compensate the damage on developing countries through carbon trade where the developed countries pay specific amount of money for the agreed volume of carbon they emit.

This being one of the schemes to remunerate developing countries for the environmental loss, the other initiative to fund climate efforts of developing countries is the debt swap. Through the debt swap agreements, rich nations pledge to fully or partially write off debt owed by developing countries commensurate to the environmental protection and climate change prevention efforts.

Accordingly Portugal has recently signed an agreement to swap Cape Verde's debt for investments in an environmental and climate fund that is being established by the archipelago nation off West Africa's coast, Portuguese Prime Minister Antonio Costa said on Monday, Reuters reported.

Such "debt-for-nature" swap deals are emerging in other countries and are part of attempts to resolve a dilemma faced by world leaders on how and who will foot the bill for actions taken to reduce the impact of

climate change.

The former Portuguese colony, which is already suffering from rising sea levels and significant biodiversity loss due to increasing ocean acidity, owes around 140 million euros (\$152m) to the Portuguese state and over €400m (\$434m) to its banks and other entities.

Costa said that initially, €12m of debt repayments to the state scheduled until 2025 will be put in the fund, and ultimately "the entire amount of debt repayments" will end up there, allowing Cape Verde to invest in energy transition and the fight against climate change.

"This is a new seed that we sow in our future cooperation. Climate change is a challenge that takes place on a global scale and no country will be (environmentally) sustainable if all countries are not sustainable," Costa said during a state visit to Cape Verde in remarks broadcast by RTP television.

He did not specify if debt to Portuguese companies was part of the deal, but expressed hope that companies "will also be involved in the various areas from energy efficiency, to the production of renewable energy" or storage of green hydrogen.

Cape Verde Prime Minister Ulisses Correia e Silva said his country needed to urgently enable mechanisms and financing

instruments to support such solutions and deal with natural emergencies.

Debt-for-nature deals can help as they can produce the so-called green and blue bonds to finance conservation efforts on land and at sea, which appeal to a rapidly growing number of investors seeking to meet net-zero carbon emissions and other environmental goals.

Developed countries have failed to deliver promised climate finance to developing countries. According to research from the Overseas Development Institute (ODI), Portugal is one of the countries which in 2020 paid the least percentage of its fair share.

The ODI says that – based on its size, historic emissions and population – it should have paid \$688 million towards rich countries' collective \$100 billion target. But it paid just \$70 million, about one-tenth of its fair share. Only the USA and Greece paid less of their fair share.

ODI researcher Sarah Colebrander told Climate Home that "a growing number of developing countries face default through no fault of their own". So ODI "warmly welcome[s] efforts to provide debt relief and - better yet - debt forgiveness from creditors, particularly in ways that help respond to the climate crisis".

But, she asked: "Will Portugal now count

debt-for-climate swaps as part of its longstanding climate finance pledge? Or will debt relief be new and additional given the multiple shocks hitting Cape Verde? Greater transparency and specificity about the scale and nature of international support for climate action is essential in the face of these interlocking crises."

The International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) helped facilitate the agreement. Its head Tom Mitchell said: "Linking borrowing to protection of the ocean, nature and tourism could ultimately save the lives and livelihoods of people who are already suffering the effects of a warming planet having done the least to cause it.

He added: "This agreement should serve as inspiration for other creditors and debtor nations to harness sovereign debt as part of the solution to the challenges of climate change and biodiversity loss."

A debt-for-nature swap was carried out in the Seychelles. Nations which have expressed interest in them include Eswatini, Kenya, Pakistan, Colombia and Argentina - the latter with Argentine Pope Francis's support.

Source: *Insideclimatenews*

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

Business & Economy

Creating job opportunities for youths: a tested success of AfCFTA

BY DANIEL ALEMAYEHU

The objective of creating job opportunities for certain people is the core agenda for many countries. It is the fact that the continent of Africa is labeled as the youngest continent in the world according to a report from *Statista*. It is also reported that 207 million African children are aged 0-4 years. The total population of Africans aged 17 years and below is approximately 650 million in 2021. On the other hand, the report stated that only around 48 million people are aged 65 years and above in Africa.

The same report further elaborated that in 2022, the population of youth aged 15 years and younger covers 40 percent of the total population.

Based on the above data, Africa is labeled as the home of the young population. In this regard, leaders of African countries are working tirelessly to address the needs of the people. In most countries, the idea of job creation is one of the core issues raised by different stakeholders. Accordingly, it is very essential to create a kind of platform that can save the generation and bring them to have a job. This is the reason why regional integration and trade partners in Africa are implemented and most African youths are benefited.

As briefly stated on the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) website, the continental free Trade area is the largest free trade area in the world bringing 55 African countries of the African Union together coupled with eight regional economic communities. The notion of the AfCFTA is to create a single continental market that incorporates around 1.3 billion people with a combined GDP of approximately 3.4 trillion USD. This project is one of the major projects stated in Agenda 2063 of the African Union. It is also used as a tool to transform the continent into a global powerhouse.

AfCFTA is, as to the website, responsible to eliminate trade barriers and boost intra-Africa trade. It is also accountable for advancing trade in value-added production across all service sectors of the African economy. It also helps to establish a regional value chain in Africa, enabling investment and job creation. The practical implementation of the AfCFTA has the potential to foster industrialization, job creation, and investment, thus enhancing the competitiveness of Africa in the medium to long term.

By the same token, based on the data from the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, the objective of the Regional Integration and Trade Division (RITD) is to contribute to effective regional cooperation and integration among member states. The division also aims to support efforts towards deepening regional markets, enhancing transboundary cooperation, boosting intra-African trade, accelerating industrialization, fostering market institutions, and tackling the challenges of structural transformation.

In the present climate, the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) is achieving its set goals by bringing better outcomes for

the African people. Regarding job creation, AfCFTA is productive according to youths who are benefited from it. It has become an opportunity for the young people of Africa. It opens doors to the action that helps to increase the continent's industrialization and economic transformation through implementing entrepreneurship.

Based on the AfCFTA youth protocol, acknowledges that young citizens of Africa can play a critical role in the realization of the free trade zone by performing youth-led initiatives in agriculture, financial technologies, Information Technology, and creative industry. Despite the advantages that AfCFTA has created, the youths disclosed that in youth-dominant trade areas critical to the AfCFTA, the challenges of infrastructure gap, lack of access to modern technologies, funding, electricity, and broadband internet keep the youth on the sidelines of the free trade area.

During the online presentation meeting organized by the Regional Integration and Trade Division (RITD) of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), nine young mentees who have completed RITD's "Youth for AfCFTA Mentorship Program" presented their final assignment to senior staff in ECA.

Though the youth participants highlighted that the AfCFTA presented huge entrepreneurship opportunities for them, it is important to remind governments to implement supportive policies and investments to ensure their participation.

Associate Expert in Economic Affairs,

Market Institutions Section of the Regional Integration and Trade Division (RITD) at the ECA, Mie Vedel-Joergensen said the mentees who took the "Youth for AfCFTA Mentorship Program" are winners of the competition held in 2022 dubbed "The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA): What is in it for young Africans?" which was developed by the Youth Alliance for Leadership and Development in Africa (YALDA) in collaboration with the AfCFTA Secretariat, Afrexim bank, the International Trade Centre (ITC), the UN Development Program (UNDP) and ECA. The competition leads to the mentorship program in ECA.

In addition, in the competition, participants were expected to develop essays, infographics, or animation to communicate the potential impact of the AfCFTA on youth in Africa.

Mentee of the Essay group, Jessica Debby Ndjadila disclosed that young people can influence policy decisions in favor of the AfCFTA in addition to providing labor. Africa's youth understood the technology enablers of the free trade area such as Information Technology, supply chain management, and financial technology.

Ndjadila said, "African governments should prioritize intellectual property rights protection." Besides, Ndjadila stressed fiscal policies to drive entrepreneurs into content distribution and the democratization of access to broadband connectivity.

Africa also needs to operationalize the Pan-African Payment and Settlement System

(PAPSS), a centralized payment and settlement system for intra-African trade in goods and services developed in 2022. Such a platform would be able to increase the competitiveness of trade and investment in youth-dominated start-ups in Africa. Another group of youth developed an infographic to highlight the benefits of gender inclusion in the AfCFTA.

It is a fact that Sub-Saharan Africa was losing an average of 95 billion USD annually as a result of gender inequality, the youth felt that investment in mobile and digital solutions can bridge the gender gap in Africa where the proportion of women using the internet was 25 percent lower than men.

A youth whose group developed an infographic highlighting the opportunity cost of gender inclusion in the AfCFTA, Richard Muraya mentioned, "Implementation of the AfCFTA would increase employment opportunities and wages for unskilled workers and help close the gender wage gap."

The Director of Regional Integration and Trade Division at ECA, Stephen Karingi, said young people fully understand what the AfCFTA is all about and their information products should be promoted in giving policymakers the right narrative about the free trade area.

Furthermore, the youth have well demonstrated the potential of the AfCFTA and the issues that must be addressed by the protocols developed for the realization of the free trade area, the director concluded.



Art & Culture

Uncovered

BY SENAIT G/HIWOT

Our conditioning begins from birth. You will get validation if you become what people want, not yourself. If you are your true self you won't be accepted.

We are not our pretentious selves though; we are our animalistic human selves. By animalistic I mean not always happy and accepting but also fearful and ashamed. We are not always kind and forgiving but hateful and envious.

Living in the society you will be praised for some of these parts but denied for the other until conflicts burst out and take an ugly turn, just because they weren't expressed to begin with.

Living with an amputated behavior society becomes unhappy and living with different mental health issues. Society by itself is judgmental and staggers itself of growth.

If someone has a different behavior from his peers he will get bullied for it. His innocence will be up for mockery and he will be ashamed of himself even though he did nothing wrong. If someone doesn't follow the mob thinking then his ideas are wrong.

Friedrich Nietzsche, one of the great philosophers of the 19th century spent most of his productive time in solitude and he has



managed to shape our modern thinking... so is being an individualistic thinker worth it or not?

When our society appreciates people for who they are instead of who they are supposed to be their will be growth in every aspect in the society. People will feel welcomed and at home and their positive attributes will develop more.

I am not saying being evil is good but being human is good. Do you see animals always loving each other, you see them fighting too. Humans can also do the same and they shouldn't be judged for it.

We have a box of what qualities we should have and we drive ourselves crazy to be it. We put on a façade in an attempt to please others and deny our screaming inner selves. When we become our selves we'll definitely be judged... so how can we be happy?

Most of our society's questions today has become how can I be happy, how can I manage depression, how can I find meaning in life... all these stem from not being our true selves.

Life becomes unenjoyably because of all the standards we put on ourselves. I agree with the statement that says God accepts

you for who you truly are because he knows a human that is fully accepted will never be bad.

We are told to accept our selves flawed and all but how can we do that when the society doesn't? We live in a society where people are shamed for being fat when they should be accepted...

People with mental illness are judged for being different and so their condition is hidden until they find themselves isolated and prone to suicide. These all stem from not accepting our flawed parts and always trying to be perfect.

Perfection makes life boring. Learning from each other in an attempt to grow is what makes life interesting. When we accept each other for who we are and we look for our similarities instead of our differences we grow and change for the better.

When we deny ourselves in order to be perfect our imperfection becomes our suffering. We start to talk alone trying to figure out if we were right or wrong. We shouldn't place ourselves in that condition in the first place. We only do that because we judge others who we think are wrong. Gary Zukav a famous spiritual teacher says "when you judge others you will do the same to yourself. We judge others in an attempt to feel better about ourselves but we will have the same level of acceptance to ourselves."

Time for making posterity

BY MENGESHA AMARE

Competent, civic minded,
Responsible as well as candid,
Posterity has to be produced,
BUT HOW?
Must be requested right now,
So the saying stipulates,
The utterance declaims,
Yes, charity begins at home,
Honesty and innocent can boom,
In a given single room,
Where a family is housed,
Whether it is good or bad,
A generations is needed,
For this ruined world,
Full of sham and treachery,
Nepotism, partisan and bribery,
Posterity is needed,
With optimistic gesture,
Good will, and rational thinker,
Cooperative mind devoid of slander, flatter,
Yes, consecrated endeavor is the source of,
Smart generation,
Ranging from germination,
To some sort of graduation,
Keeping the pattern of evolution,



It's time to shape the generation,
Correct the future,
Make posterity,
That condemns isolation,
Corruption, maladministration and poverty,
With sense of belongingness,
Avoiding cursed spirit, being jealous,
It is time to make posterity,
Taking over the nation,
With its future,
Whole identity and full structure,
Couple with appealing behavior,
It is right now,

BUT HOW?
Families, guardians or close relatives,
Have to be role models,
In showing practical actions,
Beyond mere utterance,
Valuing essence of a country,
Like a bountiful tree,
The inimitable worth of fellow citizens,
Tell them to avoid temporal sentiment,
Putting aside the permanent,
Instead the posterity has to be told,
About all the good,
Above all fear of God,

Inform unequivocally,
About material wealth,
Others' is others'
The posterity must know that,
What is gained bucketing self-sweat,
Is incomparably sweet!
Make the generation, make the posterity,
With sense of amicable tie,
With fraternity,
Championing solidarity over solitary,
Either in civil society, in entire community,
Or in the military,
At shanty houses, in the palace,
In the planet at every place,
Posterity can be made,
Generation can be shaped,
It rather demands commitment,
Selflessness and virtuous spirit,
To make the world bright,
It is inevitable,
It is natural and expected,
To come up with wrong deed!
Focus on how to make it good,
We had better look into ourselves,
Before criticize others,
If we ourselves know the direction,
It would be easy to make the generation!!!

Science & Technology

Developing digital tourism for more tourists flow

BY DARGIE KAHSAY

With its pristine beauty, historical ruins and places, fascinating cultural and traditional activities, Ethiopia is becoming among world's best tourists' sought-for destination countries. It has turned a rising start in the tourism sector with its best and preferable destinations for all tourists with different interests. Its cultural richness, traditional and religious holidays, ancient historical places, beautiful geographical destinations with different features, development of new investments in natural destinations guarantee Ethiopia to become the most preferable tourist destinations especially after the outbreak of COVID-19.

A renowned travel media, National Geography UK has named Ethiopia as one of the top five destination places of the world to travel to in January 2023. Citing the two most important Ethiopian religious holidays, the Ethiopian Christmas (*Gena*) and the Ethiopian Epiphany (*Timket*) that takes place in January, National Geography UK recommended travelers to visit Ethiopia during January.

The media in its Travel and Adventure category of the 2023 New Year publication stated that the weather condition of Ethiopia is conducive to visit Danakil Depression in Afar and Omo Valley where temperature lowers and roads are accessible respectively this time of the year.

Similarly, in January 2020, Forbes listed Ethiopia as one of the top seven tourism destinations of the world in post COVID-19 period. Forbes.com in 2020 predicted that Ethiopia is among top seven countries with the potential of becoming the rising start in travel destination of the post COVID-19 world. It praised Ethiopia's most fascinating historical backgrounds.

As to the January 2020 Forbes.com report, out of the 54 nations that make up Africa, Ethiopia has the most fascinating historic background with its second civilization on earth to adopt Christianity, the only African nation to defeat a European power in battle, at Adwa and resist colonialism during the Scramble for Africa. In addition, it stated that Ethiopia is believed to be a place where the earliest human ancestors first came from.

As to Forbes.com, "visitors to this unique country will find a truly diverse scope of natural beauty, the western edges of Ethiopia are home to lush rainforest, which quickly give way to the towering peaks of the Ethiopian Highlands as one ventures east. If the rich history and spectacular natural sites don't propel this nation to stardom, the national cuisines surely will, eating *injera* by hand is a cultural experience that everybody should take part in at least once in their life."

Though, Ethiopia is rich in natural, historical, cultural and traditional destinations for tourists, the promotion of its tourism potential is yet poor. Especially, these days, digital promotion and promoting digital services in tourism sector are preferable to attract more tourists and to increase the influx of tourists.

Particularly, to attract youth travelers, promoting tourism potentials using the digital infrastructure is very helpful and countries are using this opportunity to attract youth travelers.

According to global data, the number of youth travelers is growing and these youth travelling out of their country are more attracted due to the digital promotions and the online systems that are easily accessible to get information, to buy packages and other facilities.

Recently, an application, Visit Ethiopia, was launched by the Ministry of Tourism and Sport after it developed by Space Science and Geo-spatial Institute (SSGI) with the goal of promoting Ethiopia's tourism destination sites. The application was developed using local and international languages to be easily accessible through android and iOS operating systems of mobile technology.

According to SSGI, the application indicates the GPS of tourist destination sites, service providers near the tourist destination sites, market places, weather condition of the destinations and other necessary guides for tourists. In addition, the application contains a space for experience sharing of those who visited the area to share their stay in the destination to others, which is a testimonial promotion. The 'experience sharing' site takes features of those who visited the area posted ideas, videos and photographs during their stay in the site.

To promote visitors to share ideas, videos, photos with captions about the destination they visited, the application was developed with providing rewards. During the launching ceremony of "Visit Ethiopia" mobile application, heads of SSGI and Ministry of Tourism and Sport disclosed that digitalizing the tourism sector is vital to exploit the country's potential of the sector and would help to promote the country's destinations easily.

Digital Marketing Head at Ministry of Tourism and Sport, Desalegn Abebaw said that digital technology is becoming vital in the tourism sector both to promote destination sites and to ease bureaucracies as services and packages are provided online for travelers.

According to reports, in 2022 the dominant visitors were youths globally and the youth were initiated by the digital promotions by the destination countries especially on social media. Countries are using social media and other digital platforms to attract tourists and the top tourist destinations in 2022 used digital platforms to attract the tourists and benefited from them.

According to Digital marketing head, Desalegn, digital tourism is becoming a key factor in promoting tourism and attracting tourists. Digital tourism for him means applying digital technologies in the tourism industry through different mechanisms both to promote destination sites to attract tourists and providing online services for those who planned to visit the sites.

"In tourism, there is destination site selection, transportation, accommodation of hotel services, physical tour," Desalegn said adding that "thanks to digital tourism, travelers can adjust all these services before they physically travel to the destination using digital technologies." As to him, nowadays, digital tourism is facilitating and making easy travel for tourists as tour packages and visas are available through online platforms thanks to digital technology.

"Comparing to other service sectors, tourism is becoming the most beneficiary sector from the development of digital technologies though digital technology is crucially important for the development of all service sectors," Desalegn noted. As to Desalegn the trend of tourism is totally changed following the development of digital platforms. In the current world, every traveler first has all details about the destination he/she selected to visit using the digital platforms and the .Other packages are processed before s/he physically traveled to the specific place or country.

Digital technology makes travel easy and services easily accessible. Due to this reason, countries are digitalizing their tourism sector and using the platform to promote their destinations and to provide online services for those who plan to visit their country. In addition to websites of governmental tourism offices, travel and tour agencies, hotels and other service providers, applications are developing in the sector to easily promote sites in one center and the nearby services providers.

According to a tourism expert who stated his view to a local media, most travelers visiting Ethiopia are comparably senior citizens. He stated that Ethiopia should promote its tourism potential to attract more tourists especially youth tourists. For him, countries are more benefiting from youth travellers as they are not budgeted compared with aged visitors. "If youth visitors get beautiful services and sites, they are more open to use additional services than they planned before. As youth travellers are more active in social media and other digital platforms, they choose their travel destinations using the promotions and other attractions they saw on the digital platform," he stated.

According to the experts, all digital and social media platforms are suitable to promote tourism destinations and the services in the sector. Not only promoting the destinations through digital means but also digitalizing all services including applying the E-visa is critical to attract more visitors and to exploit the rich tourism potential of Ethiopia.

Desalegn said that Ethiopia has not shortage of destinations. Promoting this potential using the digital platform can benefit the country to maximize its gain from its untapped potential in the sector. Similarly, modernizing and digitalizing all services related to the tourism is very important to make Ethiopia the best tourist destination of the country.

Comparing to other service sectors, tourism is becoming the most beneficiary sector from the development of digital technologies though digital technology is crucially important for the development of all service sectors

Society

“To forgive is to set a prisoner free, discover the prisoner was you”

BY LEULSEGED WORKU

Several writers, scholars, religious leaders, politicians and motivational speakers have said a lot about the power of forgiveness. Some of them have used the word for the sake of motivating others or to get publicity without practicing it. Others have spoken about forgiveness and practiced it and they have become legendary figures through their deeds.

Recently, an art exhibition entitled “Yikerta” to mean ‘Forgiveness’ was staged here in Addis. The exhibition was organized by Artist Bereket Andarge, who was born and grew up in Bahir Dar.

As it is learned, Bereket exhibited his works for the 60th time. Most of his paintings displayed here in Addis Ababa were in black and white colors; and were done based on his philosophy of “forgiveness”.

Using his idea as a ground, this reporter had a chance to share Bereket’s philosophy and thoughts concerning forgiveness to readers.

“Forgiveness is not something we talk about for the sake of getting acceptance or, for the sake of political consumption. It rather is a life by itself,” says Bereket. We prove forgiveness by practicing it. We forgive not only for the sake of another person who hurt our feelings but for our own sake. The more we forgive others, the more we get internal peace. Forgiving others may not be as simple as it seems. It needs commitment and a strong value system which is based upon cultural and religious norms of a given society. In this regard, we Ethiopians are religious people and; are raised hearing the power of forgiveness in respective religious institutions. For this reason, we practice what we heard from religious leaders and from our forefathers.”

Regarding converting “forgiveness” into visual art, Bereket said, depending on the culture of a given society, forgiveness can be expressed in various ways. “For instance, in the society where I was born, it is common to ask individuals for forgiveness by carrying a rock on shoulder. I have tried to convert this idea into painting by using symbols.”

As to him, converting forgiveness into visual art is not simple; at the same time; it is not that much difficult. Symbols are gifts of the creator to all human kinds. God has created words before He created man. For that reason, man has been using words and symbols for millennia.

The cave man had been using symbols to express himself /herself through them. Then, through time, man has developed a more complex and systematic way of expressing life through words and symbols to convey a message. Painting is one way of expression. “That is what I used to define forgiveness in the form of a picture.”

In one of his paintings, Bereket has

portrayed the image of Jesus Christ where his face covered with blood and the scar on His body reflects the sacrifice He paid to save humankind. According to Bereket, Jesus Christ is the father and model of all forms of forgiveness. Through His sufferings, He has taught humankind love and forgiveness. Despite all the betrayal and the burden He faced because of human beings, He has never abandoned them. For that reason, Jesus is the emblem of love and forgiveness. That is why the artist preferred to put Him on his canvas - to convey his message about forgiveness.

The other work where Bereket reflected his thoughts about forgiveness is the image of Nelson Mandela. According to Bereket, whenever the issue of forgiveness is raised, Nelson Mandela is always remembered for his forgiveness, peace loving personality, humility, integrity, passion, respect and his will to serving others.

“Mandela shows these values not in words or vague ideas, but in action. That is why he paid all the sacrifices. It was for this very reason Madiba suffered in prison. But the reward he received is immeasurable. When Mandela came into power, most people in his time were expecting revenge, imprisonment of white minorities. However, to the surprise of the whole world, he showed them mercy and even went on assigning them to higher political positions, he added.

“Peace can only be ensured by love and forgiveness not by revenge. This is what we have learned from Mandela’s leadership skill. That is why he is still considered as an icon of love and forgiveness. Using his philosophy, I have tried to depict his picture in black and white color that reflects harmony in differences.”

When asked why his paintings are dominated by black and white color Bereket said, “Life is all about balancing. Our nature is made up of such truth. Can you imagine what our eyes look like if it was only made out of black color? Our creator has made us to live in harmony with nature. What is more, the black and white colors also represent ‘Light and Darkness’ which are natural and recurring facts of our life. Both darkness and light live in harmony. The spectrum of human experience includes the contrasting realities of darkness and light. As long as our planet exists or we exist in this life, we must embrace both. This is the reality of our life. Lightness cannot exist without darkness.”

Clays are one of the media the artist used to reflect his thoughts about forgiveness. Using all the available clay materials our parents used for household purposes, Bereket has testified his deep talent by converting them into art and philosophy. For Bereket human beings and pots have something in common. They are made from the same material-soil- and both of them are fragile.

Bereket has a firm belief that having proper



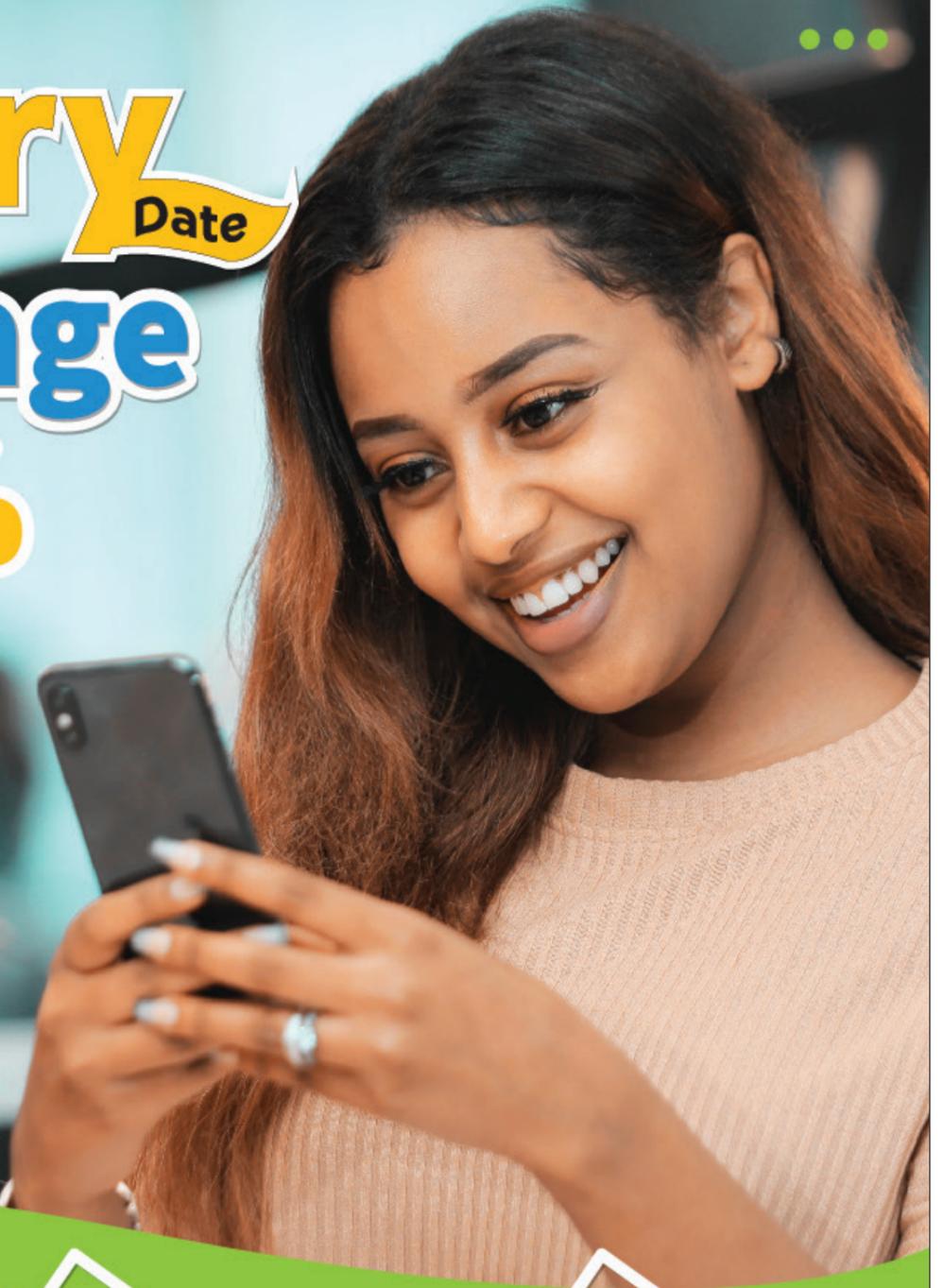
Forgiveness is not something we talk about for the sake of getting acceptance or, for the sake of political consumption. It rather is a life by itself

care and valuing the fragile body we are carrying is not an option but a must. Life is short; for that reason we need to nourish it; we should also care for the life of others. Whenever we nurture tolerance and love among each other, we would improve our lifestyle and others. The more we avoid hatred and nurture forgiveness; we are not only creating earthly heaven to ourselves, but also to the generation to come.

For this reason, he added: “I use clay pots to express my philosophy and to remind humankind as he is created of the dust. As one famous author puts it, to forgive is to set a prisoner free and discover that the prisoner was you.



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