



# The Ethiopian Herald

Vol. LXXIX No 131 10 February 2023 - Yekatit 3, 2015

Friday

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## East Africa Standby force to see new structure

BY TSEGAYE TILAHUN

ADDIS ABABA - The East Africa Standby Force (EASF) would be restructured to solidify its engagement in ensuring peace and stability in the Horn of Africa for the next ten years, a high-ranking military official said.

A three-day EASF's 31st Ordinary Policy Makers Meeting started here yesterday.

Addressing the meeting, Ethiopian National Defense Forces (ENDF) Foreign Relations and Military Cooperation Director-General Major General Teshome Gemechu stated that the new structure would enable the EASF to intervene in security problems in

the region.

In accordance with law, the structure will also enable the force to be deployed in any hotspots and enforce law and order as well as prevent and eliminate terrorism in the volatile region. In the meeting, discussion was held on fostering the capacity of EASF

See East Africa ... Page 3

## Renewable Energy Expansion: Seeking regional integration

BY YESUF ENDRIS

ADDIS ABABA- As the energy crisis in Africa undermines the magnitude of economic development, the fostering of regional integration is a tool to develop renewable energy resources, experts in the area said.

The Russian Global Energy Association held an international conference here Wednesday whereby scholars from Ethiopia, Kenya and Ivory Coast exchanged views about the prospects and challenges of renewable energy development in Africa.

Speaking at the occasion, Ethiopian Nuclear Science Society President Emeshaw Damtew said the collaboration of Africans will have vital to exploit the continent's immense renewable energy potential. "We

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Photo: Eyob Teferi



## Office commences second-round fundraising tour for Abay Dam

• Looks for 60 bln Birr to project completion

BY BETELHEM BEDLU

ADDIS ABABA- The second round of awareness creation and financial mobilization tour of the Abay Dam, which will encompass 36 towns and 200 districts across the country, commenced yesterday.

The Office of the National Council for the Coordination of Public Participation to the Construction of Abay Dam disclosed that the tour was prepared to stimulate financial contributions to the flagship project

See Office Commences... Page 3

## Ethiopia's summer wheat irrigation to yield 52 mln quintals

• Covers 1.3 mln hectares of land with commodity

BY HAILE DEMEKE

ADDIS ABABA- The summer wheat irrigation program covered 1.3 million hectares of land in the current year, the Ethiopian Agricultural Research Institute (EARI) said, revealing the plan to obtain 52 million quintals from the harvest.

The Institute's Wheat Irrigation Project Coordinator, Daniel Muleta (Ph.D.) told the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) that the

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Ethiopian Herald's recommendations  
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Rehabilitating war torn areas, rehabilitating communities



# News

## Amhara state's job creation efforts promising: Bureau

• *Over 400,000 citizens secure jobs within six months*

BY BETELHEM BEDLU

**ADDIS ABABA-** The so far job creation activities have been as promising as 400,783 citizens have secured jobs during the past six months alone, so said Amhara State Labor and Skills Bureau.

The Bureau Head Arega Kebede told the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) that during this fiscal year, the state has planned to create 1,180,000 jobs; about 400,783 citizens have so far enabled to secure employment.

While 327,000 citizens have been hired on permanent term, the rest are working on temporary basis, he said.

Moreover, the State conducted an assessment to identify the market demand and number of job seekers, according to him.

Thus, he stated that out of the 1, 065,000 thousand registered job seekers, about 169,000 were fresh graduates.

By the same token, over 1.8 million Birr

loan as well as land was provided to job seekers who were organized in enterprises. Of the enterprises, the agriculture sector accounts for 33 percent while the industry development covers 45 percent.

Trade and private sector played a significant role for the high employment rate in this half budget year, the head said.

“The efforts put towards enhancing women employment rate are promising and some 33 percent of the employment opportunity goes to women. This year has shown better performance compared with that of last year due to the relative peace ensured in the nation,” he added.



The Bureau Head also underlined that the ongoing activities performed to increase the employment rate through advancing loan provision. The bureau in collaboration with Tsedey Bank has planned to revise the loan provision manual and better facilitate the system, he said.

### East Africa...

and regulating its deployment and organization.

Maj. General Teshome further noted that the meeting is being held to re-establish the ESAF and help the force to fight cross-border crimes and maintain peace and order in the East African region. In the new structure, ESAF will have a security council that is believed to enable it to easily detect and address security threats in the region.

“The meeting is also deliberate on research and policy reforms that will enhance and improve the capacity and capabilities of the institution. In addition, there will be a discussion on diplomatic and security issues that did not exist before.”

Teshome added: “Currently, EASF has only a military structure, and the new arrangement will have mechanisms to address problems through diplomacy, consultation, and mediation.”

The meeting also deliberated on ways to scale up the EASF's contribution in the peace and stability of the strategic East African region and present recommendations to the decision-making body about the new structure.

The Eastern Africa Standby Force (EASF), formerly Eastern Africa Standby Brigade (EASBRIG), is one of the five regional forces for Peace Support Operations (PSOs) of the African Standby Force, consisting of military, police and civilian components.

### Renewable...

need to learn from those countries who are now leading global energy. Development of renewable energy resources including nuclear energy should be kept in mind.”

“In Ethiopia, for example, nuclear energy is unfamiliar. But, we are now initiating the university community and scientists to research pathways of nuclear energy,” he added.

Approached by the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) at the sidelines of the conference, Kenya's Renewable Energy Association CEO Andrew Amadi shared what was echoed by Emeshaw.

According to him, the shortage of energy coming from grids is not the only challenge Africa has encountered, but the distribution of energy generated from renewable sources should be industrialized regionally and continentally.

“In Kenya, the electricity from hydroelectric grids is significantly reduced in dry seasons due to the shortage of water, and expanding energy sources has become the order of the day. Kenya is importing 200 megawatts of electricity from Ethiopia, and if we will acquire another 100 megawatts from Uganda, we could sufficiently satisfy the local demand.”

Amadi added: “Africans need to foster cooperation in the energy sector, and this partnership will bring a significant boost to the continent's energy production capacity. For instance, 20,000 megawatts of electricity could be generated from the Democratic Republic of Congo and sufficiently supplied to the rest of the continent.”

For Abel Didier Tella, an Ivorian energy expert and a member of the Global Energy Association, energy development should be the prime concern of Africans. Millions of Africans are now under severe energy shortage and the overall development of the continent is being challenged by power deficiency.

“So, seeking and expanding renewable sources of energy including nuclear power should not be regarded as a luxury.”

### Office commences...

that requires close to 60 billion Birr for completion.

Speaking at the launching ceremony, Office Director-General Aregawi Berhe (Ph.D.) stated that the tour would speed up the construction of the dam.

“The nation has been trekking this far though local and foreign enemy quarters have made continuous destructive attempts. The completion of the Abay Dam will be a victory for the people of Ethiopia. The unison the people of Ethiopia have shown makes its enemies ashamed. Thus, we have to exert a similar effort to conquer all the changes and realize the completion just like we did in the Battle of Adwa.”

Apart from political and economic gains, the project would help the nation resolve its societal problems. To this end, it is crucial to focus on common values rather than differences, Aregawi advised.

Meseker Negash, CEO of Addis Ababa City Administration's Office of the National Council for the Coordination of Public Participation to the Construction of Abay Dam, said for his part that consolidated fundraising activities have been underway in the metropolis.

Accordingly, since the commencement of the dam in 2011, the office has collected over 4. 2 billion Birr from various income-generating sources. In 2021 alone, the office collected over 2.2 billion Birr for the same cause.

Similarly, over 345. 4 million Birr was mobilized in the first six months of the current fiscal year.

Noting the overall project is 89 percent completed, the CEO underlined that 60 billion Birr is required for the remaining tasks.

Nechu Worku, Director of Save Heritage, History and Culture Charity organization, said that the second round tour is to be held in big towns and cities, different higher education institutions, public gatherings, and other marketplaces.

Apart from bond purchases, he urged the public to actively participate in other income-generating schemes such as SMS.

The tour is organized by the non-profit organization, Save Heritage, History and Culture in Ethiopia and the Office of the National Council for the Coordination of Public Participation to the Construction of Abay Dam, it was learned.

### Ethiopia's summer...

government has heavily invested in the program to ease Ethiopia's dependence on rain-fed agriculture and ensure food –sufficiency. Accordingly, starting in October 2022, Ethiopia has covered 1.3 million hectares of land with wheat.

The preparations of land and other activities have been carried out in line with the schedule and currently, the institute is undertaking crop protection.

Noting cluster-farming method is highly productive in enabling farmers to implement modern inputs and technology, the coordinator highlighted that relevant stakeholders such as the Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Irrigation, and Lowland Areas Development are taking part in the endeavor.

To improve wheat productivity, the institute adopted improved wheat seeds and implemented the crop protection and water management system. The EAIR has also executed an effective mechanism to control crop diseases with a view to boosting productivity.

The irrigation-based summer wheat program contains the impacts of climate change and to improve the soil fertility, which in return led to improving production and productivity. The program is also expected to fundamentally transform the country's rain-fed farming to a modern and commercial one, Daniel emphasized.



# News



Tamiru Gedafa

## Ministry streamlining 70 mln USD potable water project for 23 cities

BY FIKADU BELAY

**ADDIS ABABA** - The Ministry of Water and Energy has stated that it is streamlining efforts to address the issue of water supply that results from the rapid growth of cities across the country.

The Ministry of Water and Energy's Drinking Water Supply Lead Executive Tamiru Gedafa, the Ministry is implementing the Second Urban Water Supply and Sanitation Project in low-income zonal cities to solve the problem of drinking water.

The project would address the shortage of potable water in 23 cities including Addis Ababa, Tamiru indicated. The project is being executed with 70 million USD with assistance from the World Bank, African Development Bank, UNICEF as well as the governments of UK, Korea and the Netherlands.

To control the water supply from a single place, energy is needed to draw water from a distance; Tamiru said adding by reducing the use of fuel, clean water is being made available through the use of solar systems.

In this sense, Tamru noted that attempts are being made to improve the water supply with technological equipment,

Tamiru mentioned that some of the challenges facing the efforts to raise the water supply in the urban areas include shortage of engineers with the necessary skills, security, drought, failure to properly utilize the available water resource, among others.

## Ethiopia seals Emission Reduction Purchase Agreement with WB

BY ASHENAFI ANIMUT

**ADDIS ABABA** – Ethiopia has signed the first Emission Reduction Purchase Agreement (ERPA) with the World Bank (WB) that would be used as safeguarding of the Bio-carbon Fund Initiative for sustainable ecosystem, Ministry of Finance (MoF) disclosed.

As to MoF, the ERPA framework agreement could grant up to 40 million USD for results-based payment that could be disbursed in two phases, as a result of reduced emissions through forest preservation and other environment-friendly land uses, including livestock management.

“In addition, specific ERPA agreement amounting 15 million USD for the first phase of the program has been signed. In this program the communities would be rewarded for efforts to reduce carbon emissions by preventing deforestation and land and forest degradation, from January 2022 to December 2024, while the ERPA framework agreement runs up to 2029. Out of 40 million USD 80% directly goes to the participating communities,” the Ministry said.

The Ministry added that ERPA is a continuation of the Oromia Forested



Landscape Project supported by the World Bank with 18 million USD financing which starts implementation on April 2017 with the aims of reducing net GHG emissions and promoting sustainable land use practices to minimize deforestation and GHG emissions, including from the

livestock sector, throughout the Oromia Regional State.

MoF Minister Ahmed Shide and Ousmane Dione, Country Director for Ethiopia, Eritrea, Sudan and South Sudan signed the framework agreement.

## State secures 8.2 bln Birr in six-month tourism revenue

BY TAMERU RREGASA

**ADDIS ABABA** - Oromia State Tourism Commission announced that it has generated over 8.2 billion Birr from local and foreign tourists over the past six months.

The commission Deputy Commissioner Derara Ketema told The Ethiopian Herald that some 7.9 million domestic and 120,000 foreign tourists have visited the state during the reported period.

He noted that the amount of income garnered and number of tourists visited the state decreased compared with the income obtained over six months in 2019.

Derara pointed out that global economic crisis, unrest in some parts of the country, COVID- 19 and others have attributed to the tourism income losses.

Explaining the opportunities the tourism sector has given to the state, the deputy commissioner said that the state is blessed with appealing geographical location, candid community hospitality and availability of the potential market.

He also said that government's commitment to develop and support tourism together with the existence of diversified tourism destinations is



attributable to the vast opportunity of the state out of the sector.

He said: “Tourism industry is among the prioritized key pillars of development in the country's ten years strategic plan. Taking this into account, the government is developing tourism industry using myriads of mechanisms.”

He stressed that the state has been taking various measures to transform state's tourism industry via establishment an independent organization (Oromia Tourism Commission), which is in charge of developing and marketing tourism

destinations.

The commission has been marketing destinations, using different marketing and promotional tools and coming up with a motto reads “Visit Oromia” as well as using different communication tools.

“The commission needs to work more to fill awareness gap, solve challenges related to basic facilities and infrastructures around tourism destinations and enhance the collaboration between stakeholders though it has been achieving a lot at its short period of establishment,” he underlined.



# Opinion

## What shall we pass down to generation!?

BY MENGESHA AMARE

A country that embarks on feeding the new generation would undoubtedly reap the healthful fruit at the end of the day. Feeding doesn't necessarily mean and refer to providing the generation with nutritious diets and gratifying drinks. Needless to state, the new generation is a nursery that needs to be watered well, properly nutritioned and mentally properly feed.

The center of this piece is the concept mentioned later, the latter to make it clear, mentally feeding infants, adolescents, the youth and the general public with real, verified and benefiting information with a view to coming up with well informed society about making a great nation.

Creating peaceful atmosphere among the society and letting them live in harmony is as easy as talking about what we know well. This is because it is the general public who is the source of both good and bad things.

This is because the general public is the hub of what is orchestrated for or against them and their country, and nothing is out of the sight of each and every individual citizenry. Yes, it is anthropologically stated that 'human being is a social animal' and a coordinating creature. As a result, human beings can build a nation when coordination and unity prevail over disintegration and solitary, and when honesty prevails over disloyalty as well as when responsibility prevails over reckless move and undependable act.

Conversely, damages rife, skepticism is rampant and peaceful coexistence is eroded when human beings, citizens when is seen in a country context, nurture differences, magnify minor scenarios that can widen gaps and water retaliation and cruelty to grow.

The new generation should thus turn a blind eye and a deaf ear to futile attempts and utterances preaching differences as Ethiopians do have numerous elements tying up each other/ one another than those minor differences segregating them.

No one refuses to receive what can potentially make mind delighted as human conscious is normally or naturally optimistic to good things, though no clear demarcation is put on what makes people happy or sad. Basically, this condition highly based on individual difference and human preference as sometimes what is good for someone might be bad for the other though there is a common ground

that makes all agree, and upon which a rational being would optimistically approve.

Be that as it may, there has been a communal basis that attracts agreement and good will as human beings are not a bad creature by their very nature. However, circumstances, the way people are informed and the means they are treated makes them what they look like at present. As has been practically proved, many would like to receive information from who they believe are reliable ones. This idea can be substantiated with convincing justifications and practical incidents in life based on the experience of mine, that of my friend what was informally sought from senior citizens.

One Thursday morning, a friend of mine and I were taking coffee and tea in a small café around Arat Kilo not far from the place where we are working, of course. We were talking about peace and harmonious ways of living we Ethiopians have been exercising since long back citing the hardships in relation to price hike due to either following artificial means or due to the global impact from which the whole world is highly suffering.

A friend of mine and I lent our ears to the three senior citizens with charisma and catchy paternal style.

Touching up on the repercussions of the high cost of living, the genuine and mindful state of the general public, the systematic crafting of which everyone is proud to win daily bread and pass bad times as well as the vigilant management of what people possess to be victorious over the ever-costly high of living, three elderly, senior citizens I can say, who were seated besides us have admired public endurance to withstand ups and downs in life.

In the middle of their talk, one of the three ones raised something crucial among the bucket list of concepts they have been discussing. He raised what he came across while he paid a visit to some part of the country saying, "Everyone I encountered didn't know to which ethnic category and tribal sect they belong and they provided us (his colleagues visiting Bale Dodola and he himself) with all what they have had and welcomed their guests well.

When he was telling them about such an appealing scenario, he prettily reminded me of what I myself came across while I was once in Jimma. I myself was recently traveling to Jimma University

to take part in the graduation ceremony of a brother of a friend of mine using his private car. In the middle of our journey to our destination, on the way to Jimma I mean, we planned to park somewhere in a small rural village. We were enthusiastic to have the spirit of the society taking advantage of our desire to take water around. Surprisingly, we were given yogurt and to drink and bread with honey to eat. Look! In the era of a range of trying scenarios coupled with lack of resources to fulfill unlimited human needs, finding such a generous community is regarded as a blessing indeed!

Except irresponsible politicians and conflict entrepreneurs who would always like to amass undeserved profit at the expense of the peace and well being of the general public, innocent civilians in various parts of the country have even now prioritizing fellow citizens, respected them and warmly hosted with what they have had.

This situation is definitely a manifestation of the community's respect of their country and fellow citizens regardless of the place they have come, the language they speak and the way they dress so long as they are Ethiopians. This culture of respecting people, giving priority to guests coming out side of the resident of the local community and from remote areas where they have been living must be well cultivated and receives due attention.

This must be the way how Ethiopians have to shape the new generation and make new country which has long been entangled with a number of wrong doings against the invaluable social strata and cemented culture of the society.

Our conclusion on the basis of what we encountered as Ethiopians are committed enough to maintain their culture no matter how wearisome all the passages they have passed through especially for the past three to four years. This is what we have long been aspiring, certainly! The new generation must be fed and nurtured accordingly to build a great country and take over, an affluent country which can compete with developed nations, with its future.

In one way or another, the central point we (my friend and I as well the senior citizens mentioned earlier) both observed during our respective journeys has reflected Ethiopians hospitality, peaceful coexistence, sense of fraternity and amicable gesture. In simple terms, the golden culture what has been entrenched

in our mind from generation to generation has to be well nurtured and further augmented.

The very important actors for such rewarding cultural assets are unequivocally the youth, who will take over the country with its future. They have to painstakingly take care of the mesmerizing and appealing norms, cultures, traditional values and natural assets I can say.

Yes, the sporadic clashes and the intermittent disagreements among citizens in some parts of the country do by no means emanate from the minds of the innocent civilians residing in rural areas and some urban localities. Instead, those who would like to always fatten private gains out of clashes and conflicts spoil the atmosphere and engaged in erroneously informing the innocent ones with a view to twisting the latter to the direction they would love via damaging their psychological strata, the social cohesion they have been through, the normal way of leading life assimilating themselves with their fellow citizens without even requesting to which tribal segments they belong and which religion they have been following.

What a gracious gift it is! How likable their mode, amicable ties and coordinated fashion is! The entrenched culture respecting one another, sharing what people have with their neighbors and relatives, resolving conflicts using traditional way of settling tensions and other important values of the society have to be well augmented and properly pass down to the generations to come.

Such a rewarding and luring culture, virtuous spirit and peaceful coexistence would be of paramount importance in building a strong nation and eternal societal association.

It is high time right now to work on societal cementing and firm ties as the brotherhood and sisterhood gesticulation among the society has been, is or will be a fundamental basis for growing together and getting Ethiopia prospered. However, as there are elements who would like to gradually erode the rewarding assets with a view to cutting the long-lasting peaceful coexistence and spirit of fraternity. Their evil actions would be dwarfed and get vanished at the end of the day when the firmly tied cultural assets, respecting one another/each other, societal support and other priceless societal wealth are properly taken care of and cherished.

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

# The Ethiopian Herald

Established in 1943

Published daily except Mondays  
By The Ethiopian Press Agency



Office of the CEO

Tel. 011-126-42-22

Fax. 251-011-156-98-62

Advertisement and Dist.

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The Ethiopian Herald

## Editorial

### Way to curb emerging threats

The volatile region of East Africa faces dynamic peace and security threats stemming from layers of regional and global fast-changing circumstances. Beset by internal conflicts and superpowers' race to control the strategic locations, the region encounters unprecedented and imminent security concerns behooving the countries to find a common approach to the common challenges.

From terrorism to arms smuggling to increased militarization, nations live under constant conflicts and instability stoked by the vested interests of regional and foreign forces.

Also, there are coordinated attacks posed against member countries requiring governments to join hands and ensure collective solution. Last week, a bold move was made by Ethiopia, Somalia and Kenya where leaders of the three countries renewed commitment to step up the fight against Al-Shabab and other adversaries.

The triple alliance has been combating the terrorist group for years now putting it under precarious situation weakening its ability to carry out attacks. Particularly, Ethiopia has been spearheading the fight deploying peacekeeping mission and showing unreserved resolve to eradicate the terrorist group. Its troops had been effectively discharging their missions and now remain key part of the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS).

The leaders agreed to provide regional solutions to regional problems. To this end, it is expected that the countries of the region will jointly plan to eliminate terrorism, collect timely support, and advise on issues where they can combat terrorism in different ways.

Ethiopia as anchor state in the region continues to be at forefront

of a regional effort to fight terrorism and ensure stability. In what could be said another step towards an effective approach to ensure peace and security in the east African region, East Africa Standby Force (EASF)'s experts yesterday held meeting to assess ways of revitalizing the Forces' working mechanism to combat emerging peace and security challenges.

The outcome of experts' group meeting would form an agenda to prepare various important documents and improve organizational operation and administrative activities. The prepared documents would help to fill policy gaps and make some amendments on administrative issues and policy documents in order to effectively respond to regional peace and security demand.

The region requires better tools and mechanisms to curb emerging security and peace threats, said EASF Director Brigadier General Getachew Shiferaw.

Despite improvements in policy implementations and plan preparations, financial constraint affected EASF's capacity to properly execute its task, he added.

To scale up the capacity of EASF, member states should commit more resources and develop better organization tool. After all, overcoming complex security challenges must be the main priority and responsibilities of the regional countries.

The Eastern Africa region continues to go through conflicts and crisis that threaten the region's peace and security. And, developing appropriate mechanisms is a timely task that helps respond to the region's dynamic situation. The constant changes in global and regional security situations demand dynamism and better and coordinated approach.

## Opinion

### God forbid it!

BY MENGESHA AMARE

Nature holds upheaval, mob and uprising! It gets annoyed and intermittently upset, oceans shout loud, but human beings have slept and take good sleep in some parts of the universe. Earthquakes are getting rampant, tidal waves are around the corner, and global warming is further exacerbated to put human life at death's door at each and every infinitesimal. God forbid it!

The world is sleeping deep! Mother earth is in a trying scenario at present as the fire around which it revolves is flaming, the sun is burning, the minerals it has possessed for years or centuries is dilapidated and the irresponsible actions its inhabitants are doing against it are further worsened. Unquestionably, forest resources are dwindled and the weather by which the planet is surrounded is also portraying abnormality.

The world is thus purchasing arteries and mass destruction weapons to make each other vanished instead of rescuing the endangered planet due to manmade and natural catastrophes as well as unprecedented calamities. Souls are yelling, pleading others to rescue them, the fauna and flora are converting into

gray and ash. Mother earth is at risk indeed!

Countries and people they host do not know where they are heading and what they are doing, too. Irresponsible leaders, egocentric politicians, some bodies who are always working against the peaceful world as if they have been sent from other planet antagonistically act with mother earth are working from dawn to dusk to harm their mother, get its population sullen and make the planet restless. From where are they sent? Who have covered their eyes not to optimistically observe a pacific mother planet into which a healthy air bedecked with an eternal perfume—peace—throughout its corridors?

God forbid it!

How endured the earth is! It has been hosting all sorts of irregularities and other related mishaps since recently especially following the dilapidated forest resources which have safeguarded it from untold damage and irresponsibly attached messes.

Everyone would have died of anxiety in no time had they encountered all the untold misery and myriads of anomalies from which mother earth is suffering.

Let alone providing all its inhabitants

with clean air, water and diets to take though the volume and access a bit vary following terrestrial position, mother earth equitably give change human beings with cemetery, a three meter tomb regardless of age, sex, religion, social status and other parameters you name it.

If one asks what human beings are doing mother earth favor in return, the response is nothing, except hurting it, getting it bleed, recurrently damaging it via making it barren and exposing it to global warming and natural and manmade devastation.

From this, one can easily deduce that how ignorant and self-centered human beings are as they are working against the one who has been covering all their rubbishes and immoral matters since time immemorial.

Why people of the world do not capitalize on recovering earth's greenery through pumping billions of trillions of dollars instead of damaging it creating havoc, conflict and public unrest procuring armaments that can demolish their own temporal material wealth and their eternal residence, tomb, even human ash all the time rests on this earth for those whose corpse is burnt. Believe it or not the earth is the mother of all, accommodating them

with all vices and virtues.

In sum, leaders, ministers and other concerned bodies have to walk the talk and researches done on green aspects, rescuing the planet have to be translated into practical auctions instead of being spider webs in shelves in various centers.

We as human beings have to always remember that working for mother earth pays off! Making war, creating conspiracies against the countries one dislikes is enough! Climate change is galloping towards human beings to see them off all forever, but they are fighting day in and day out halving too dry plots of lands as if they can survive taking ashes burring green sceneries.

When will the world wake up to rescue mother planet thinking out of the box? God forbid it! Don't kill each other, don't get one another vanished, the destitute and abused planet itself kill you all soon!

Please human beings turn your face to the right direction and try to exert utmost effort to rescue the MOTHER EARTH to be rescued. For instance, buildings take many years to be constructed are demolished within a fraction of seconds, so do human lives!

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



# Business & Economy

## Financial institutions

### work closely with NBE for better economic development

BY DANIEL ALEMAYEHU

In recent few years, the financial sector has become the central point in order to achieve better results. As of the emergence of the banking system, people have developed higher interest to invest their capital on the sector. Due to various results, putting the sector in the right direction can bring tremendous benefits.

In the Ethiopian context, the banking sector has been one of the much potential that the nation can be profited from. It is the fact that both the government and the private sector have been involved in investing billions on the sector. In the 2022 report, Director of Banking Supervision of the National Bank of Ethiopia (NBE), Ferezer Ayalew said, "The number of banks has increased from 18 to 30, and their branches reached to 8,944, as of June 30, 2022, from 5,564 four years ago. With the expansion of bank branches, the ratio of branch per population reached to 1: 11, 516 (one bank branch serves 11, 516 people)."

Besides, as to Frezer, the number of deposit accounts in the banks has increased from 40.04 billion Birr to 83.3 billion Birr. Hence, the total deposits, over the last four years, have increased from 899 billion in 2019, to 1.7 trillion Birr in 2022. The total capital of the banks has been boosted from 98.9 billion in 2019 to 199.1 billion Birr in 2022. Such reports depicted that the banking sector is the major economic pillar in the Ethiopia's economy and overall development.

Recently, the National Bank of Ethiopia presented the six-month performance of the institution at the presence of leaders of commercial banks and other relevant stakeholders. The newly-appointed Governor of the National Bank of Ethiopia (NBE) Mamo Mihretu and NBE's Deputy Governor Solomon Desta have presented the report and raised the major points about the institution and highlighted the next steps.

The governors have highlighted the major achievements in the past six months and also raised the challenges that the institution will act on in the coming months.

According to the deputy governor, financial institution of the country has generated an asset worth 2.9 trillion Birr. This figure depicted that it has a 30 percent increase of which, banks and insurance companies share 2.8 trillion and 0.04 trillion Birr respectively. The share of financial institutions is 0.05 trillion, and other institutions shared 0.02 trillion Birr.

Solomon added that around 71 financial institutions are under formation.



*Ethiopian financial sector has registered healthy growth*

From those under formation financial institutions, 8 of them are banks, 54 of them are small financial institutions, and the remaining 9 are system operators. On the other hand, the number of borrowers has decreased by 7.8 percent.

In addition, the deputy governor noted that the deposit of financial institutions hit 2 trillion Birr of which 1.98 trillion is banks' deposit, and the remaining 0.02 trillion Birr belongs to small financial institutions.

As to the report, the number of financial institutions has reached one hundred nine. The figure also shows 27 percent increment. From the 109 financial institutions, 31 of them are banks, 18 insurance companies, and 44 of them are small financial institutions. The remaining 16 institutions are bodies that are working in the financial sector, Solomon disclosed.

The newly-appointed Governor of the National Bank of Ethiopia (NBE), Mamo Mihretu, on his part, said that the financial sector has registered better performance in the past six months of the fiscal year. Banks deposited and collected assets have been increased by 30 percent on average which is 159 billion Birr.

Likely, Mamo revealed that his focus is on fighting back the existing price hike in the country that the price of goods and services are skyrocketing, and actions will be taken to stabilize the market.

The governor has explained about the inflation in detail. As to him, inflation has become one of the most pressing challenges to the national macro-economy in recent years. To reduce the challenges, the central bank plans to deal with the problem systematically. Regarding inflation, Ethiopia manages to reduce the inflation in the price of food items by five to six percent compared to last June, but unfortunately, the price of non-food items is increased by six percent in the reported period.

The governor further added, "Accordingly, arresting the soaring increase in the price of commodities and services will remain our most important concern in the future. In conclusion, we will take viable financial measures to stabilize the market and ease the challenge of inflation that severely affected the low-income communities."

In addition to that, creating a healthy financial sector and curbing the alarming parallel market challenge will remain priorities of the regulatory bank. "This time, creating stable prices and stabilizing foreign currency exchange as well as enhancing financial institutions' performance are undeniable; I join NBE to act based on this mission," Mamo elucidated.

The governor also suggested financial institutions including non-bank entities to contribute to the success of the NBE directive that has been set to contain the

staggering inflation.

Mamo stated that all financial institutions coupled with responsible stakeholders should act on all the measures and tasks that enable the country to halt the progress of the inflation. "The loan service, for instance, shall be to support the development of the country. If not, the national bank will take possible legal measures."

According to the governor, parallel with the support from the institution regarding the financial development of institutions, they have planned to add some force to supervision works, and they will supervise all financial institutions in the country to assess whether they are working based on the international principles and values or not.

In the meantime, Mamo emphasized that financial institutions have played their part in accordance with the overall development of economy of the nation. He further mentioned that the Treasury bill contributed by banks hit over 157 billion Birr in the past six months. Indeed, the contribution of the financial sector to fix the national budget deficit is growing immensely.

According to the report from Deputy Governor of the National Bank of Ethiopia, despite some glitches, both government-owned and private financial institutions have registered healthy growth.



# Art & Culture

## Ethiopian Herald's recommendations (Five things to do in the month of February)

### Attend Wedding ceremonies

February is a sunny season thus anyone interested can organize outdoor ceremonies without any concern. The fact that there is no fasting is also go-ahead for weddings, parties and other celebrations. It is an auspicious time for Ethiopian couples to throw a wedding party.

Whoever wants to have a glimpse of what Ethiopian weddings look like will not find a better time. If there is anyone you know having a wedding or if you are invited for such an occasion don't hesitate to go. You will find yourself in the middle of an elaborated and at times fantasy wedding. You will bear witness to glamorous looks of the bride and groom. The colorful and stylish dress of guests, eye-catching decorations of stages, hot local and international music's, elation of celebrants and array of mouth-watering traditional dishes, electrifying vibe that arouses the unmarried to tie the knot are but to mention some of the overarching impressions. What else makes attending wedding worth it? The recently inaugurated Friendship Park hosts wedding ceremonies and you will find yourself in large wedding ceremonies of several brides and grooms being held in the same day. If you are in the countryside, you can also witness pristine wedding ceremonies with traditional outfit, songs and meals.



### Go to Concerts, exhibitions

February is a half way through the year in Ethiopian calendar. People want to rest and summon their energy to finish the year maintaining their productivity. So, in resting and refreshing yourself you can participate in concerts, exhibitions and art festivals. A number of similar activities take place as the month is favorable to organize outdoor ceremonies and many people take vacation leave.

Lately pubs and night clubs are amusing fans by inviting stars like Aster Aweke, Bezuayehu Demessie and Henock Abebe. Watching music legends perform live is a rare chance.

Art exhibitions are being held in big hotels, exhibition centers and gallery houses. You can drop in and even buy paintings from artists who are making names worldwide. The exhibitions will let you to get acquainted with the art community thereby learn Ethiopia tradition of painting and its great artists.

### Visit the countryside

The rainy season poses challenges to go around and visit places but the dry February makes the countryside penetrable. You can go deep inside and look the fields, check the much-talked hospitality of Ethiopian farmers and be served inside thatched huts.

Also whether it is being harvested or just be sown depends on the produce and which corner of the country you go. But you don't miss fields covered with grains like wheat, barely Teff and others. You could also see farmers collecting harvests. Most importantly, if you go to the countryside you would meet Ethiopian hardworking farmers. You can spend time eating local foods and drinks. Seeing things first hand you will know more about Ethiopia than any means of information or informer. You can be blessed by their humility and generosity. The scenes are amazing affording you serenity.



### Admire Nature, breeze clean air

If you have the budget, this point in the timeline is also a perfect time to hiking and visiting wild life. Ethiopia has several national parks in different corners hosting various plant species, endemic animals and unique sceneries. Lakes and rivers inside parks also provide the chance of seeing animals living in water. Watching crocodiles, ducks and fisheries refreshes the mind.

It depends on your choice whether to go hiking near the capital or go far to Arba Minch, Bale or Gondar. The beautiful Suba Menagesha Forest is just 35 kilometers from the Addis Ababa. Hiking, bird watching and picnicking in the environment have become customary these days. The forest has a decade-long history of tourism. The place's different species make it alluring and comfortable to gather, chat and camp.

You could also watch the globally threatened species, including the iconic Walia ibex; a wild mountain goat-- found nowhere else in the world-- the Gelada baboon and the Ethiopian wolf in Simien National



Park.

Bale Mountains, Nech Sar and other national parks also offer diversified vegetation and species of animals.

### Participate in remembrance of Ethiopian martyrs

Ethiopia is famed for the bravery of its people. Their unity and resolution against aggression have been tested and proved inviolable many times. This wasn't an easy accomplishment. They have paid ultimate price to protect their sovereignty; culture, faith and dignity. Yekatit 12 is one of the days a multitude of Ethiopians fallen defying western colonization. It is the day Abraha Deboch and Mogus Asgedom attempted to assassinate Rodolfo Graziani, governor of Italian East Africa. In a knee-Jerk action Graizani responded vengefully and brutally and more than 30,000 Ethiopians were killed in three days.

"Comrades, today is the day when we should show our devotion to our Viceroy by reacting and destroying the Ethiopians for three days. For three days I give you carte blanche to destroy and kill and do what you want to the Ethiopians," he was recorded saying.

By going to this event, you could know about Ethiopian history, meet Ethiopian patriots, history enthusiasts, watch traditional outfits and listen to Ethiopian war songs that encourage heroism and togetherness.





# Science & Technology

## Live Science: Massive, 1.2 million-year-old tool workshop in Ethiopia

BY KFLEYESUS ABEBE

Since the discovery of Lucy, the first *Australopithecus afarensis* skeleton ever found, Ethiopia has become a center of archeological studies. The discovery of other important archeological and paleontological milestones contributed the country to be called the land of origins. Archeological studies have persisted uncovering and informing on different aspects of early human life. This week Live Science brought another development in archeological studies from Ethiopia. The magazine reads: More than 1.2 million years ago, an unknown group of human relatives may have created sharp hand axes from volcanic glass in a “stone-tool workshop.”

What is unique about the discovery is the place it is founded and the Tim becoming way older than previous record. Manufacturing of stone artifacts were previously recorded in France and England 500,000 years ago. But this discovery suggests that ancient human relatives may have regularly manufactured stone artifacts in a methodical way more than a half-million years earlier.

The finding offers a window into the evolution of the human kind than animals. This is due to the skill and knowledge requires. Stone tool used among early hominins, the group that includes humans and the extinct species more closely related to humans than any other animal.

A key advance in stone tool creation was the emergence of so-called workshops. At these sites, archaeologists can see evidence of hominins methodically and repeatedly crafting stone artifacts.

Margherita Mussi who is the study's first author and director of the Italo-Spanish archeological mission at Melka Kunture and Balchit, a World Heritage site in Ethiopia, described the incident as: “This is very new in human evolution.” The newly analyzed trove of obsidian tools may be the oldest stone-tool workshop run by hominins on record.

### Oldest known hominin workshop

As Live Science, to come up with this finding the researchers investigated a cluster of sites in Melka Kunture, located along the upper Awash River valley of Ethiopia. The Awash valley is famous for yielding some of the best known examples of early hominin fossils, such as the famous ancient relative of humanity dubbed “Lucy.”

The scientists focused on 575 artifacts made of obsidian at a site known as Simbiro III in Melka Kunture. These ancient tools came from a layer of sand dubbed Level C, which fossil and geological data suggest is more than 1.2 million years old. These obsidian



An illustration showing ancient human relatives making hand axes out of obsidian more than 1.2 million years ago in Ethiopia



Obsidian hand ax crafted by an ancient human relative more than 1.2 million years ago. (Image credit: M. Mussi et al.)

artifacts included more than 30 hand axes, or teardrop-shaped stone tools, averaging about 4.5 inches (11.5 centimeters) long and 0.7 pounds (0.3 kilograms). Ancient humans and other hominins may have used them for chopping, scraping, butchering and digging.

Obsidian proved far more rare at Simbiro III before and after Level C and scarce in other Melka Kunture sites. The new excavations also revealed that Level C experienced seasonal flooding, with a meandering river likely depositing obsidian rocks at the site during this time of Level C. Obsidian axes from this level were far more regular in shape and size, which suggests mastery of the manufacturing technique.

The archaeologists found an influx of obsidian at level C at the Simbiro III site, which suggests that an ancient river flooded periodically more than 1.2 million years ago, depositing obsidian there.

Ancient hominins “are very often depicted as barely surviving, struggling with a hostile and changing environment,” Mussi said in an email from the field in Melka Kunture. “Here we prove instead that they were clever individuals, who did not miss the opportunity of testing any resource they discovered.”

This nearly exclusive use of obsidian at Level C of Simbiro III is unusual during the Early Stone Age, which ranged from about 3.3 million to 300,000 years ago, the researchers said. Obsidian tools can possess extraordinarily sharp cutting edges, but the volcanic glass is brittle and difficult to craft without smashing. As such, obsidian generally only found extensive use in stone tool manufacture beginning from the Middle Stone Age, which ranged from about 300,000 to 50,000 years ago, they said.

John Hawks, a paleoanthropologist at the University of Wisconsin–Madison who did not take part in this research, validated



The archaeological site at the Awash River at Melka Kunture in Ethiopia



the use of Obsidian saying: “The idea that ancient hominins of this era valued and made special use of obsidian as a material makes a lot of sense. Obsidian is widely recognized as uniquely valuable among natural materials for flaking sharp-edged tools; it is also highly special in appearance. Some historic cultures have used obsidian and traded it across distances of hundreds of miles.”

It remains uncertain which hominin may have created these artifacts. Previously, at other Melka Kunture sites, researchers have discovered hominin remains about 1.66 million years old that may have been *Homo erectus*, and fossils about 1 million

years old that may have been *Homo heidelbergensis*, Mussi said. *H. erectus* is the oldest known early human to possess body proportions similar to modern humans, whereas *H. heidelbergensis* may have been a common ancestor of both modern humans and Neanderthals, according to the Smithsonian. Since the age of Level C at Simbiro III is more than 1.2 million years old, the hominins that made the obsidian hand axes there may have been closer in nature to *H. erectus*, Mussi said.

The discovery is another proof that Ethiopia is indeed a land of origin and many discoveries are yet to come proving early civilization.



# Society

## Rehabilitating war torn areas, rehabilitating communities

BY STAFF REPORTER

Following the peace agreement reached between the Ethiopian Government and TPLF, the efforts exerted to rehabilitate conflict affected areas are ongoing in a more organized and concerted manner than before, by its own resources and in cooperation with development partners.

Concurrent to delivering humanitarian supplies and medical supplies to the communities affected by the war, the restoration and rehabilitation activities of basic service rendering institutions are well underway.

For instance, basic service providing institutions such as education, health, electric and financial institutions which were damaged owing to the war have now started providing services. Likewise, air flights to war torn areas have resumed and banking services in Tigray have started.

Since recently, the National Bank of Ethiopia has begun sending five billion Birr to Mekelle to be dispensed to customers.

Concurrent to the government's massive rehabilitation and restoration efforts, partners are also taking part and supporting government's endeavors.

Recently, following the damage caused by the conflict, a project worth eight million USD was launched to help improve maternal and child health services in conflict-ridden areas.

As the Ministry of Health reported, subsequent to the conflict occurring in the northern part of the country, a wide ranging damage has occurred in health institutions and has brought about enormous impact to the health system.

However, the Ministry, joining hands with development partners, has been working aggressively and executing various activities to restore the health facilities to enable them restart their former services.

According to Meseret Zelalem, Lead Executive Officer of Maternal and Child and Adolescent Health Service with the Ministry, the damage caused by the war was high. Considering the seriousness of the issue, therefore, several works are carried out to restore the institutions to their previous level of service.

As part of this, the three UN agencies, namely UNICEF, UNFPA, WHO, together with the Ministry of Health, have designed a project that can be implemented in areas affected by conflicts.



Photo: MoH

While launching the project

The project is designed with new ideas to improve the health services with the financial assistance from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the Director added.

According to her, for the implementation of the project, eight million USD was gained from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, and it will be used to support a total of 12 hospitals, 24 health centers, 48 health posts and 6 mobile health teams located in war affected regions. The project will support the institutions to provide better health services to communities residing in the affected areas.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Paul Mainuka, Director of Maternal, Child and Nutrition at World Health Organization (WHO) Ethiopia, said that UN agencies (UNICEF, UNFPA WHO) will continue supporting the provision of post-conflict health services to support integrated health services for women, youth and children.

According to Dr. Paul, the aim of the project is to support the implementation and coordination of maternal and child health services and health systems in conflict-affected areas in Ethiopia. The investment will contribute a lot in terms of streamlining coordination across the three UN agencies, [UNICEF, UNFPA,

WHO]. This in turn will allow to scale up the existing activities and enable to carry out effective innovations.

According to Dr. Paul, the project will be implemented for 18 months (from November 2022 to May 2024) in conflict-affected areas.

Representative for UNFP Susan Mandong on her part said that her Office will strengthen health services and extend the necessary support to mobile health teams.

UNICEF representative, Mariko Kagoshima also said that the conflict has resulted in internal displacement on several people, caused security challenges and infrastructure destruction. Thus, the project will have significant contribution to solve some of the aforementioned problems.

The event was attended by representative from the Ministry of Health, heads of states' health bureaus affected by the conflict, partner organizations, as well as a representative of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Women and Social Affairs announced that psychological and business skills training were given for women affected by the war.

As the Ministry stated, over 150 women residing in the north and south Wolo zones and faced with psychological, social and

economic challenges due to the war, have received basic business skills training to enable them get relief from psychological traumas and to create employment opportunities.

According to Alemitu Umod, Women and Children Affairs State Minister with the Ministry, the Ministry is providing various support. And the training offered to the victims will have substantial benefit to the trainees to grasp the required basic skills and knowledge, engage in various income generating activities and generate their own income.

She stated that trainees are expected to use the knowledge and skills they get in the training and engage in various fields of work on their own, overcome problems and become a role model for others.

It is said that, aside from providing psychological, social and skills building trainings, trainees when they complete the training, will receive startup capital that enables them start their own business, and will be also provided with the necessary support from State's and north and south Wollo zone women; children, and social affairs offices. To this end an agreement was signed among the Ministry, Amhara State Women, Children Social Affairs Bureau as well as North and South Wollo Zone Women, Children and Social Affairs Department.





# This is Ethiopia



Tis Esat Falls



Gorgora Project nearing completion

## Tourism hotspots, festivals reinvigorate sector income

BY TEWODROS KASSA

The Amhara State is one of the leading tourist destinations in Ethiopia. Having numerous major and emerging tourism hotspots and wide ranging sector activities enable the State to attract more international and local tourists. The State is home to prominent tourist destinations such as the rock hewn churches of Lalibela, Gondar castles, Tis Esat fall on the Blue Nile falls, the Lake Tana monasteries, among others.

In doing so, the Amhara State has announced that it has generated a better income compared to the past similar budget years in the first half budget of the 2022/23 budget year. The State's Culture and Tourism Bureau disclosed that it has collected over 2.49 billion Birr revenue from the tourism sector over the last six months.

However, the COVID-19 pandemic, conflict in the northern part of Ethiopia, lower infrastructural facilities in the past have been the major reasons behind the poor tourism sector performance in the country and the State.

In an exclusive interview with the Ethiopian press Agency, Amhara State Culture and Tourism Bureau Deputy Head Abayneh Mengistie said that the State hosted over 9.2 million local and foreign tourists, of which over 9.18 were local tourists. Over 11,364 foreign tourists visited different tourist sites over the last six months.

The above income has been registered following the peace agreement reached between the Ethiopian government and TPLF. The existing relative peace has encouraged the tourists to visit the State though the number of visitors was not sufficient, he indicated.

According to him, the multiple activities that have been carried out in the sector, such as expansion of tourist resources and attractions around destinations, including infrastructure development, promotion of natural, cultural, and religious attractions

and improving services helped it register remarkable successes.

Making tourist sites comfortable and increasing tourists' stay in destinations, ensuring sustainable peace and stability and related tasks are future priorities of the Bureau to milk much out of the sector.

Moreover, as the State houses various tangible and intangible tourist destinations, it is capable of attracting more visitors. Over the last six months, the State has earned over 2.49 billion Birr revenue from tourists who visited Lake Tana Monastery, Tis Abay Waterfall, Simien Mountain National Park as well as attended various festivals and events.

As to him, the Bureau has prepared a tourist destinations improvement plan to make sites more comfortable for visitors and to prolong tourists stay. Besides, what are required for the growth of tourism, including financial supply, scaling up the service sector, expanding transport and road alternatives as well as making conditions to host tourists are being well underway in a bid to further revive the sector. What is more, preparations are also underway to welcome guests/ tourists who would come to the country to attend various events in the future.

Recently the Republic of Indonesia Ambassador to Ethiopia, Djibouti and members of the African Union visited the Simien Mountains National Park that are found in the State.

After visiting the Simien Mountains National Park, Amb. Al Busyra Basnur expressed his impression to local media "I am very pleased to visit such a heart taking scenario. During my stay here in Ethiopia, I did not expect that there would be an attractive tourist destination like this, but I luckily found this one very mesmerizing and impressive," he said.

"The natural beauty of the park, he continued, is not only providing tourists with ample opportunity to refresh themselves; but also let them have chances

to enjoy, take photos, make films, do researches and carry out many more activities," the Ambassador said.

Visiting many parts of the Park, the Ambassador said that he is optimistic that more Indonesian tourists will be visiting the site and Ethiopia; and Indonesia should tighten their solidarity with regard to reviving the tourism sector.

The Ambassador also vowed to introduce the appealing site and the experience he has gained from the tour and other catchy areas to his whole families, communities, followers, fellow citizens and others- about the best scenery of the Park which in turn helps the area to be one of the best tourist destinations.

"Ethiopia and Indonesia are keen to capacitate the tourism sector to make the countries one of the best tourist destinations in the world. Indonesian tourists will also be ambassadors of these two countries. The whole communities around the world have to visit Simien Mountains National Park," the Ambassador recommended.

Currently, the Ethiopian government has given due priority to develop new tourist destinations across the country. The Gorgora tourist destination is among the newly developing tourist destinations in the Amhara State and sought to be the other emerging tourist destination.

The grand Gorgora project is nearing completion as the final phase of the construction is well underway and; when it is completed, it will be the other potential tourist destination in the State in the near future. The Gorgora project along with Wenchi and Koysha projects is part of the national projects initiated by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) in 2020 to preserve natural resources and unleash tourism potentials in the country.

In sum, the presence of major tourist destinations and newly developing tourism projects will have an immense contribution to boost and expand the tourism sector and income from the sector.

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*The natural beauty of the park, he continued, is not only providing tourists with ample opportunity to refresh themselves; but also let them have chances to enjoy, take photos, make films, do researches and carry out many more activities,*

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