



The Ethiopian Herald

Vol. LXXIX No 145 26 February 2023 - Yekatit 19, 2015

SUNDAY EDITION

Price Birr 10.00

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127th ADWA Victory

Unity, Bravery, and Perseverance

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African media: Well deserved, real time concern

BY HAILE DEMEKE

The political will of African leaders will deter the pejorative representation of the continent and create pan-African media that will deliver reliable and accurate information to the global audience, journalism experts said.

It is to be recalled that Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) proposed the establishment of a pan-African media to participants of the 36th Assembly of the African Union (AU).

Commenting on the issue to the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA), Assistant Professor



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Borena: State stepping up humanitarian operation for drought response

BY HAILE DEMEKE

ADDIS ABABA –Oromia State Government said it has been working closely with the federal government and donor groups to provide food and non-food amenities to drought-hit communities in the Borena Zone.

In a press conference he gave yesterday, Oromia State Disaster Risk Management

See Borena: State ... page 4

Israel keen to advance healthcare partnership with Ethiopia

BY BETELHEM BEDLU

ADDIS ABABA- Israeli Ambassador has revealed his country's keen interest to advance the longstanding relations with Ethiopia in the health sector and to foster strong knowledge and experience-sharing platforms.

Approached by *The Ethiopian Herald* during the Ethio-Israel health exhibition, Ambassador Aleleign Admasu said that his country attaches due emphasis to make

See Israel keen to ... page 4

News



Getahun Alemu

Association eyeing UN event to promote Ethiopia's tourism potential

BY MESERET BEHAILU

ADDIS ABABA – The Ethiopia Tourism and Hotel Market Association revealed a plan to capitalize on the forthcoming United Nations tourism event to promote Ethiopia's tourist attractions to the rest of the world.

Association President Getahun Alemu told local media that when he was in Addis Ababa to participate in the 36th AU Assembly, the UN Secretary-General António Guterres promised the association's participation in the tourism event.

"The opportunity we have gained to participate in the event would play a significant role in promoting Ethiopia's historical and natural tourist attractions to potential visitors and stimulating the industry."

Getahun further stated that the association has been tirelessly working to promote Ethiopia's tourism potential and signed memorandums of understanding with Tanzania and Kenya counterparts to draw regional collaboration. The COVID-19 pandemic outbreak, however, challenged this move over the past few years.

Currently, the association is working a lot to reinstate the activities held back due to COVID-19 and makes close ties with similar associations in Burundi and South Africa.

"Having capitalized on the AU emphasis to accelerate the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), we have made consolidated attempts to promote Ethiopia's tourism through various mechanisms."

Similarly, the association has been carrying out various activities to improve the hospitality sector and offering training and other capacity-building programs in a bid to enhance service delivery in hotels across the country.

Ethiopia's green legacy 'role model' for Africa

BY HAILE DEMEKE

ADDIS ABABA—Ethiopia's Green Legacy Initiative is a role model for Africa as it is designed to mitigate the multifaceted challenges facing Ethiopia and beyond, so remarked Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Affairs Minister Demeke Mekonnen.

The Ethiopian green legacy initiative championed by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) aimed at ensuring food security and mitigating climate change needs to be continental agenda. Ethiopia's Green Legacy Initiative is a flagship program that aims at providing various benefits to the development efforts in the country including the fight against environmental degradation and food security challenges.

"When we talk about green legacy it is not a simple and separate intervention in our national transformation agenda. Green legacy by itself is about climate change, food security, ensuring sustainable development and others," Demeke said.

According to him, Ethiopia is trying to look to integrate the green legacy initiative with other different development activities being underway in the country during this year. "It is all about addressing nutrition, sustainable development, food security, poverty and this flagship program is crucial to address those related challenges."

He stated that green legacy needs concrete effort and response from all the concerning bodies thereby leading to strong national and continental response to address challenges.



Ethiopian Forestry Development Senior Research and forestry and climate change specialist Adefires Worku (PhD) said that having abundant potential African is still lagging behind due to no unlocking the potential. Problems related drought, flooding, conflict, migration of youth, and other are among the problems.

Accordingly, Ethiopia's green legacy initiative is critical program in averting those natural and manmade problems. The initiative is crucial in revitalizing and sustaining connectivity among African countries and it needs to be continental program.

Likewise it plays key role in climate change mitigation which is global issue. The initiative helps Ethiopia to conserve

biodiversity rich forests, world heritage and two of the world's 34 biodiversity hotspots are found in Ethiopia, he said.

Director General of African Risk Capacity (ARC) Ibrahim Cheikh said that Ethiopia has become a model in green development initiative which other countries need to replicate it and the country has done a marvelous job on carbon emissions and minimizing climate induced impacts.

Currently, Ethiopia is implementing the Green Legacy Initiative as a good response to a worrying trend of global warming and environmental degradation and the idea is believed to be transcending borders not only in the continent but all over the world as humanity is threatened by the challenges of climate change, he said.



Ethiopian, Chinese firms agree to assemble heavy trucks

BY STAFF REPORTER

ADDIS ABABA- BEAEKA General Business PLC, owned by an Ethiopian business tycoon Belayenh Kende, signed an agreement with Chinese automotive manufacturing company Shacman to assemble heavy trucks here.

According to local media, the two firms have agreed to assemble up to 1500 trucks during the production trial year.

Speaking at the occasion, Industry Minister Melaku Alebel said that the agreement

signed by the two companies is extremely important as Ethiopia's transport sector needs more private-sector engagement. "We are still using animals for transportation. So, we need to cooperate on industrial development that could transform the sector. Incoming technology companies and investors should be supported."

For BEAEKA Managing Director Michael Kassa, the agreement will allow the company to acquire advanced technical skills that are beyond the business exchange.

"The assembly work needs to hire about

1,500 employees. In the first phase, senior technicians from China will handle the technical works; but we are planning to substitute them with Ethiopians after skill exchange."

According to the agreement, in the first phase (this year), the two firms will supply 1,500 trucks to the market while production of truck motors and bodies will be started in the second phase (next year).

Assembled trucks by the two companies will start to penetrate the market within the next 45 days, it was stated.

Editorial

Home-grown policies to keep emerging pioneers of defiance

In the battle of Adwa designing own military strategies and mobilizing citizens, carrying mainly traditional weapons, Ethiopia did manage to repel invading colonizer troops armed to the teeth. What a living billboard of bravery that keeps on resonating down the lane of time? What a chemistry of nation-loving leaders and freedom-adoring subjects!

In so doing, our heroic forbearers and their leaders had portrayed their sagacity and valor. The defiance against subjugation they set as an example has found an echo across places the sun goes around. That is why many freedom-seeking countries across the globe especially in Africa adapted Ethiopia's tricolor.

When anniversaries like the victory of Adwa are around the corner, no doubt, there is a need to amplify such bright chapters in history as they help keep the legacy of defiance alive.

But the nature of defiance the nation should stage may differ from one generation to the succeeding ones. The nation may not need to raise arms to foil aggression. That does not mean it does not have to lock horns with fettering poverty to uproot the social evil and plant seedlings of development that beg for constant watering before they spread out their boughs in every sphere of endeavor.

To the aforementioned effect, Ethiopia has demonstrated pioneering tasks that could be seen exemplary.

To substantiate the case in point, we could mention here some flagship projects the country chalked out to shape its own roadmap of socioeconomic deliverance. The Great Renaissance Dam (GERD) and similar dams Ethiopia brought into play to quench its thirst for electricity and that of neighboring countries harnessing its bountiful water resources in a win-win manner is worth mentioning.

Also, mostly of its own volition, Ethiopia's notable move in the Green legacy aside from ensuring the sustainability of its water resources, it goes a long way in addressing the carbon sequestration task that begs for a coordinated and global push.

To kill two birds with a stone, Ethiopia is conserving and also developing earthly-paradise-looking touristic spots like Gorgora, Kosha and Wenchi to turn Ethiopia, of course in due course of time, into Eldorado and thereby maximize the influx of tourists. Here in Addis too, eyesores are made to metamorphose into awe-inspiring parks—Entoto and Sheger parks.

The country is also building industrial parks to curtail the export of raw materials that beg for value addition for a better return and to substitute goods being imported outlaying hard-won currencies.

Salient is also Ethiopia's bold step forward to export agricultural produces like wheat on top of augmenting the income it gets from quality export of its green emerald—coffee. It is not hard to surmise the returns given the country's vast arable land and water resources.

Ethiopia is also paving the way for its mastermind youngsters' surge in the avenue of science and technology introducing cutting-edge -technology-boasting centers that serve bedrocks for research and innovation.

As the government could not address all challenges single-handed facilitating things like expansion of infrastructural networks and designing policies promising a turnaround, it has to invite local and foreign investors as well as the diaspora community to buttress the country's exertion towards tackling challenges and joining the ranks of well to do countries.

Due to inclement weather and the vagaries of climate change that surface just like the one in Borena necessitating global support, strategies and policies ought to be designed in such a way to troubleshoot such glamorous unfolding too. Solutions that proved effective at one corner of the country could be adopted and adapted in other parts.

The bottom line is let us go for home-grown policies to keep emerging pioneers of defiance.

Opinion

Realize Pan-Africanism ambitions by rejuvenating the youth

BY EPHREM ANDARGACHEW

Pan-African is a thought and a concept that advocates the African movement and self-determination, Unity, worldwide black nationalism, and so on. These thoughts have arisen out of the social, political, and economic conditions that Black people faced pre, during, and after colonialism.

The main objective of Pan-Africanism was the attempt to create a sense of brotherhood and collaboration among all people of African descent whether they lived inside or outside Africa. Pan-Africanism is the idea that peoples of African descent have common interests and should be unified. Although varieties of Pan-Africanism concepts exist, historically, Pan-Africanism has often taken the shape of a political or cultural movement.

Despite various challenges and understanding, Ethiopia, more or less, is the center of the Pan-Africanism movement. Among the more-important Pan-Africanist thinkers of the first decades of the 20th century, Jamaican-born Black Nationalist Marcus Garvey is worth mentioning. Garvey, taking Ethiopia as a concept of freedom and independence, defended the issue of African independence and emphasized the positive attributes and characteristics of Black people's collective past.

Taking the independence of Ethiopia into account, his organization, the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA), boasted millions of members, envisioning and then making plans for a return "back to Africa." Garvey laid forth a vision for a new world where all people of African origin, on every continent, were united, self-sufficient, and proud. It was the manifestation of an idea known as Pan-Africanism.

In fact, Gravy and other thinkers have been working to see a united, independent, prosperous, self-sufficient, and politically powerful continent. Nonetheless, either before or after independence, the people of Africa have suffered a lot and are condemned to live a life of hustle and bustle.

Chaos, turmoil, security threats, conflict, absence of peace, and instability, which recouple with recurrent drought and starvation have been a challenge to development, and economic growth across the continent. Therefore, to achieve the concept of Pan-Africanism, it is important to design a new strategy that inspires and supports the youth.

Indeed, the forefathers, who established OAU with the Pan-African spirit, wanted to promote unity and solidarity amongst African states. Nonetheless, establishing either the Organization of African Unity (OAU) or African Union (AU) is not enough. It requires extra effort to materialize the objective of the Pan-Africanism concept.

Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) said that strengthening the Pan-Africanism spirit would enable development and safeguard the continent's sovereignty and territorial integrity. This is an important reminder for the young generation of Africa to be able to carry on the responsibilities set by the African Union Agenda 2063.

Africa has abundant resources and the continent

holds a considerable proportion of the world's natural resources, both renewable and non-renewable. Although Africa's assets are more than its liabilities, its economic sovereignty has been caught in a vicious cycle of lack, and out-of-state autonomy has been vulnerable to interference. Hence, it is imperative to look out of the box by investing in innovative and skilled manpower to meet the Pan-African vision and withstand globalization challenges, he added.

According to Kenya's former Director of the Anti-Corruption Commission and law professor, Prof. PLO Lumumba, the current generation of Africa must play an irreplaceable role in the continuance of Pan Africanism movement by following the footsteps of the crucial contribution of the founding fathers of Africa for independence.

Materializing and strengthening the Pan-Africanism movement is necessary to ensure the peace and security of Africa, establish economic and social integration as well as the formation of a political mindset that is free from external influences, he underlined.

In actual fact, Ethiopia has been playing not only defending the sovereignty of its territory but also the independence of the continent. The country has an unwavering position for the spirit of Pan-Africanism and supports the continent in realizing its ambitions.

Besides, Ethiopia has a decisive role in the struggle of African countries for freedom against colonial powers. Ethiopia's commitment to Africa and Pan-Africanism never changes with a change of government. Because the country believes that the issue of Africa is the issue of Ethiopia and vice-versa.

Ethiopian Ministry Foreign Affairs State Minister Tesfaye Yilma explained that Africa's problem is Ethiopia's problem and there is no separation in between. So, Ethiopia has an unwavering position on the Pan-Africanism concept and movement.

Congolese American and Pan-Africanist Professor Teylama Miabey said that the idea of Pan-Africanism is the most essential idea to the survival and development of Africa. The idea is very powerful which all Africans should maintain. Especially, bringing the African youth is a great opportunity to actualize the vision of Pan-Africa.

Africa has a lot of issues today, but the continent also has a lot of solutions, he said, adding "because we are the richest continent on earth because all the natural resources are coming from Africa. Pan-Africanism is the solution in which we can cooperate among Africans to try to solve our problems." he elaborated.

"We have to find a peaceful solution to our problem. I believe that the solution for African people has to come to Africa themselves. And the only way we can come with this solution is first by unity, by coming together," he underlined.

Since African countries have been interwoven to the extent that one state's security cannot be guaranteed without that of the other. Therefore, states should work to avoid conflicts peacefully. This is very important to see the Pan-Africanism vision which ensures a peaceful, independent, prosperous and self-sufficient, and powerful Africa.

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.

Department
email: etpresspromotion@gmail.com
Tel. 011-156-98-73/011-811-13-15

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News

Bureau toiling in creating innovative citizens

BY HAILE DEMEKE

ADDIS ABABA – Oromia Job Creation and Vocational Bureau is aggressively working on producing skilled and innovative manpower in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) College across the state that fits country's market demand.

Oromia Job Creation and Vocational Bureau Head, Mathewos Soboka said that the training being provided by the TVET College needs to focus on producing innovative and skilled manpower that fits the country's market need.

The Bureau is aggressively working towards creating skilled labor forces with the attitude of boosting working culture and habit thereby contributing to the economy of the country.

Accordingly, the bureau has been studying the potential of the state so as to create visible jobs, he said.

In order to boost job creation creating industry-college linkage is crucial. Encouraging the trainees in innovation and technologies, providing short and long-term training and others are crucial in capacitating and increasing the competitiveness of enterprises and industries.

It is important to integrate knowledge, skill and attitude during training, engaging



trainees in applying skills similar to the real world of work, providing practical skills to trainees and others have been crucial, he stressed.

In order to address problems related to materials needed for training in TVET College, over 47 million Birr has been allocated to buy necessary machines for training. This year, the bureau has planned to receive about 238, 898 twelve complete trainees across the state and train from level I-V with the primary aim of producing skilled, well equipped, and mentally readied citizens across the region and it finalized all necessary preparations.

Development Enterprise and Accreditation Director Tarekegn Bulcha on his part said

that TVET across the state has been playing significant role in enhancing the economy of the country thereby creating immense jobs for citizens.

Though the sector is contributing to the economy of the country creating huge jobs for citizens, it lacks due attention and necessary support from the concerning bodies, he said.

“Both government and private TVET need serious attention, necessary technical and financial support, so as to be more effective and efficient in producing skilled human power.”

As considerable number of TVET trainees are characterized by incompetence which has resulted in failure to be self-employed and employment in different public and private sectors, it has to be the major area of concern and needs to be well improved.

It was indicated that there are a number of factors such as inadequate teaching learning materials, poor implementation of principles of competency based training, studying environment, lack of college and industry linkage, among others, which negatively affect the move.

The bureau has been discussing a range of issues with college owners, TVET centers and other concerning bodies to run activities properly and receive trainees, adjust infrastructural facilities and the likes.



Mustafa Kedir

Photo - Hadush Abreha

Borena: State...

Commissioner Mustafa Kedir stated that consolidated efforts are underway to bridge the food and non-food shortages in Borena.

Borena has been affected by drought due to the prolonged absence of rain for five consecutive seasons. “Many of the community in Borena are pastoralists and the disruption of rainfall for such a long period putting their livelihood at a risk.”

Noting the prolonged drought left about 3.6 million people in dire humanitarian situations in Oromia, the commissioner indicated that emergency operation centers have been opened to mobilize the drought response to Borena. Over 2.4 million quintals of grain and 1.3 billion cash have been dispatched to support the needy people of the Zone.

The Borena Zone of Oromia State has been experiencing severe drought over the past three years due to a lack of adequate rainfall. Accordingly, about 867,140 people need emergency food assistance in the area.

Mustafa commended donors who have contributed to the drought response and encouraged others to prevent this drought from becoming a humanitarian catastrophe.

The government called for vital humanitarian aid, including relief food assistance, safe drinking water, nutrition services, and mobile health teams to help address the needs stemming from the drought. Close discussions are also underway with the World Food Program (WFP), donor groups, and embassies for the speedy response to Borena and other drought-hit areas in the country.

African media: Well ...

of Journalism and Communication at Addis Ababa University (AAU) Samson Mekonnen (PhD) stated that the corporate media have been hugely engaging to cast Africa as a place of disorder and dismemberment.

Accordingly, translating Premier Abiy's initiative to reality would enable the continent to reverse the well-coordinated media assault and to tell its own story. Almost every day, the western media unashamedly crank out and spread lies and disinformation on Africa.

Noting the western media's dominance of the global political system, the academician highlighted that the establishment of a free and independent continental media is instrumental in repulsing the unwarranted pressure.

Some western powers are waging information war using their media as a tool to put pressure

and interfere on the domestic affairs of developing countries. Thus, the formation of vibrant media will have a significant impact in halting such kinds of tendencies.

Samson further highlighted that the prevailing conflicts in various hotspots of Africa coupled with the immense natural resources have kept the continent attractive to the international media. To proactively eschew the corporate media lies, Africa needs to establish a financially capable and professionally equipped continental outlet.

African leaders and academia also need to discharge their role in supporting the establishment of a continental media by allowing the free movement of journalists and providing necessary information to the media.

Sharing the above rationale, Journalism

and Communication Lecturer at Haramaya University Denasew Shimeles said that modernization does not mean resembling the West. Modernization denotes promoting African culture to the rest of the world and repulsing the corporate media's disregard of African values.

Since Africa doesn't have a media that tells its truth to the world, this limitation paves the way for corporate outlets to nurture the global community's negative perception towards the continent.

Having a continental media will play a paramount role in presenting the true future of the continent to the global audience and successfully curbing the western's media defaming narratives, the academician remarked.

Israel keen to...

more engagement to improve Ethiopia's healthcare delivery.

According to him, Israel has been doing a lot in helping Ethiopia's health care delivery and facilitating knowledge transfer. Accordingly, an Israeli medical team conducted free eye treatment for Ethiopian children, and the embassy sponsored nine children to get cardiac surgery in Israel for three months.

“We want Ethiopia to become Africa's health hub and we will put utmost effort to support the government's efforts to attain such a vision.”

Besides the health sector, the Israeli Embassy has an extensive engagement in wider areas including agriculture, innovation, and education, among others.

Erez Barenboim, (MD), Director-General of Israel-based Assuta Ashdod Hospital expressed his desire to create connections and partnerships with relevant stakeholders in Ethiopia. “We come here to share knowledge and experience in the health sector and to exchange views in various researches that are being conducted in the area.”

“I believe we should establish a long-lasting relationship that each side can learn in a win-win approach. That way, we learn, teach, and

we practice. I hope we will find partners and ways to collaborate.”

The medical doctor added: “The thing about Ethiopia is the fact that we have past history together. This is why we are connected more in the heart than in the head. We find it very simple and basic to come and join Ethiopians to find a way to collaborate together. We can do it in other places but we prefer and want to try to share ideas and join forces with them.”

For his take on the issue, Assuta Ashdod Hospital Surgery Department Head HanochKashtan (MD) indicated that the problem of the poor operation technique they witnessed at Felege Hiwot Hospital in Bahir

Dar some eight years ago is the reason for them to come here.

So far, six Ethiopian surgeons and 4 nurses attended months-long training at Assuta Ashdod Hospital. “We go to Bahir Dar and Gondar two or three times a year to operate with them. We are looking for institution-level ties to expand the areas of cooperation.”

“I admire Ethiopian surgeons for working with limited resources and equipment but still managing to do great operations.”

At the exhibition, two Israeli medical doctors delivered lectures on healthcare leadership for Ethiopian health professionals who attended in person and virtually.

Opinion

No longer must Africa go hat-in-hand to feed citizens!

BY MENGISTEAB TESHOME

Contrary to the abundant resources and productive human labor it has possessed, the continent of Africa has still suffered from dependency syndrome and inefficiency of basic needs. The reason behind this paradoxical gesture has to be well investigated and the continent has to have the status quo it deserves in all aspects. It is really shame on Africa, having untapped resources and luring scenarios in every part of the continent, which could potentially be sustainable source of income, entangled with food insufficiency has to be made history and perhaps unforgivable myth.

Africa remains a net importer of food though there are a number of truths about African agriculture as could feed continent's population. The irony is Africa has 60 percent of the world's uncultivated arable land, yet go hat-in-hand to feed citizens.

As learnt from facts on the ground telling that Africa population has doubled overall and tripled in urban areas in the past 30 years, agricultural production and food security have struggled keeping a similar pace to its population. Africa is the only continent where the absolute number of undernourished people has increased over the past 30 years, as to research documents.

As far as this writer's point of my view is concerned, it high time for Africa to bring about radical change not to beg for food rather it is expected to provide others with aid as all is there in the territory of the continent, what it has lacked is coordination and commitment to well exploit its natural resources. The most crucial point along this line is we should build the convictions among the leadership and the people at large on how we, as sons and daughters of the continent, could make the aid dependency and spirit of waiting for others history through sustainably ensure food security; yes it could be made a puzzle following hard work, proper use of resources, community mobilization towards self-sufficiency in all aspects.

Africa should let its own people feed themselves, their villages, towns and countries. As scale, quality and quantity of food production and productivity develop, countries can be in a position to well feed their respective citizenry, export markets from the continent can flourish and they could ultimately be competent with other developed nations. This aspect thus is increasingly leading them not just to poverty alleviation, but wealth creation and ensuring economic sovereignty. As more

inhabitants see the promise of a better future in agriculture, many more clusters will be developed towards truly making Africa the breadbasket from which other part of the world would benefit much out of its success. We all should come up with capability and confidence to make no longer must Africa go hat-in-hand with a view to feeding its vibrant and resourceful population.

Former prime minister of Ethiopia Hailemariam Desalegn and Greg Mills have written that most African states have done a lot for better outcomes than what they did at the start of the independence process, i.e more than 60 years ago. They were weak then, ruled by outsiders in some cases in concert with unelected traditional leadership, with an economy based on an extractive, commodity-based model. There have been staggering improvements particularly to health care and education, unimaginable at independence.

The utterance that articulates that African states have across the board failed to deliver enough to their citizens is indisputable, not only when measured against the expectations of their citizens, but against the performance of peers in East Asia.

Each country should weigh the magnitude of the danger, according to recent reports, Africa malnutrition looms large. Over a fifth of the continent's 1.3 billion people faced hunger last year, more than twice the level of any other continent, Africa-oriented reports revealed.

Even before the war in Ukraine jeopardized supplies to many African countries of grain and fertilizer needed to feed their people or for growing crops, Covid-19 had disturbed food processing and supply chains, affecting world economies and provoking agricultural and food inflation.

Though the immediate threat of stocks running out has abated, the shock to food systems has forced urgent debate on the long-term dangers of malnutrition and how it must be addressed.

Especially in Africa, hunger and malnutrition threaten human life, accounting for between 20 percent and 40 percent of maternal deaths on the continent. Malnutrition is one of the leading killers of children under five in Africa, reports indicate.

It clear that hunger and malnutrition are keeping on affecting the physical, mental, cognitive and physiological development of African children and prevent adolescents from reaching their full potential, locking entire populations into vulnerability. Making it a human rights issue that extends

far beyond the already volatile impact.

What my suggestion in this regard is transforming Agriculture and the Agricultural production in Africa has to be a prime agenda and countries of the continent must build social cohesion, create beneficial continental trade, provide a platform for global exports, and, most importantly, help create millions of jobs while pulling subsistence farmers out of poverty.

The other very important point that needs to be taken into consideration in relation to the topic of discussion is farmers should the access to markets to earn their fair share of the profit pool in the value chain. True, many are supporting such a constructive suggestion and say good markets, in turn, provide food security for the population and facilitate Africa's agricultural self-sufficiency.

Without a shadow of doubt, making markets work is a supply chain infrastructure and information issue. Hence, governments and private investors need to ensure sufficient roads, warehouses, processing facilities and other infrastructure as well as get products accessible to increasingly urbanizing markets. Farmers need access to information to deliver products to the markets that offer them the best price, too.

At the regional and country levels, government and market actors need to create the markets that allow the trade of homegrown products. These initiatives in general cut across the wide spectrum of crops and products produced.

As learnt from experiences of countries and recurrent exercises, markets are often developed at country level, but a pan-African strategy should include the best practice sharing and public-private partnership support, and this aspect has to be highlighted at the farmer level. Additionally, for markets, removing trade barriers and inefficiencies between countries and freeing up the traffic of agricultural produce across Africa would significantly boost the intra-African cross-border trade of produce.

Governments need to focus on significantly improving the enabling environment for local agriculture, particularly when it comes to land rights, infrastructure, market access and elevating women's roles in society.

Moreover, Pan-African institutions such as the African Union should help develop cluster opportunities across the continent and promote intra-African trade and best practice sharing.

The private sector also should help by

investing, understanding that Africa's potential for growth and its untapped arable land offer huge opportunities in spite of the risks. Public-private partnerships can unlock value, as long as both sides share the onus of success.

In his opening remarks at the 36th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Union, Prime Minister of Ethiopia Abiy Ahmed said while the principle of African Solutions to African Problems is widely raised in the scope of conflict, it is imperative that we begin to extend this principle to a wide range of peace and security issues. Continental food security and food sovereignty is one such issue. Our continent is not only well able to feed itself, but can become a bread basket of the world. With 65 percent of the world's remaining uncultivated arable land in our backyards, we need to critically assess why one third of the hungry people in the world are in our continent.

Yes, Ethiopia has been working diligently to enhance agricultural productivity in the past four years. It has commenced an initiative that encourages small-holder farmers to farm in clusters that enable them to benefit from irrigation and mechanization.

Last but not the least, it is high time for making Africa food security a puzzle though productive engagements. In my view African leadership should refrain from providing duplications agendas that could serve own political agenda than ever before.

In sum, Africa has to well exploit the opportunity that perches on its palm so as to emancipate itself from the grip of poverty it finds itself in and the command-oriented or landlord tenant ties with foreign masters.

All in all, Africa needs visionary leaders, who are determined enough to radically transform the continent wisely using resources, leading nations properly devoid of partisan and believe in public participation. Besides, the continent badly needs independent institutions that can transfer defined rules and mechanisms working for the public and the respective countries, not to maintain the power of ruling groups, to the next posterity as unwavering system of running activities, but not to be twisted as per individuals or groups interests. This could be made real through working in a responsible manner, spirit of coordination and sense of belongingness for the nation and their respective citizenry.

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

Business & Economy

Towards creating ideal investor destination

BY DANIEL ALEMAYEHU

With no argument, the African continent is rich in natural resources. This is the main reason why European colonizers fled in every African corner in order to exploit these natural resources for the sake of their people. As history tells, this move for conquering the colonizers has brought marvelous benefits for those who made the Africans asset theirs. On the other side, Africans are still suffering from so many problems happened before and after the colonization. They even couldn't resist the pressure from their colonizers even after they become free and sovereign states.

From these years of suffering, a country was standing alone to fight the white supremacy and became a role model for the rest of the states to struggle for their freedom. In those years, Ethiopia has been doing its best to support the neighboring states to see their bright future as a free state. The country also took the lion share on the foundation of the continent's organization, the African Union. Following its contribution, the African states decided to make the country the seat for the African Union.

Ethiopia, with all the challenges it encounters, came a long distance to transform the country and the people into better stances. It is a fact that almost all African countries have pressured by the external forces in order to make the continent submissive.

As it is said before, every African country has enormous natural resources that change the lives of the people. Though there are pressures from various actors, Africans are struggling to cope up those pressures and work hard for change. Ethiopia could be an example for such promising move. Starting from the past three years, the country has been achieving multiple successes in different sectors. Even though there are conflicts and unrest in the country, the country hasn't sit idle, rather the people and government of Ethiopia work together to use the problems and challenges as opportunities.

Even in such times, the county has scored better in various sectors and investments. Regarding the mining industry, it is true that Ethiopia is rich in mines. But it is believed that the country hasn't used its maximum potential in mining so far. In recent years, the mining industry is flourishing. According to the report from the local media, it is reported that the country will be the next destination for mining investors. The report attributed 'mine' website, and it says that Ethiopia is rich in gold and the country is in the right track with good governance.

Another report from Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) which works on nations' annual mine production, it pointed out that the initiative will be advantageous to invest in Ethiopian mines. The report further explains that from 2019-2020, Ethiopia traded 2.23 tons of gold in the world market and earned 126.3 million USD. From the exported mine trade, gold covers the bigger share with 93 percent, the



As Ethiopia does have a number of investment opportunities, a lot needs to be done towards making it the most preferred investment destination

report highlighted.

The report further remarked that Ethiopia has untapped mineral deposits that can attract international mining companies to invest in the country. The report also suggested that there is unbalanced foreign trade which relays heavily on gold. So as to address the problems, the country needs to open its doors to international mining investors.

Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) also uncovers that Ethiopia has untouched more than 200 metric tons of gold, more than 360 million metric tons of coal, 70 million tons of metal and other mineral deposits.

On the other hand, Ethiopian coffee has become famous in the world online market. Apart from the formal way of trading, the Ethiopian coffee hits better in the international online trade. Joint efforts from Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and the Ethiopian government, Ethiopian coffee products have been delivered in online platform. Alibaba, the largest Chinese E-commerce, put the Ethiopian coffee on online trade for the first time. Reports showed that within a second, 11,200 kilos of Ethiopian coffee was sold out. A report showed that UN Under-Secretary-General and Executive of the ECA, Secretary Vera Songwe said the success recorded by Ethiopian coffee is a milestone for the rest of African nations. It provides a roadmap in leveraging export potential for other ten African countries. The Secretary also mentioned that ECA is working to provide more export opportunities from Africa to China.

H.E Gebremeskel Chala, Minister of Trade and Regional Integration said, "This launch demonstrates the benefits not only Ethiopia, but Africa can also reap in harnessing digitalization."

Likewise, people especially Ethiopian Diasporas have shown their keen interest in investing in their motherland. A report from a local media has indicated that these Diasporas are eager to invest in Gambella Region in service and agriculture sectors. The region also offers 826 thousand hectares of land for agriculture and investment purposes. It was learnt that the Gambella Region is rich in land and water resources.

In order to make the country a hub for investment, different government organizations and other responsible stakeholders have contributed their role to make the dream come true. One of the responsible institutes, Ethiopian Investment Commission has been introducing various platforms where Ethiopian Diasporas and other investors could invest in Ethiopia. The Commission has announced multiple collaborative works with other institutions. For instance, the Commission posted on its official Face book account saying Minister of Trade H.E Gebremeskel Chala, and Commissioner Lelise Neme discussed on teaming up for comprehensive investment strategy in mining. It is also said that they have the ability to transform the living standard of our people through the growth-promoting policies and we continue to push to realize these opportunities.

The Ethiopian Investment Commission launched EIC Diaspora Investment Forum and Exhibition at Skylight Hotel from Jan.

12-16, 2022. This forum had many activities such as presentations, panel discussion and exhibitions of potential investment opportunities.

It has also the objective of attracting Ethiopians and friends of Ethiopian Diasporas. It is also to consult about investment opportunities and incentives to the Diasporas. Lelise Neme, Ethiopian Investment Commissioner highlighted that the investment priority areas are manufacturing, agriculture, industrial parks development specializing in ICT, health and logistics sectors. Girma Seifu, Addis Ababa's Investment Commissioner on his part said, "Our main target is enabling the diaspora to look at the untapped investment potentials of Ethiopia and invest in various areas in their motherland."

The Commission has also introduced a better profit for the ones who invest in Ethiopia under hospitality sector. It is said that there will be a zero profit tax for new investors in nearly seven tourist attraction sites in the country.

Therefore, with untapped natural resources and attractive investment destinations, Ethiopia will be one of the major investment sites in the coming days.

The government of Ethiopia has done marvelous actions to attract investors by taking plenty of steps towards promoting the investment opportunities and benefits when people, investors, the diaspora community and other interested bodies are actively engaged in investing in the country especially combating the illegal move regarding the mining sector.

Planet Earth

Borena

needs an urgent response to withstand the drought

BY EPHREM ANDARGACHEW

Climate change that occurs across the globe causes an increase in global temperature, and sea level, and fossil fuel consumption. Developing countries, unlike industrially advanced and developed nations, have been affected and faced global climate change risks which increases from time to time.

Especially, the Horn of Africa has faced recurrent droughts. Currently, the drought-affected places in East Africa have been requiring urgent government and concerned bodies' intervention to provide humanitarian assistance and fodders. The region has experienced consecutive failed rainy seasons which experienced serious impacts of prolonged drought, and one of the driest periods.

According to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) report, "across the region, at least 36.1 million people have been affected by the drought including 24.1 million in Ethiopia, 7.8 million in Somalia, and 4.2 million in Kenya. As a minimum, 20.5 million people have faced serious high levels of acute food insecurity and this figure could increase to between 23 and 26 million by February 2023."

This year, the numbers are increased and the drought is affecting the entire horn of Africa severely. In Ethiopia, drought has affected livestock production and the livelihoods of the pastoralists resulting in heavy economic loss. Although many areas of Ethiopian pastoralists have been affected by the negative impact of drought, Borana pastoralists are affected seriously and the impact is worse than before.

The Borena is a zone found in the Oromia regional states of Ethiopia. The Zone is bordered on the south by Kenya, on the west by the Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples Region, on the north by West Guji, and the east by Dawa Zone of Somali Region.

The Borana are nomadic pastoralists who herded livestock including cattle, goats, and sheep. They lived in semi-arid areas. They also practiced small-scale farming on fertile lands in the higher regions around Moyale, and in the river basins in Isiolo county.

However, the Zone dryland areas have experienced recurrent drought impacts every year, but the current drought is very severe and long. Lack of rain for three years increased the earth's surface temperature and dryness, which resulted in a critical shortage of pasture and water that lead to the emaciation of livestock and massive deaths of livestock particularly cattle, which is the main livelihood asset of the community.

The drought affected not only the productivity of the livestock but also the

production of agro-pastoralist communities that practice farming besides livestock breeding. Hence, these three years have been years of suffering for Borana Zone pastoralists.

Taking the severity and range of the drought into account, the Borana Zone administration made a call for more support since the support provided to the victims in the zone is not enough.

Oromia Region Borena Zone Administrator Jarso Boru said that the drought that occurred in the zone is causing great damage to people and animals. Accordingly, 807 thousand of people need help due to the drought in the zone.

Furthermore, currently, more than 3.3 million animals have died in the drought, and the aid is not enough for the victims. Due to the lack of rain in the last 3 years, more than 800,000 people have been exposed to severe problems.

However, Before the drought, the zone received rain twice a year, he recalled. But the region hasn't received rain for five consecutive rounds in the last three years. Hence, the drought has affected 13 districts in the zone, as a result, 60 percent of the society in the zone needs urgent support, he explained.

Apart from informing the regional and federal governments about the severity of the drought, the Zone, despite the seriousness of the problem, has been doing various life-saving work. Accordingly, the government has provided more than 90,600 quintals of wheat, 2,66 liters of oil, and 22 water bottles to more than 600,000 people in just one round.

Non-governmental organizations and development partners have provided around 750 million birr worth of aid to people affected by the drought. However, the aid and the support of current assistance are not enough for the people.

The zone is giving priority to withstanding the negative impact of the drought and saving the lives of the people and has not done rehabilitation work since the drought has not stopped and affects the life of the people, he elaborated.

In the Zone, long-term and short-term plans are implemented to solve the problem of drought. Particularly, the Oromia Regional Government, since the people living in Zone are pastoralists, is building 18 small dams that can retain rainwater to alleviate the water shortage of the local community. The Zone is also working to utilize the groundwater.

Indeed, the absence of rain in one season would affect the farmers. It also forces them to lead a risky life. Climatic change and other human-induced factors including drought and desertification add fuel to the

existing problems in Ethiopia.

Based on the country's experiences, drought has been affecting nearly all sectors in Ethiopia namely agriculture, water resources, the availability of freshwater, inadequate water for industry, reduced electricity production from hydropower, fishery, and so on.

Climate change negatively affects the ecosystems and causes loss of wetlands and lakes, loss of forest and soil cover, increased soil erosion, and land degradation. It is also a source of socio-economic problems like increasing human and livestock diseases, migration, conflict over water, and the decline in the National Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

Due to the aforementioned and related problems, in Borena, drought negatively affects the lives of humans, animals, and biodiversity. This requires an urgent and collaborative response from the government, individuals, Regional states, City Administration, and stakeholders to provide humanitarian assistance in accordance with their capacity.

The government should also put a direction to provide support for drought-affected areas of the Borena people. Because the complexity of the problems in the zone and the inadequate support from partners created a negative impact on the support and response endeavors.

In actual fact, it is essential to support each other instead of expecting donors and other partners. Expecting and depending on others has no result or the result could be a very short time. Hence, local donors and solutions are key to withstand drought-related effects and other man-made difficulties in the Zone. Besides, efforts should be made to prevent the drought not turning into a famine.

Sharing pain and supporting each other during difficulties is a long ingrained culture of the people. Recognizing the problem of others is essential to minimize, if possible to alleviate, the problem since the damage has been done across the Zone.

The efforts that have been done by some people, individuals, and the regional government is important to the zone. Especially, the action that was taken by the Gedeo Zone last year, which received drought-affected Borena Zone cattle and grazes them on their grazing land, should continue this year to pass this drought season.

However, extensive efforts and plans for short and long-term activities are still needed from the government, the concerned bodies, stakeholders, partners, and so on to prevent the drought from turning into a famine. the devastating consequences of the recent prolonged drought on Borana pastoralists could be alleviated through the collaboration of the people.

In Borena, drought negatively affects the lives of humans, animals, and biodiversity. This requires an urgent and collaborative response from the government, individuals, Regional states, City Administration, and stakeholders to provide humanitarian assistance in accordance with their capacity

Art & Culture

Why after a promising start Ethiopian film industry has sunk into oblivion

BY MULUGETA GUDETA

By all measures, Ethiopia was an early starter in Africa to be introduced to the film enterprise more as a magical entertainment than a feasible business and the last to succeed in conquering the world of movie making in Africa as other countries like Egypt, Nigeria, Senegal and Kenya to name a few continued to blossom even though they were relative late comers to the industry. At one point, a few veteran Ethiopian movie makers had the opportunity and enough talent to bring their productions to the attention of the African audiences through various film festivals. Nowadays, no Ethiopian film makes it to those festivals as both the veterans as well as the amateurs seem to ran out of ideas if not the money to change their scripts that are languishing in their drawers into motion pictures.

As a rule, people don't make films in Ethiopia just for pleasure or to express yourself or convey some noble vision. This is also true anywhere in the world where movies are hatched like hen's eggs in small and big studios and appear in various forms going from the Internet to the mobile phones to other high tech distribution technology. Thousands of films appear around the world each year and almost all of them are produced to make money. In other worlds, the film industry is a money making industry. Other claims like talent, inspiration, artistic expression come afterwards.

The Ethiopian film industry had started to raise its head for much of the 1990s through the following decade, producing a lot of trash but also some interesting pictures that genuinely caught the imaginations of moviegoers as well as the emerging investors who were putting their money into the tiny and slowly grinding studios, mostly operating on borrowed money by amateur producers whose "self-contained" roles as script writers, producers, directors and actors sometimes baffled audiences for the similarities of themes, story lines and acting styles that were copied from more "successful" filmmakers.

Veteran or established filmmakers like Solomon Bekele and the venerated Haile Gerima were living and breathing life into the infant film industry by bringing forth their crafts, experiences and education to the attention of potential learners and younger craftsmen and women of the industry that was making baby steps in an environment of economic growth that gave them the opportunity to make low-budget and amateurish films with the aim of not of profits but recognition.

Making films in those "boom" years sounded like becoming celebrities

in a profession largely unknown and misunderstood by the public. Later on, the real purpose and life blood of the film business became increasingly evident. One could not survive in an industry that lives on continuous infusion of more money than talent. After a long hiatus since the birth of the modern film industry in Ethiopia back in the 1960s, there was some glimmer of hope for a robust revival but all that remained an illusion by the end of last decade as films became ordinary things and the initial passion and audience enthusiasm dissipated slowly. This was indeed bad news for an industry that could have provided for so many jobless youngsters and could bring tax money to the government.

The tiny Ethiopian film industry is apparently standing on the brink of total eclipse as the number of films produced each year has dwindle to a handful and the people involved in the industry are abandoning it in droves, changing professions or simply idling away their times instead of sticking to an enterprise that has run out of steam. At one time hundreds of films were made and shown. Now you can count them on the fingers of a single hand if you exclude "films" made with the cheapest and oldest video camera with a minimum of actors whose acting roles are often confined to the usual "boy loves girl and kills her out of jealousy" stereotypes that kill your appetite for movies as soon as you leave the theatres.

What is paradoxical in all this is the fact that the country is currently bristling with historic events that could be turned into movies instantly while filmmakers have long lost the appetite to work on those inspirational events. Patriotism is always in the air in the country but movie makers have not yet managed to turn one of the historic events like the Battle of Adwa into an epic motion picture event with the potential to win the Oscars in many categories. Haile Gerima has tried to revive the spirit of Adwa in a still movie sequence but has not yet touched the heart of the matter. Once again, this brings us to the question of money or investment in the small industry that is threatening to disappear overnight for lack of finances and committed professionals.

Government or the Ministry of Culture is one potential life saver that could breathe a great deal of oxygen into the dying body of the Ethiopian film industry. Unfortunately however the tourism or culture ministries are not interested in this extremely important undertaking. Egyptian or Nigerian movie makers could develop fast simply because they benefitted from government financial and technical largess that opened film academies and financed the training of future directors producers and script writers. Not so in Ethiopia where film making is considered a luxury that

few can afford and many cannot properly understand. While other African countries are bringing their productions to the attention of global audiences, filmmaking in Ethiopia seems to be going backwards and maybe disappear into total oblivion.

The recent international film festival in Rotterdam is a good example to compare and see the widening gulf between the Ethiopian and other African industries. According to African Report magazine, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Nigeria, Egypt and Kenya among others have been chosen 10 top African films at the Rotterdam Film Festival. "The Specter of Boko Haram" is the winner of the Tiger Competition award worth 42, 772 dollars and dazzled this year's jury, who describe it as a "story that centers on the filmmaker's patient and honest gaze on the hovering presence of violence seen through the eyes of innocents".

According to the film review in Africa Report, fourth ranked Kenyan film by Angela Wanjiku "addresses the essential and ambivalent but not publicly discussed traumas caused by prisons in Africa. In her debut feature, she brilliantly uses multilayered ploy to unleash the slow burn of the profound pain of the main character, a former English teacher (Geoffrey), now a manual laborer." The other films are from Egypt, Morocco, South Africa Nigeria and Namibia. The 2023 version of the Rotterdam Film Festival "reunited audiences and filmmakers from far and wide for a full edition for the first time after the pandemic." By the way, the COVID-19 pandemic has also hit the Ethiopian film and entertainment industry that could not withstand the negative fallouts and sunk deep into a chronic malaise as we can see it now.

Where is the Ethiopia film industry now? Money problems and the pandemic have hit it flat on the belly and it is running out of breath for lack of "oxygen" to revive it. It may be time for the remnants of the former movie fraternity in the country to come together and start by discussing the problems that have tapped the industry before identifying and feasible solution. The ministries of tourism or culture can join hands in providing the logistics for such an event perhaps financial support for reviving the industry with a chosen film that shows the amazing faces of Ethiopia's landscapes that could be used to advertise tourism tours and travels.

The money thus produced could be used to finance the revival of the industry and keep it moving for some time until the ghosts that are haunting it leave the scene for a healthier and dynamic business that could contribute indirectly to the economy in the form of jobs and even investment.

The tiny Ethiopian film industry is apparently standing on the brink of total eclipse as the number of films produced each year has dwindle to a handful and the people involved in the industry are abandoning it in droves, changing professions or simply idling away their times

Society

New approach to ensure quality education

BY TEWODROS KASSA

Recently, the Ethiopian higher education entrance examination result was declared by the Ministry of Education. The result witnessed that there is a tangible change in the amount of students that qualify for the admission at the country's higher education institutions.

Cheating on exams claimed to be the main challenge behind the sophisticated education system in the country. Different national exams were cancelled in the past due to cheating in exams and breaches in academic integrity conducted with the orchestrated conspiracy of ill intended politicians and activists. The use of mobile devices and internet during examinations exacerbated the challenge of identifying the competent students from the cheaters at the national exams.

Therefore, the Ethiopian government has been exploring various mechanisms to stop cheating at exams. This year, the Ministry of Education has come up with better decisions on the way to ensure quality education.

Minister of Education Prof. Birhanu Nega told local media that in recent years the quality of education has been challenged by multi negative factors and; lack of quality education has been causing the country directly or indirectly to encounter social, political, moral and economic problems.

The Minister urged every agent/citizenry to be part of the school community to improve the quality of education. The active participation of the education sector stakeholders is also fundamental to realize the vision of ensuring quality education in the country.

As to him, problems related with school infrastructure, political interference in the education system, state of teacher training and cheating on national exams are the key challenges of quality education in the country. Thus, the deterioration of quality of education is the main cause of the challenges the country has been recurrently encountering.

"The politics have been leading some local education administrators to support cheating on exams in an organized way. This is why the Ministry has centered activities related with national exam so as to reduce cheating in exams", he underscored.

Moreover, the Ministry has devised a campaign for education and massive teachers' retraining as a future direction that will be implemented in the nearest future to improve the quality of education.

Accordingly, the designed campaign is helpful to enhance the involvement of all agents including Diasporas to build school infrastructure and achieve another target that enables to improve quality of education.

Educational experts also applauded the new measures being undertaken by the Ministry



of Education. Ensuring quality of education is possible where the government and every segment of the society give special attention to the issue. The major challenges the education sector faced should be resolved immediately so as to cultivate a productive generation.

From now on, the Ministry will administer national exams at higher education institutions and students are strictly forbidden to bring mobile and other electronic devices so as to contain the cheating level being exacerbated through the use of telegram and Facebook. The university exit exam is also sought to create confidence among graduates through making themselves ready to fulfill what are expected from them in their field of study.

On the other hand, President Sahle Work Zewde, during her recent remark on this same issue (education quality in Africa), insisted on the importance of ensuring quality education throughout the African continent. She urged all African countries to reimagine educational models and approaches so as to accelerate the development of the continent.

In her speech at the launching of a report on education in Africa on the margins of the 36th African Union Summit concluded last week, the President said that countries of the African continent need different approaches in terms of quality education.

"To transform the future, we need to rethink our educational models and approaches. We must maintain the vision of education as a public endeavour and a societal project that serves public purposes," Sahle Work noted.

The continental education strategy for Africa was adopted by African Union Heads of State during the 26th Ordinary Session held in Addis Ababa in 2016. However, the President stated that the continental education, both in terms of quality and

accessibility, has remained far behind.

For instance, one out of five African children is out of primary school and almost six in 10 adolescents are out of secondary schools. The proportion of young people not in employment, education or training in sub-Saharan Africa has worsened over the past 10 years. This is for the reason that there has not been renewal of the education system in a manner addressing the root causes of education and social exclusion, the President pointed out.

Therefore, Africa needs to transform its education system to realize the continent's ambitious development agenda. What is more, she underlined the need for new force of governance that includes all voices and; decolonize the education policy of Africa.

The first edition, "Education in Africa – Placing equity at the heart of policy", found that while many countries are taking important and significant positive steps towards reaching this goal, too many children are still left behind.

As to the edition, efforts to expand access to and improve the quality of education need to prioritize equity in learning so that the most vulnerable children are placed at the centre of policy decisions and investments. Most education systems experience segregation between the more able children and those who need the extra support. In addition to working around the more visible dimensions of equity (gender, location, poverty), it is important to delve into the invisible barriers that prevent many children from benefiting from the educational experience.

Accordingly, the report looks at six key topics: Early childhood education, primary and secondary school, skills for work, teachers, education facilities, and means of implementation, and suggests that providing quality education for all children will require a complex set of interventions.

Ensuring quality of education is possible where the government and every segment of the society give special attention to the issue

Law & Politics

Crafting own narration to change distorted image

BY ADDISALEM MULAT

There is no question that establishing Pan-African media plays a huge role in making conversant the wider international community with the self-evident truth of the continent of Africa. Other than that bringing Pan-African media to fruition plays a paramount role in changing the negative image of the continent.

In actual fact, Africa has been a victim of the discredited media outlets' bogus stories. As they have been spewing negative information about Africa as if it is a dark continent known for its backwardness, hunger, and other negative things, the attitude towards the continent has been negative. In consideration of the foregoing, the positive image of Africa in several instances has been heart breaking.

As the media outlets have been fully controlled by other entities intending to disseminate misinformation about the continent of Africa in a negative way, the continent is deprived of nondiscriminatory and genuine representations. To everyone's dismay, the media outlets have been spreading negative news about the continent aimed at imposing their hidden agenda going behind closed curtains by attaching significance to the continent's bad things among a great many things.

As the media outlets have been persistently reporting negative stories about Africa intending to distort its good image, the continent's reputation has been badly damaged. Until today, they have continued deliberately making the global community not to know the real image of the continent of Africa.

Though the continent has been inundated with a plethora of natural resources that can take the entire world to the next level of development, they have been time and again preoccupied with blackening the positive images of Africa. They hate to death reporting the truth about the continent.

A case in point, in the course of the conflict that lasted for two years in Ethiopia, the media outlets disseminated bogus stories with the purpose of mystifying the wider international community. Apart from dragging through the mud the positive images of the continent, they left no stone unturned to create a false picture of the country by spreading erroneous impressions about the country.

It is public knowledge that unless the people of the continent of Africa work in close collaboration to change the false narrative of the media outlets by establishing its own pan-African media to tell its own stories to the entire world, the so-called international media for sure will continue bewildering the global community with their usual cock and bull stories and casting a slur on the positive image of the continent of Africa.

It is common knowledge that if the people of Africa fail to pull out all the stops to change the bad narratives in the global stage, Africa's image will remain lopsided.



Addressing the AU Summit lately, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed on the subject of the issue said Africa's voice on the world stage needs to be heard loud and clear. Africa must also be represented on important international bodies.

Today, more than seven decades after the creation of the United Nations, Africa remains a junior partner without meaningful input or role in the system of international governance. This is particularly true of the United Nations where Africa lacks representation on the Security Council and is underrepresented in a variety of ways.

It is the right time to reform and revitalize the United Nations system to reflect current global realities and ensure that it is a more representative and equitable body. Only fair representation and transparency in those institutions can usher in a just era in multilateralism.

"Consistent with our Ezulwini Consensus of 2005, we should collectively insist that Africa's reasonable request for no less than two permanent seats and five non-permanent seats in the UN Security Council be adopted."

Equally important is Africa's media representation on the international stage.

Africa is often portrayed in the international media negatively. The endless representation as a continent troubled by civil wars, hunger, corruption, greed, disease and poverty is demeaning and dehumanizing and likely driven by a calculated strategy and agenda.

The stereotypical and negative media representations of Africa not only misinform the rest of the world about our continent, but it also shapes the way we see ourselves as

Africans.

Telling our own stories and shaping our own narratives must be our top priority.

In this regard, I would like to propose to this august body the establishment of an African Union Continental Media House.

"This media house could be organized to provide authoritative news and information on our continent, fight disinformation, promote our collective agenda and offer opportunities for Pan African voices to be heard."

In a previous exclusive interview with The Ethiopian Herald, Anteneh Tsegaye (Ph.D.) Assistant Professor at Addis Ababa University, School of Journalism and Communication said, "There is an urgent demand for Africa to have its own media for the purpose of face negotiation, rebranding itself and connecting Africa together in all core endeavors of the spirit and dimensions of Africanism.

The interference of the former colonizers of Africa in terms of injecting western political ideologies did not help Africa move forward to brand its pleasant face to the world and engage itself in development efforts in an African way. It has to say no to foreign adopted political and development ideologies in the spirit of Pan-Africanism to portray its real face and rebrand its actual identity in a collective manner connecting Africa together.

Media is one of the war fronts for this cause. It is vital to remind the power of media in this 'fight' given the current western media abuses in reporting African issues. Added to these, it is significant to think of Pan-African media to air African views and

connect Africans together to craft a sense of African union and brotherhood. The African Union, as the most mandated institution for Africa and Pan-Africanism, should establish a global media house to air or voice African issues. This proposed media house should engage in an African face negotiation process in communicating Africa to the world.

The image and story of Africa have been distorted and wrongly portrayed for a long and it is time to establish a continental media house that tells the true story of the continent, Addis Ababa University President Professor Tassew Woldehanna said.

The president told ENA that the media plays a major role in selling the policies and letting people buy the ideas while creating a good image of their respective countries.

Even if Ethiopia has done very excellent things at home, it is not popular outside and that is because there are no African continental media, he said.

"So, we need our media to tell our people, to tell the world (the truth) and attract Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and good things about Africa. There are not only bad things in Africa. There are many good things, attractive places where we can attract investors. But the media has not played its role in Africa. I support the idea of the Prime Minister that Africa should have its own media," the professor elaborated.

The American journalist of Ethiopian origin, Hermela Aregawi said on her part that Africans need to tell their own story.

For a long time the story of Africa and Ethiopia has been told by outsiders, she said, adding that "more and more of us need to tell the story from different angles and that is the only way we are going to get a closer and more accurate picture of Africa and Ethiopia."

"There needs to be a pan-African media network and I think it needs the support of all the governments that are interested in this venture. The Ethiopian Prime Minister has shown interest in the pan-African media network, so you would expect him and other leaders that think alike to give some level of support to the network."

"But I also think that pan-African media network needs to be independent, can't be government owned. It needs some buying from the AU because I think for any leader or any organization that wants to do good for Africa having their voice or entities that can help tell their voices is important," she noted.

According to the American journalist, the envisaged African continental media house should be independent of any influence from the AU or any organization; but should be working hand-in-hand.

As the continental bloc has the ability and capacity to establish Pan African Media, all member states should join hand for its realization no matter what the challenges may be.



Ephrem Endale
Contributor

Between you & me

Talking about 'Friends' and FRIENDS!

A couple of months back a few of us were talking about friendships in these difficult and trying times. There seemed to be what you can call a general consensus that we used to call real friendships in those bygone days aren't what they used to be. Not much argument there. Of course, such things are not easy to justify with real examples because our concepts friendship are usually custom-made and personal. I mean the idea of real friendship taken by some as being there for each other in rain or shine and even stepping in as the sacrificial lamb isn't universal.

"Look, we might be best friends. That doesn't mean I am obliged to stick out my neck for her!"

"But, say she is in rough waters and needs some lifesaver, would you jump in or just watch her drown?"

"If trying to pull her out poses the slightest risk for me wouldn't jump in."

They say real friendship is tasted not when the sun shines and the coast is clear but when the waves come rushing in. Isn't that nice idea for a sci-fi blockbuster? After all the sci-fi is becoming reality and the real nicer things are so rare these days that they're almost becoming sci-fi material.

So in that group of 'friends' talking about friendships we were a hell lot of far apart when it comes to what we say were the reasons for real friendships to be on the decline. It was at this time one in the group out of the blue asks me; "How many friends

do you have?" Now that it is a very strange question if you really think about it. Can you really say you have so many friends! I mean friendships go all the way back to your childhood days and friends of those days are still friends even though they are in other parts of the world and rarely contact you. It's a little difficult to categorize any friendship null and void just because life has gone your buddies across the oceans. If one childhood chum comes home after three decades and you guys run into each other you're sure to introduce him, "Meet my childhood friend! We were in primary school together." So friendship still persists! So with so many 'friends' out it's difficult to remember all of them. In addition as I was saying it seems our concepts of what real friendship consists of aren't universal.

If you describe someone "he's my friend" it means a hell lot much than saying "I know the guy," or something like that. So no wonder the question "How many friends do you have?" the guy threw my way caught me off guard. But then before I could reply the guy was smart enough to realize I was somewhat confused;

"I mean how many Facebook friends do you have?" Aha; call that a life jacket saving me from even more confusion. So he was talking about 'those friends!' Now how many social media friends do I really have!

Look let's be positive for a change, shall we? I mean in a world that is so messed up and negatively charged some dose of positivity goes a long way in doing nerves some justice.

Now 'thanks' to Facebook and as far as you are on that social media platform you're never out of friends. Hmm... I used to hear guys saying things like, "I have already the five thousand friends Facebook allows me to have." I mean had it not been for that rule people could have five thousand or even five million friends! (The 'confirmation' button would have been 'worn out' with overuse!) Look at all the Ronaldos and Messys who have tens of millions of Instagram and other social media platform followers. Now apart from the social media platform how can anyone get as many as five thousand friends!

In a world that is becoming increasingly unfriendly thumbs up for those social platforms for allowing us to have so many 'friends.' I mean 'conventional friends' are in short supply so these days. A childhood friend with several decades of strong bonds between you two could no more be a childhood friend. I'll tell you what I'm trying to say. The guy with whom you have been spending so much time over the past few decades, a guy with whom you have faced nicer and difficult times together, a guy with whom you have vowed to put your wellbeing in line if he ever either of you faces any problems suddenly changes skin! I mean the other day you two had your usual beer or two a talking your hearts out. Two days later you all him and say, "Hi, Saturday the beer would be on me." With beer costing forty and fifty birr a bottle in the most uninviting of places such an invitation., or the promise of one, is enough to bring the smile back

to one's face! But then the 'friend' acts so strangely. All of a sudden, not only his tone his words too have changed;

"I've other matters on Saturday."

"Ok what about Sunday?"

"Sunday too I'm engaged. I'll call you when I can." believe me and that is the end of the road for you two. He never calls. The mystery here is most of the time you wouldn't even know why the other side has suddenly broken a friendship that was supposed to be some "...until death do us part!"

By the way I tried to see how many 'Facebook friends' I have; a couple of hundred would be great; Surprise, surprise! Facebook tells me I have almost six hundred! So, my index finger had been itching for nothing! Isn't that very nice! And I have been around Facebook for quite a while.

People send you a request for friendship and that is real nice. Anyone asking you to be friends on Facebook or wherever else must have a nice person; but then some friend requests could send you practically running to the nearest pharmacy in search of painkillers; Imagine your ex sending you a friend's request! No, it is not that I'm a firsthand witness. But then the very ex who threw you under the bus and boarded it with someone you call your best sending you a friend's request! Someone should come up with ways how we can prosecute such a 'devastating weapon.' Reading the request you can also imagine your ex having the laughing like hell!

The lifespan of a pair of shoes

A trio of us were recently scouring the shoe shops around town looking for maybe a thousand birr pair which would last all the way to the next FIFA World Cup. Did I say a thousand birr! Yes, I did. I can hear you berating me, "You dude the days of thousand birr reasonable shoes are gone!" Look, no wonder you're surprised. But the story here is that with prices of everything going higher and higher most of us are trying to play it cool with life. I mean if there still are members of the opposite sex 'evaluating' you by the shoes you wear they can start walking to the farthest desert on earth for all we care. Nice voyage! People are really trying to grapple with this budget thing.

So at a certain shop way off mid-city we come across a pair we liked. We asked "How much do these pair cost?" The lady with lots of make-up and probably trying to look like the other twin of Angelina Jolie says, "Three thousand five hundred birr!" Why is that everywhere you go the things you like are priced so high you curse the lottery people for not yet awarding you the ten million prize! I remember many years back buying a hundred birr pair and I was treated almost like VIP among those close! In times when fifty birr would cover all the cost of a weekend date no one was crazy enough to buy a hundred birr pair of shoes! But I was! And I have to confess that was one of the sweetest craziness I must have

ever attempted. Of course, I'm not sure if I tried to act like a VIP. But the one thing I'm sure of is that I enjoyed the whole thing until the shoes starting 'inclining!' But until then I was the gig class fellow in a group of dudes wearing thirty-birr seven year-old shoes! Ha!

So as I was telling you we came across these three thousand five hundred birr pair but we weren't ready to take them. We rushed out before that learnt smile started messing with our nerves. We walked all the way to the center of town and we visit this shoe shop. One amongst us was quick to notice the same pair of shoes like the three thousand five hundred birr. Now this being somewhere around mid-town we expected for the price to hit the four thousand birr mark. Yes, that's what they do, just because their shops have nicer ambience with all the flashy drapes and widow displays they hit you with hundreds even thousands of birr hike.

"Can you tell us the price?"

"One thousand five hundred birr."

What! Now if the shopkeeper was one of those sleepwalking guys with too much both last night we might have concluded, "He must still be fighting his hangover." Or maybe he had the wrong mix of alcohols the previous night. Isn't that what committed drinkers say? "Whatever you do, don't mix beer with hard stuff." he failed to do so. But

this shopkeeper was a young, maybe too young, girl with the sweetest smile anyone could offer you. "Did you say a thousand five hundred birr?"

"Yes," she says with that smile that would have forced any guy with all the screws upstairs intact to pay whatever price she calls. Yes, nature could sometime play on you tricks even the most established hypnotizer wouldn't manage to do.

By the way do you buy some item because you need it? Do you buy it because others tell you need it? Do you buy it because you have more than enough money to throw around? (By the way, is there anything as having 'too much money?' There should be. I mean in anything there is a level when things are described as too much! Look who's talking!)

So with a shopkeeper like hers you might do what you never planned and deal your budget its biggest blow of the month if only to satisfy the young girl. By the way, it so happens much of the time you're forced to do what you normally don't do because socializing expects it from you. Now that's not very nice. It might be being sinful-minded to talk about meat in times of the main fasting season. But just for argument's sake say you never go anywhere close to raw meat. Not for all the scientific stuff about tapeworm and things like that; but you just don't like your meat raw. But, and

this is true in most cases, you must be the only guy among your group who doesn't like raw meat. "What do you mean he doesn't like raw meat? Something must be wrong with that guy!" But then one time or another you're pushed so much to be like others and take "only a bite or two!" but then it is not about the number of bites but the very action of eating the meat. Now you're not some self-crowned rights activist claiming you kill the animal and eat it meat raw! This is abuse against the animal kingdom!"

So many times you might be forced against your principles just to fit in the society. By the way the truth coming out of this world is that you don't get the standing ovation for sticking to your principles. "Principles! What principles? A world that gives precedence to principles is long gone and you better fall in line or once the train leaves the station your end alone in a completely vacated train station. And what is more you don't know when another would come or even if it'd ever come for that matter.

We left the shop empty handed. What we later learned was that most shops have these near-perfect imitations and had we taken those pair of shoes we can't expect a lifespan of a month half or two months.

When it comes to quality it's always about lifespans, isn't it? So the lifespan of a pair of shoes holds volumes of stories.

In Pictures

PM Abiy Ahmed attended the Pan-Africanism Forum at 36th AU Summit

At the Forum prepared by the African Leadership Excellence Academy, on the occasion of the AU Summit, PM Abiy Ahmed stressed the need for Pan-Africanism to flourish as an idea of cooperative integration, global competitiveness and peaceful coexistence.

“Reinvigorating and recalibrating Pan-Africanism requires us to disrupt the status quo and leap into the future. Potentials need to change into products. Our minds need to transform our lands. We need to create clean and green environments.”



Zero-tariff treatment to 98 percent of taxable items originating from Ethiopia



The new step is conducive to materializing the spirit of China-Africa friendship and cooperation, helping the least developed countries accelerates their development, and building an open global economy, the commission said.

China will move further to gradually expand such treatment to all the least developed countries that have established diplomatic ties with China.

Zhao Zhiyuan, Ambassador of China to Ethiopia, said that his country will offer zero-tariff treatment to 98 percent of the tariff line, with 8804 items of products, originating from Ethiopia.

“This preferential treatment will help boost Ethiopian exports to China, bring more benefits to Ethiopian people and further strengthen the friendship between the two peoples,” said Ambassador Zhao on his twitter post. It was learnt that recently Ethiopian Finance Minister Ahmed Shide signed the exchange of letters with Zhao Zhiyuan, Ambassador of China to Ethiopia on spare parts assistance from China to Ethiopia for Addis Ababa Light Rail Transit.

Mayor Adanech Abiebie received Ambassador of Brazil to Ethiopia, Jandra Ferrer Dossantos at her office

In their discussion, they discussed the ways in which Addis Ababa can work together with Brazilian cities in tourism, development of agriculture and, in a special way, school meals.

Mayor Adanech expressed her gratitude for the warm welcome and recognition given to him at the Milan Forty Food Policy entry program where our city was awarded.



There can be no renewal of education without addressing the root causes of social exclusion: President Sahle-Work Zewde



To transform education, more of the same will not do. Some of our difficulties stem from how we educate. It is not only about strengthening political commitment to education in national development policies or even to increase financing, as important as that is. We need a different education. To transform the future, we need to renew education. We need to rethink our educational models and approaches.

Educational exclusion is comprised of a web of exclusions where poverty is compounded by a range of factors of discrimination linked to gender, to residence, to minority status. Past injustices need to be addressed and corrected.