



# The Ethiopian Herald

Vol. LXXIX No 135 15 FEBRUARY 2023 - Yekatit 8, 2015

Wednesday

Price Birr 10.00

## AU Summit: Hashing out measures to expedite AfCFTA implementation

BY HAILE DEMEKE

**ADDIS ABABA** – The speedy implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) is the top agenda that African leaders will convey at this year’s Summit, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) disclosed.

At a weekly briefing he held here yesterday, MoFA Spokesperson Ambassador Meles Alem stated that the leaders will deliberate on the speedy execution of the agreement that is expected to create an integrated intra-Africa market. The AfCFTA is also believed to foster the free movement of people and goods in the continent.

Noting the theme of this year’s summit is “Acceleration of AfCFTA implementation,” the spokesperson indicated that African leaders are expected to pass viable resolutions that will translate the agreement into reality.

Various African countries are in different phases of ratifying the agreement and they have recruited workers and conducted other necessary activities that will facilitate the implementation of the continental pact. It is to be recalled that African leaders decided

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## Wheat exports drive Ethiopia’s economic dynamism

BY YESUF ENDRIS

**ADDIS ABABA** - Ethiopia’s becoming a wheat exporting country will assist the government’s investment capacity and contribute share in the growing economic dynamism, an expert in the area said.

The government of Ethiopia has recently launched exporting wheat to neighboring countries.

Speaking to *The Ethiopian Herald*, Haramaya University Economics Associate Professor Mola Alemayehu (PhD) said that wheat export will have long term positive outcomes. “In long-term, the government can boost investments using the foreign currency that will be generated from the export.”

This time, surplus production of agricultural

See Wheat exports ... page 3

## Addis optimistic about tourism revival

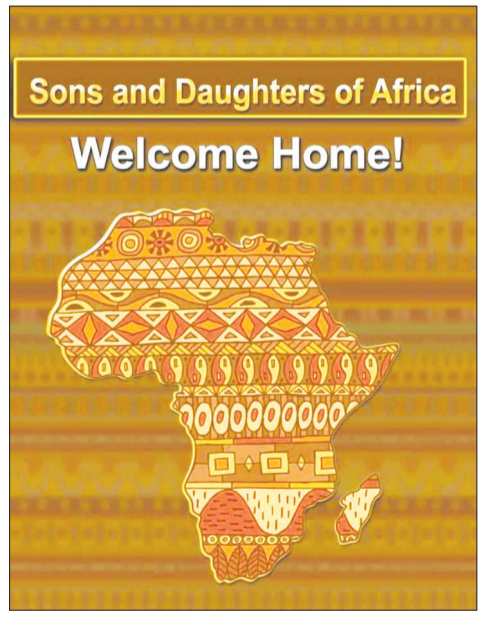
BY MISGANAW ASNAKE

**ADDIS ABABA**- the Addis Ababa Culture, Arts and Tourism Bureau announced that the 36th African Union Summit will be of great benefit to the revival of tourism activity in Addis Ababa.

Bureau’s Tourism Destination Development and Quality Assurance Director Amdemariam Mamo told The Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) that the summit will avail the opportunity for AU guests to learn Addis Ababa’s famous tourist sites. Apart from promoting tourism destinations, the session will also play a vital role in increasing Ethiopia’s forex earnings from international visitors.

There are abundant tourist attraction sites in the metropolis that are developed by the government, religious institutions, as well as the private sector. Among them, Entoto Park, Unity Park, Friendship Park, Science Museum and Entoto Museum are mainly mentioned.

In order to make the conference successful and memorable, the Ministry



of Foreign Affairs has been preparing for three months with various stakeholders. Due consideration has been given to render seamless provision of utilities and amenities as well as to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the AU guests.

The director further stated that the owners

of the star-designated hotels in Addis Ababa have been gathered to arrange the necessary conditions for receiving and hosting tourists. The hotels will organize coffee ceremonies on all four days of the AU sessions to ensure a good reception; hosts will wear traditional costumes, promote culture, sell traditional items, and entertain traditional music and cultural night programs.

Amdemariam, who noted the summit’s contribution to foreign currency earnings, expressed a belief that the session will also increase the overall activity of the city. From the point of view of building the image of Addis Ababa, the tourist maps are displayed in the areas where the guests pass.

“Through displaying Addis Ababa’s tourism brand in main streets, keeping the metropolis clean and disseminating fliers, we have made concrete jobs to promote the capital and its tourism potentials. We are also working closely with private companies to enable them to put their fingerprint in the campaign.”



Ambassador Dina Mufti

## Successful diplomacy hinges on nat’l consensus

# News



Yesihak Yusuf (PhD)

## Lake Haramaya: Resurrection brings about fish harvesting

BY FIKADU BELAY

**ADDIS ABEBA** – Following the continuous and relentless efforts of restoration, Lake Haramaya has started producing fish for the local community, according to Haramaya University.

The lake, which neighbors Haramaya University, started to lose its water gradually and dried up fully about 20 years ago, it was learnt.

Haramaya University Community Engagement and Enterprise Development Vice President Yesihak Yusuf (PhD), told The Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) that Haramaya University's work to conserve natural resources has allowed restoring the Lake.

The University has been working strenuously throughout the years to restore the dry lake by stepping up the plantation of some 400,000 seedlings annually since 2011.

He stated that the water has recovered as a result of efforts to save the environment, watershed, and the local community now benefits from increased fish output.

In the past, the institution and the community used to import fish products from Ziway, he added.

He stated that eight boats offer tourist services to the people that travel from various locations to the lake.

In addition to supporting the tourism sector by attracting tourists, the lake has been able to create jobs for many local youths since the work to restore the dry lake began, he explained.

According to him, the University is capable of performing maintenance and watershed work on the natural resource and that it gave attention to the restoration of the lake.

He said that protection of the local natural resources would continue cultivating the damaged land around the lake and planting various plants.

He also underlined that the natural resources conservation works carried out around the lake have helped to reduce the risk of floods that threaten Dire Dawa city every year during the summer season.

## Stakeholders, Gov't resolute commitments succeed wheat exports

BY TAMERU REGASA

**ADDIS ABABA-** Ethiopia has successfully achieved wheat exports due to the unwavering commitments of stakeholders and government, Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) said.

Speaking to *The Ethiopian Herald* MoA State Minister Melese Mekonnen(PhD) further said that: "The ever increasing number of farmers that have been engaging in wheat production following various government incentives, high number of investors to work on wheat irrigation and the effort of research and investigation institutions have enabled the country to launch wheat exports."

According to Melese, the country has been working on producing 52 million quintals of wheat exclusively using irrigation program. To this end, the nation has covered 1.3 hectares of land by wheat seed. Likewise, it has a potential to produce 110 million quintals of wheat by rain fed agriculture annually.

Explaining opportunities to produce wheat in the country, the state minister stated that Ethiopia is blessed with both vast cultivable land and agro ecological condition that enable it to produce abundant amount of wheat making use both irrigation and rain fed approaches.



He stressed that 97 million quintals of wheat is needed for local consumption per annum; this has shown the increased demand of the product. Though the demand of local consumption is growing, the country has successfully achieved the plan to export wheat.

Citing the need to control the illegal transportation of Ethiopian wheat product to neighboring countries, he said that as million quintals of wheat have been smuggled to neighboring countries, stringent measures have to be taken.

He said that the official launching of wheat export would be helpful to enable the country to generate the required

amount of revenue from the product.

"The country costs 700 million USD up to one billion USD annually to import wheat. However, beyond substituting import we can export millions of quintals of wheat if we tap our potential," he added.

Speaking at the launching of national wheat export program held in Bale Zone, Oromia state of the country Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed said, "We have fulfilled what we promised and we have made Ethiopia's wheat export dream real. It is a testimony that we dream big, say what we dream, practically do what we say via working day in and day out."

## Addis to host "Made in Germany– Africa" platform

BY ESSEYE MENGISTE

**ADDIS ABABA-** "Made in Germany–Africa" platform to be held in Addis Ababa for key African industries to enhance multilateral trade relationships, said Made in Germany.

In its press release sent to The Ethiopian Herald Made in Germany stated that the "Made in Germany-Africa" platform is slated to be held from March 2<sup>nd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup>, 2023. It aims to improve multidimensional trade relationships between Germany and African industries.

Made in Germany –Africa platform is organized by the Trade and Fairs Group and the German Embassy in Addis Ababa, with the support of the German Ministry of Trade and Climate Protection Ethiopia and the Ethiopian government.

Made in Germany- Africa will offer a significant opportunity to find the best economic and political solutions for Africa's needs.

According to the release, over 2,500 Germans as well as African professionals, investors, diplomats, government personnel are expected to attend, providing a unique opportunity to discuss and refresh these major relationships

At the platform German and African experts will discuss solutions for African educational organizations i.e. schools,



universities and other higher learning institutions. Others will meet with German companies leading in infrastructure, clean cities, building systems, environmental solutions, digitalization, and manufacturing of machines, Made in Germany noted

Financing projects, leasing machines for agro-processing and other finance topics will be discussed with World Bank, IMF, and the German KfW Bank. Some of the other discussion points will include the

new important European and German regulations for Ethiopian and African exporters, it was learnt.

Accordingly, at Made in Germany– Africa it may expect leading brands, products and services planned for the African market. With its high-end visitor profile and large proportion of decision-makers, this special event will attract not only exhibitors but also conference attendees as well as diplomats.

# News



## Defense Minister urges EASF members to maximize cooperation in promoting peace

**ADDIS ABABA /ENA/** - Ethiopian Defense Minister Abraham Belay has called on members of the East African Standby Force (EASF) to maximize their support in promoting peace and stability across the Horn of Africa region.

The minister made the remark in his speech on 31st Ordinary Session of the Council of Ministers of Defense and Security of Eastern African Region yesterday.

According to him, the African continent is still suffering from the supply chain disruption due to COVID-19 and lack of

stability, among other challenges.

The defense minister in particular underlined that the peace and security situation in the Horn of Africa needs a collective approach and sound mechanisms.

In order to promote peace and security in region, it requires alignment among the East African Standby Force, Abraham noted.

He also underlined the need for regional mechanism to overcome the common difficulties of the East African nations and

to mitigate conflicts.

As the African continent is rich in cultural and traditional mechanisms, the countries should exploit these to manage conflicts and destructive approaches, the minister stressed.

The Eastern Africa Standby Force is a regional organization whose mandate is to enhance peace and security in the region. It is one of the five regional multi-dimensional Forces of the African Standby Force (ASF) consisting of military, police and civilian components.

## AU Summit:...

Accra, Ghana to be the seat of the AfCFTA Secretariat.

Meles further stated that high-level delegations from 51 countries including 35 heads of states, 11 foreign affairs ministers, 13 first ladies, four prime ministers and 10 heads of various international organizations including the UN are expected to attend the summit. Moreover, high-level delegations and deputy presidents from six non-AU states will take part in the gathering.

Apart from the vigilant preparation for the successful conduct of the Summit, the Ethiopian government aims to capitalize on the gathering to forge strong diplomatic ties with countries from four corners of the globe. To this, the country will conduct different bilateral and multilateral discussions on the sidelines of the main event.

Ethiopia will also host another event under the theme "Reinvigorating Pan Africanism in the Changing World."

Comorian President Azali Assoumani is expected to become this year's AU Chairperson and take the role from Senegalese President Macky Sall, he remarked.

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

## Wheat exports...

commodities including wheat is also a tool to arrest the soaring increase in the price of food items and ease the burden inflation has caused in the livelihoods of low-income communities. The wheat export, however, should be supplemented by extensive agricultural development, he added.

Satisfying the domestic demand for wheat by local domestic production is so vital to stabilize the price of some food items.

The academician recommended the government to extend national agricultural initiatives to replicate the summer wheat production in other areas. "The surplus production of wheat may be satisfactory to the market; however, there is a need to invest in other agricultural crop production. Accordingly, various agricultural initiatives including *Yelemat Turufat* should be extended."

Ethiopia officially launched a national wheat export program to its neighbors Djibouti and Kenya.

While heralding the launching of wheat export, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (Ph.D.) expressed his government's achievement in fulfilling promises and made Ethiopia's wheat export dream a reality.

## Successful diplomacy hinges on nat'l consensus

**BY MESERET BEHAILU**

**ADDIS ABABA** -The Government's commitment to successful national consensus and fostering the unity of the people are entitled to sharpen Ethiopia's caliber in global diplomacy, a carrier diplomat said.

Accordingly, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Public Diplomacy Director General Ambassador Dina Mufti told The Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) that building the public's understanding of issues of national importance is critical in the sphere of diplomacy.

Active public participation in Ethiopia's diplomatic activities will enable the country

to protect its national interest in international arenas. The Diaspora's overwhelming support to the home country's cause is also a tool for Ethiopia to become an active player in global politics.

Therefore, the government is expected to create a platform that every citizen will contribute to the national activities towards ensuring peace and development and repelling the unwarranted interference and pressures of some interest groups.

Dina continued: "The Cessation of Hostilities Agreement signed between government and the TPLF opened the door to restore Ethiopia's strained diplomacy with some global actors and it is crucial to cement the rapprochement in development

partnership."

Also, the reinstatement of Ethiopia's African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) privilege is among the notable aims of the ongoing diplomatic activities by Ethiopians at home and abroad.

Likewise, attracting multinational companies and promoting tourism potentials, learning from the success of other countries, and the like would bring paramount significance to Ethiopia's international relations.

The veteran diplomat further highlighted that the CoHA showcases the success of Ethiopia's diplomacy and the government's commitment to the principle of African solutions to African problems, which is being promoted by the African Union.

# Opinion

## No more hegemony over resource drainage: time to contemplate shared benefit

BY LAKACHEW ATINAFU

Visionary, clairvoyant for he used to be Joseph was sold to an Egyptian Caravan for good for the execution of the prophecy to rejuvenate the time of mightiness.

The husband man of destiny batters with human heart though situations seemed to have been graduated from marijuana to heroine to ease the toil human being to endure.

Then it was written in the Old Testament there is no enchantment in the house of Jacob and there is no divination against Israel. Nonetheless, be it as it may the elders traded their younger brother for a passerby for inflating ego and heralded for their old timer father that Joseph was victim wild beast.

And so the ball rolls, time ushered causalities of enormity that forced Israel to look for livelihood from Egypt where Joseph was seated in throne beneath the pharaoh.

The almighty had ultimate reason to do so which in miracle witnessed in Binyams ibet the younger of mighty Joseph born from Rachel the second spouse of Jacob.

The case in point attribute to Ethiopia its resource drained to Egypt for millennia and considered as unilateral right denying the cardinal principle of the UN.

Being situated at a very strategic region of geopolitics importance the high land of Ethiopia has been feeding downstream counties of riparian particularly Egypt though the reward from the other side is a paradox.

Conjurers, demons, all those married to evil spirit want to batter with the sacred heart of Ethiopia and yearn to see flags haul up from its debris. After committing crimes after crimes holding Bible and changing tactics from enslaving to colonization and publicly scrambling Africa, now they managed instigating conflict aiming at forming de facto state sponsoring the enemy of enemy ipso facto friend.

They have been in a haste to see the last breath of Ethiopia for exaggerated hypocrisy as they manage the cosmos. Predict they the country would be a mere history, sponsored them, and

groups what they once labeled as state terrorists.

They called on the diplomatic community to leave Ethiopia and promised for officials an asylum if they left the country as they did decades before. Though it was in vain to extenuate the matter and time seemed to be in its mood of the dark of the darkest for Ethiopia, surprisingly leaders and fellow Ethiopians played their card well and began to move in accordance with justice and truth.

It was crystal clear that tenets of journalism were violated, reputed media houses revealed to be they had been mouthpieces of capitalists and elements with self-interest. And so the ball rolls, Ethiopia continues on the right track hosting events and pulling trigger of shame on perjurers.

Unlike enemies and pessimism of campaigns stirring fear and sowing terror Addis Ababa and other historical and traditional cities had discharged their responsibility of being a host of festivals.

And people from every corner of the world mainly Ethiopian born foreign citizens paid tribute for the Ethiopianism more than Ever.

It might not be hyperbole that it was time Ethiopians stood together and combat every challenge hand in hand with solidarity and coexistence, mysteries magnetism among the diverse nation.

Over such precarious situation, Ethiopia has hosted various big events such as festivals and international and continental summits. *Irreecha*, thanks giving day of the Oromo and the marking of formation of new government, *Mesqal*, the finding of the true cross and *Timket*, Ethiopian Epiphany have been celebrated peacefully.

At such a critical time, different ethnic groups have joined the Oromo in celebrating the *Irreecha* festival more than ever though it is difficult to put it in empirics. Hence, the initiative is a good stride in the country's journey of nation building. By the same token, the effort the Ethiopian government is exerting and the involvement of African brothers and sister is a spring board for The Horn integrity and real African Unity.

Really, such magnetism will continue to bloom as narcissist view and the politics of identity and resentment ceased to exist.

Besides, hardly had the world to cope up with changes of circumstances ushered by manmade and natural disasters. COVID 19 has had a devastating impact on human, economic, social and political activities since the outbreak and the evolution from epidemic to pandemic.

Although COVID-19 has crippled the global economy and slowed down the investment sector, it is well known that some countries have seen a boom in the COVID era and have made significant profits in the sector.

Ethiopia is one of the few countries in the world withstanding the pandemic though the global political arena and internal conflict is a stab in the back for the mighty country in the Horn.

On the other hand, investment went on despite worrisome, thanks for multi-polarism and strategic partners all over the globe, Ethiopia is on the forefront of attracting FDI.

Diplomats have been tasked to promote investment opportunities, incentives, laws, rules and regulations and recruit investors in the priority sectors identified by the Government. Therefore, as part of its annual plan, each diplomatic Mission takes the assignment of recruiting a specific number of investors, based on which the annual performance of the Mission and the individual diplomats is evaluated.

Ethiopia's remarkable economic growth has partly been attributed to the economic-centered foreign policy and diplomacy that the country has fittingly designed and aggressively implemented.

The coming into power of Prime Minister Abiy has enabled a new beginning where the legal and institutional framework, as well as administrative procedures pertaining to investment in general and FDI in particular, have been significantly reformed towards a more liberal, early and favorable system.

With the Government's introduction of the

Homegrown Economic reform program, the primary focus of the Foreign Policy has been promoting and implementing this program. While implementing this program requires more aggressive diplomacy, the program has eased the diplomatic work by introducing inherently attractive and liberal initiatives.

Uplifting Ethiopia's regional and global influence requires a wide range of measures at home and abroad. First, to be a regional hegemony, Ethiopia must be at peace with itself as a house divided against itself cannot stand. Therefore, addressing the prevailing insecurity and armed conflict is a matter that cannot be left for tomorrow. The primary objective of any foreign policy is to maintain the security and national integrity of the country.

For countries like Ethiopia, domestic factors are arguably the most important determinants of foreign policy. Domestic problems increase the country's vulnerability for external interference and decrease its regional and global image and influence. This is exactly what is happening now in Ethiopia though the government is working on the remedies and becoming successful in most cases.

The experiences of many African and some non-African countries show that an armed conflict is not an absolute impediment to FDI. Investors always anticipate challenges and provide solutions in advance. Secondly, the Government has taken bold investment-related reforms, including the legal and institutional frameworks and administrative measures that ease doing business in Ethiopia.

The reforms have caught the eyes of investors and several foreign investors have decided to take a risk. Thirdly, we live in a multi polar world where several middle powers are making notable influence and contributions in less developed countries like Ethiopia. Multipolarism has created the advantage of widening policy options for Ethiopia as it no more relies on the will of a single partner to get what it needs to address its challenges.

The program requires more aggressive diplomacy; the program has also eased the diplomatic work by introducing inherently attractive and liberal initiatives.

## Kenyan troops to hunt down bandits in restive North Rift region

Kenya's President William Ruto on Monday promised to act tough on insecurity in troubled areas of the North Rift region and other parts of the country, which have been hit hard by banditry attacks.

Speaking after meeting leaders from Baringo County at State House in Nakuru, Ruto ordered the Kenya Defence Forces (KDF) to conduct a joint security operation with the police in all banditry-prone areas starting Tuesday to combat lawlessness, which has hampered education and development and caused tensions among communities.

The government also gave a three-day amnesty for the surrender of firearms in the region.

"We must do whatever it takes to bring peace to banditry prone areas. We will do everything possible to weed out a few criminals who must

stop or we will force them to stop," said the Kenyan leader.

"The President has directed the KDF to work jointly with the police to weed out bandits in various places that have experienced cattle rustling and banditry in Baringo, Kerio Valley and other parts of the county," a legislator who attended the meeting told the *Nation*.

On Sunday, a tough-talking President Ruto reiterated his government's commitment to fighting banditry, adding that the government will embrace new measures of fighting the vice.

In an effort to restore peace and security to the North Rift region, Ruto issued instructions for Interior Cabinet Secretary Kithure Kindiki to camp in the affected areas until sanity is restored.

"I know we have issues regarding security operations in North Rift. I have instructed Prof Kindiki to leave his office in Nairobi and camp in the North Rift until these citizens stop losing their lives," Ruto said.

"With the government's efforts, we will deal with them and ensure no Kenyan life is lost. We will deal with them ruthlessly," he added.

The move comes amid increased incidents of banditry attacks. Last week, four police officers were killed in an ambush on the Kitale-Lodwar highway.

At least 12 other people, including seven police officers, are admitted to hospital with multiple bullet wounds. A sub-county police commander is among the injured. The attackers also burnt two police vehicles after looting them. Police said the officers were on

patrol on the highway on Friday evening when they were ambushed near the Kenya Wildlife Service's camp in Kaakong.

On Sunday night, an expectant teacher was gang-raped by armed bandits in Kainuk in Turkana South. Banditry has over decades caused untold suffering characterized by many deaths and injuries on the people of Kerio Valley in Elgeyo Marakwet and other affected counties including West Pokot, Baringo, Laikipia, Turkana and Samburu.

Source: *The East African news*

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

# Editorial

# opinion

## Realizing Africa's development goals by its own children

Africa, in its demographic makeup, is a continent characterized by the youngest population in the world.

As studies indicate, about 65 percent of the total populations of the continent are below the age of 35 years, and over 35 percent are between the ages of 15 and 35 years, which make Africa a continent blessed with energetic, resourceful and easily trainable human capital who can play irreplaceable role in accelerating continent's development goals and shaping its future.

However, this does not mean that such demographic dividend and endowments of natural resources is always a blessing for respective countries. Rather, it is equally a pressing matter that creates a huge socioeconomic challenge not only for own countries but also for the region, the continent and even beyond; unless guided in the right way.

It is common to see young people, knowingly or unknowingly, engaging in illegal activities and organized crimes, for instance, inthieving, gang violence, terrorist activities and the like for the reasons of being out of work; targeting to escape out from the quagmire of poverty.

In fact, understanding the huge potential the young populations seize for economic growth; or otherwise, countries, as well as the African Union have devised enabling policy frameworks and supportive strategies to unlock their young people's full potential, make them productive and at the end of the day advance the continent's development.

As part of this effort, respective countries and the Union have been executing multifaceted activities to equip Africa's youth with the desired knowledge and skills, augment their entrepreneurship capacity, empower and enhance their active participation in each and every affair of their countries.

The 36<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session of the AU Assembly of Heads of State and Government Session and the 42<sup>nd</sup> Ordinary Session of the Executive Council has also made this year's theme on African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) as the initiative increases employment opportunities for young people, nurtures entrepreneurial skills and accelerates the continent's economic transformation.

The Session has officially commenced today at the AU Conference Center under the theme "Accelerating the Implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)." And the Session, aside from the challenges and achievements witnessed in the continent over the year, is expected to deliberate on the concept note and roadmap of the free trade area.

Unarguably, the Union, over the past few decades, has taken substantial moves to secure the peace and security of the region and advance continent's agenda.

Particularly, giving due emphasis for agendas of "Silencing the Guns", and "African Solutions to African Problems", it has registered encouraging results though a lot remains to be done.

Particularly, the drive of "African Solutions to African Problems", a notion devised to look over and find African solutions for Africa's troubles by own resources has seen successful results.

The measures the Union has taken to end the conflict between the Government of Ethiopia and TPLF by the same fashion - "African Solutions to African Problems" - can be taken as a good indication in this regard.

As it is stated, this year's the African Union Summit is expected to discuss the potential outcome of the free trade area initiative on youth in Africa because it expands Africa's youth benefit in various areas, lessens continent's unemployment and wards off the trend of hijacking the generations by some interest groups.

Therefore, the Summit to enable Africa transform its economy by its own children, and realize its development goals, should take a step in a manner benefiting the continent and its young people.

## What AU should do to meet continental challenges

BY SOLOMON DIBABA

The AU peace keeping mission under AMISOM and now under AU Transition Mission in Somalia is engaged in building the capacity of the Somali Armed Forces while effectively battling the terrorist actions of Al-Shabab.

The AU has also initiated a number of continental flagship projects including integrated high speed train project, African Commodity Strategy, AfCFTA, African Passport and Free Movement, Silencing the Guns, Grand INGA Dam Project, Single African Air Transport and Market, African Financial Institutions, Pan African Network, African Outer Space Strategy, African Virtual and e-university, African Cyber Security and Great African Museum.

Despite all the above mentioned achievements mentioned by the author only in brief, the AU and Africa at large face various challenges that need to be resolved if the continental organization is to meet its objectives.

Over the last several years, the AU has encountered a number of challenges related to changes of government through coups that flared up in the continent in Sao Tome and Principe, Togo, Mauritania, Mali, Egypt, and central Africa. This has to a greater degree affected AU's efforts to help develop democracy and good governance as well as the continental stability and peace that the organization has strived to achieve.

Although the AU has been advocating for self-finance, the continental organization heavily depends upon the assistance it receives from global partner agencies for about 75 per cent of its budget for running the organization and financing its projects. This will seriously affect AU efforts to effectively follow and implement its cardinal principles on deciding on the major issues that concern the member nations and creation of conflict of interest between the AU and global partner agencies who wish to drive the organization towards their official and hidden interests.

Moreover, incessant conflicts across the continent, human and arms trafficking, political instability triggered by ethnic conflicts, corruption, marked lack of good governance, inadequate infrastructure, climate change induced food insecurity, poor health facilities etc. have remained the major obstacles to the socio-economic development of Africa.

Nonetheless, recurrent El-Nino- La-Nina induced climate change which in most cases resulted in widespread drought and drought across the continent has seriously affected the pace of development programs of AU member states.

Cross border contraband trade has remained as one of the major challenges of the national economies of AU member states. For instance illicit trading in oil in Africa amounts

to nearly US \$100 billion a year due to under-invoicing, theft, bunkering and corruption.

A number of sub-regional integration programs including the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU), Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD), Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), East African Community (EAC), Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Intergovernmental Authority on Development were formed to facilitate economic integration between their members. Although some have existed for many years, they have failed to develop to the desired level of integration because the member nations are at different level of development and there is a marked lack of commitment to make all the necessary legal and economic measures to put them into action.

The proliferation of terrorist organizations like Al-Shabaab, al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), and Boko Haram are already busy disrupting the normal economic activities in the countries in which they operate totally isolating some of the areas they occupied from the rest of Africa.

Besides, in countries like DRC, armed conflicts aimed at controlling the mineral rich areas of the country has prevented the nation from enjoying its resources to pull the population out of abject poverty.

Spread of diseases like Ebola, COVID-19, TB and a number of vector borne diseases have continued to affect the health of millions in the continent. On the other hand, although AU is seriously committed to peace and security in the region lack of political commitment among leaders and wanton interference of western powers into the internal affairs of African countries have in many parts of Africa, including the volatile Horn of Africa has continued to pose a threat to continental peace and security.

Resolving the above mentioned challenges over time is of critical importance if the AU is to fulfill its objectives as one of the biggest continental block in the world. Africa has recently been seriously affected by the increase on global food prices like wheat and edible oil.

Therefore, under the coordination of the AU, African countries need to devise and implement plans to increase agricultural productivity, promotion of manufacturing industries and engage in import substitution programs to narrow down trade deficits, hyperinflation and heavy dependence on foreign aid through time.

It is quite obvious that it would take time to ascertain Africa's sustainable economic development. Despite the challenges, the future is bright for Africa to become a major economic hub and global financial magnet but more is to be done to achieve this.



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

# Business & Economy

## Raising the transaction value of land for better exploitation of the resource

BY ABEBE WOLDEGIORGIS

According to the fundamental economic principle, land is one of the economic components and when it is combined with capital and labor creating wealth will be realized. In Ethiopian history feudalism had been a dominant economic system for thousands of years. However, the land holding system had varied from place to place. In the northern part of the country the land tenure system was the 'Rist' system in which characterized by communal ownership and family members. They had the right to transfer land ownership right to their offsprings based on the customary law.

Contrary to this, in the central and southern parts of the country, the land holding system had been dominantly characterized by landlordism. Tenants had been denied the right to poses land and provide their labor to the land lords. And whenever the land lord wants, he could have the rights to evict them arbitrarily. Such land holding system prevailed for centuries and hampered the economic development and it was rather exploitative and pauperized tenants.

The 1974 revolution which brought the down fall of the monarchial system changed the old land owning system once and for all. The Derg regime which assumed power after the downfall of the old Imperial regime confiscated the land from the land lords and declared that land to be belongs to the government and to the tiller.

Though the regime introduced new law, farmers had been remained in the obscure position. They were given only use rights of the land and as to economists, land became a dead capital because of the absence of the transaction value of land. The EPRDF regime which assumed power by overthrowing the Derg regime sustained the 1975 land proclamation and for the last three decades it was unchanged.

Recently, when the second home grown economic reform was introduced, the government showed its interest that the rural land system to be changed and to allow farmers to transact the land.

Professor Melese Damite is working in the Land for Ethiopia Institute for many years and wrote various articles in relation with the land holding system in Ethiopia. He recently made an interview with the local media and reflected his view on this issue. As to him, the existing land holding system hampered the economic progress of the country.

He also said that, the government land ownership which is derived from socialist ideology is unhelpful for attaining economic growth because it is proved that raising land productivity with denying farmers' sense of land ownership is impossible. Sense of

ownership of land boosts farmer's morale and increases productivity. He further said that, in Ethiopia farmers exert their labor for their farm at maximum level but their labor is not supported by knowledge, capital and technology. As a result, the output is less and stagnant. It is undeniable fact that farmers have their own traditional knowledge but it should go in line with the objective reality prevailed on the ground all over the world.

The increasing land degradation due to both by human activities and nature restricts land productivity. As to Melese, farmers residing in the areas where sufficient moisture and water is available can create wealth. But whenever they earn some amount of money, instead of using the money for supporting their farm activities, they allocate it for purchasing lorry, wind mills, open bar or purchase land in urban centers for residential house construction.

Had they invested their money on their land, it would have been improved their productivity but because of insecurity due to absence of ownership rights and fearing the government might take it as it wishes; they spend the money on the abovementioned purposes. Even when the government takes the land from farmers, the compensation money given to farmers is very much lower than the real value of the land. Paradoxically, the government will sell it again by lease with very expensive price.

In some places, farmers grow eucalyptus trees not to lose their land with unfair compensation. They plant the tree for market and at the same time if the government takes the land the value of the land will be increased because of the availability of the trees.

All regions' land proclamations do not allow farmers to build house on their farm lands. But contrary to these, farmers residing adjacent to urban centers build house on their farm to transfer assets to their children. Last time when he was on the visit in Benishangul gumuz region, he observed that farmers were engaged in building houses in their farm lands because due to their anxiety that they might lose property that is going to be provided to their children in case the government take away it. Such practice is regarded by farmers as it brings chance to help their children.

However, it put them at the loggerhead with the woreda and kebele agricultural bureau officials. Building confidence to farmers that they think they have the right to use the land by various means seemed a better option to face uncertainty in case they lose their land. If farmers feel secure that the land belongs to them, they would invest their money for long term and produce more than the usual production in their small plots of land.

For example, Netherlands is a country with

small size of land area but its agricultural export products in 2021 was worth of 110 billion Dollars. Ethiopia annually earns only 3 billion Dollars by exporting products such as coffee, gold and others. As compared to Ethiopia, Netherlands geographical area is very small. Wealth is created by dedication and working not necessarily by geographic mass. Labor also must be supported by technology and knowledge. But the existing land holding system is a constraint factor to pull agricultural investment. As a result, land has been dead capital for long.

In Colombia, there are eight types of land holding system but in Ethiopia there is only one type of land holding system which lets land to be owned by government. Providing land position only to the government is unmanageable because it is pre occupied by many burning issues particularly governing the country, protecting the nation territorial integrity from foreign enemies and local destabilizing forces, exerting efforts for attaining economic development and other issues.

Currently, land used by few officials and brokers to obtain wealth illegally with in short period but the majority is denied access to land and such situation has been unhelpful to raise agricultural productivity.

As to Melese, in rural parts, agriculture is not the only field which can engage farmers and there are also other options. For example, producing compost is a feasible job. It can be prepared in small plots of land. Even in the urban centers one can produce vermin worms helpful to prepare compost within 500 sq m of land and supply to the market. Such practice is common in India and many earn their living from producing vermin worms and supply to the market to be utilized as fertilizer.

These organic fertilizer producers earn more money than farmers. There are also other economic activities that can be done in rural parts but they need finance, knowledge and technology. To do these, land has to have transactional value to somehow. In Ethiopia, there are vast lands which can be changed in to trillion Dollars. However, the abundant resource is unutilized.

The new law regulation introduced in the second homegrown economic reform plan explains how to possess and utilize land in common and to that end legal frame work will be prepared. It also explains that there is an intention to improve land proclamation number 456/2005 which focuses on rural land administration and utilization.

As to Melese, this is good news but as to him, the term "utilizing the land in common" is not clear whether it mean that husband and wife use the land in common or not and it is also not clear that whether they could obtain credit facility in common or not.

**Building confidence to farmers that they think they have the right to use the land by various means seemed a better option to face uncertainty in case they lose their land. If farmers feel secure that the land belongs to them, they would invest their money for long term and produce more than the usual production in their small plots of land**

# Art & Culture

## Making the Most out of Forthcoming Tourism Opportunities in Addis

MULUGETA GUDETA

The 36th ordinary Session of the African Union (AU) is taking place this week in Addis Ababa. Signs welcoming visitors to historic Addis Ababa are usually common sites as you travel along the newly-built highways of the capital or as soon as you reach the Bole International Airport or reach the gates of the major hotels in the posh areas closer to the amazingly modern airport. Addis Ababa has everything it takes to become one of the major international destinations for visitors' as well as conference attendants.

Wealthy as well as middle class visitors come descend on Addis at this time of the year. They may be out to discover new sites, new distractions, new foods and new drinks as well as a new climate where they can go with only T-shirts on their backs at the height of this European cold season.

Addis Ababa is a city created by the Ethiopian gods to reflect the greatness of its cultures and faiths, and reveal its mysteries to foreigners who come to this legendary city. Writing about the modern face of Addis, a website called Brilliant Ethiopia, wrote that, "Addis more than enough history and sights to warrant more than just a stopover." Most foreigners who come to Addis for the first time most fall in love with the city, its cultures and its people and decide to return any time of the year and during seasons of festivals in particular.

Addis Ababa is not only one of the biggest and most modern cities in Africa but also home to one of the biggest tourist attraction sites in Africa that are not yet fully exploited or fully revealed to outside as well as local visitors. In the last one or two decades, Addis Ababa has become one of the most important tourist destinations in Africa because of its history, legacy and its diplomatic importance as a city of major conferences that attract thousands of visitors every year. This description hardly provides the full picture of Addis Ababa's importance or potentials as 'a conference city' that boasts of modern hotels, banking services, new hangouts for the growing number of African elite visitors and ordinary tourists.

In a recent Ethiopian Television (ETV) morning news program, the tourism and hotel authorities disclosed that the forthcoming AU conference in Addis Ababa would be a good opportunity to promote tourism in the Ethiopian capital by improving hotel services to the expected guests. According to him, Preparations have been going on for the last six months in order to inject creative ideas and improvements into the tourism and hotel sectors in Addis with short and long term expected benefits as far as boosting the number of visitors and the services they get from hotels as dual objectives are concerned.

"We have a long experience in accommodating guests to annual AU



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conferences...In fact we have a 35-year experience in providing hotel accommodations to high-level guests and visitors." The chairman of the Addis Ababa hotels association was quoted as saying. According to him, the latest initiatives might include organizing visits to the guests in and around Addis Ababa's satellite towns like Bishoftu and Adama, among others, as well as creating good impressions about the capital and its environs so that the guests would convey their positive impressions to their nearest and dearest back home and encourage new visitors to visit our tourism sites.

The face if Addis Ababa is changing fast as new tourism outlets are being added to the older sites, like the Ethnological Museum, Meskel Square, St. George Church and the National Museum of Ethiopia. These are historic sites located in Ethiopian capital where the country's past is kept in order to hand it over to new generations. These are also concrete and tangible proofs of our country's ancient glories and achievements that are still serving to cement our common identity and inspire new generations to greater deeds.

According to the local website TripAdvisor, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia 2023; Best Places to Visit, "Sometimes referred to as the capital of Africa, Addis Ababa is a buzzing hub economic, social and political activity and home to such notable offices as the African Union and the United Nations Economic commission for Africa. The diversity of its people is reflected in the many churches mosques and museums, including the Ethiopian National Museum which houses the fossilized skeleton of Dinkinesh, or Lucy, the Australopithecine discovered in

the area in the 1970s."

According to another information, "Addis Ababa is the world's third highest capital city at 2,665 meters above sea level. It is a city with a temperate climate that has not yet lost its original features to modernization with its attendant noises and chaos. It has not entirely lost its old bucolic nature, particularly on Sundays when the streets are engulfed in eerie calm and pedestrians are less hectic than ordinary days while hotels, bars and recreational facilities are unusually busy with fun-loving people who frequent the famous beer and raw meat joints where meat is eaten in the Ethiopian way: raw, peppered and minced, downed with mouthfuls of foaming draft beer.

Addis Ababa also boasts of several must-go sites such as the biggest open air market in Africa known by its Italian name as Mercato that was established by the fascist Italians who occupied the country for some five years in 1933 and established a separate market place for the indigenous population according to the racist policies of the colonial administration in place at that time. Mercato has now become perhaps the biggest modern Market place in Africa with state of the arts buildings housing large malls where the foreigners and local shoppers brush shoulders, enjoying the services of local restaurants and cafes as well as other recreational outlets.

Mercato is a must go to place for Africans who visited it a long time to see how ago and do not have any idea how much it has changed now. Revisiting Mercato would not only be a moment of nostalgia but also an opportunity to see how the market and Addis Ababa at large have changed with time.

The Holy Trinity Church or Saint George Cathedral is a historic site where Emperor Menelik started his victorious journey to Adwa to face the invading Italian forces at the northern Ethiopian locality of Adwa where the decisive battles took place. There is a new building under construction a little farther from the cathedral as a reminiscence to 'point zero' of the long and difficult journey to Adwa, more than 100 km to the north. Nearby Piazza is also a historic place in its own right as the first modern boutiques, restaurants and cinema halls were built there during the Italian occupation and after.

North of Addis Ababa is emerging a new and state of the art park that has a Disneyland look and amazing facilities that have already given the old forest area a new attraction and a gathering and recreation center for Addis Ababans who flock to the place every weekends to savor the fresh air of the mountainous site as well as enjoy the sports facilities and the modern restaurants, that cater for local and foreign clientele.

Addis Ababa is also home to some of the best hotels in Africa with the classic Hilton and Sheraton hotels and new additions like

Marriot Regency, Yod Abyssinia traditional restaurant, 2000 Habesha Restaurant as well as the historic Tomoca café where the best Ethiopian coffee is served and fashionable residents of Addis as well the literati and business people meet to discuss the latest trends in culture and politics, sipping Tomoca's coffee at an old Italian-era building where the legendary Ethiopian smell of coffee is floating in and out of it night and day.

A short trip by modern taxis or buses would take visitors down to the Rift Valley town of Adama via Bishoftu town or 'the town of the seven lakes' where the annual Irreechaa festival in honor of Waqqa or the God of water, light and fertility, takes place. Both towns are budding and assuming new features that developers have invested to give them the services and amenities of bigger cities like Addis further north. These are towns that any visitor to Addis can see within an hour or two and enjoy the warm weather and the lakeside hotels with super-modern facilities.

According to the same TripAdvisor website Addis Ababa is great and famous for having a full day tour with hotel pick up and drop off, for enjoying Ethiopian food and drink culture, for a day trip to Debre Libanos monastery and for its inner city tours, among other things. Any visitor who has more time to spend on their hands, they can perhaps travel down to the picturesque Omo Valley and go to wildlife safaris at the Awash National Park and the Semien Mountains.

Addis Ababa is of course the departure points for all these and other tour areas and the positive impressions visitors or tourists get in the capital are bound to influence their moods as well as their decisions to go north or south according to their preferences. What make Addis Ababa so unique are not only its facilities as a 'conference city' but also the fact that almost every country on earth is represented by represented by its embassy, some of which are more than a century old while others were established in the last ten or so years. That is also what makes Addis Ababa the political capital of Africa that has remained so since the Organization of African Unity (the current African Union) was established back in the 1960s.

Addis Ababa is indeed a modernizing city but also a city whose tourism potentials are far from being adequately exploited. Traditionally, tourism development is considered to be the business of government institutions but this is far from the truth. The private sector needs to be increasingly engaged in the sector as it has started to do in recent years with the construction of hotels and other tourism and recreational facilities. As most hotel developers often say, the Addis Ababa and federal administrations need to provide various incentives to private developers so that tourism becomes one of the biggest if not the biggest income generating activities in the Ethiopian capital.

# Global Affairs

## The Climate Conversations

Climate change is a global problem that requires a global solution. However, negotiating a solution has been challenging due to several factors. One of the main reasons that recent COP Climate summits and other international climate talks have not been able to resolve climate change is that there is a lack of consensus among countries on how to address the issue. Developed countries, which have historically been the largest emitters of greenhouse gases, are often unwilling to take on significant emissions reductions or to provide financial assistance to developing countries to help them adapt to the effects of climate change.

Another significant barrier to progress on climate change is the need for more political will among leaders of countries. In some cases, leaders may not see climate change as a priority or may be reluctant to take on the economic and political costs of reducing emissions or investing in clean energy due to political reasons. Some countries may be influenced by powerful fossil fuel lobbies that push against climate action. Developed countries must be willing to take on more significant emissions reductions and provide financial assistance to developing countries to help them adapt to the effects of climate change. Developing countries, in turn, need to be willing to take on emissions reduction measures and invest in clean energy and other climate mitigation measures. This can happen through more effective multilateral negotiations such as United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), where all countries agree to set emissions reduction targets and support developing countries.

Bangladesh is located in the low-lying delta region of the Ganges, Brahmaputra, and Meghna rivers, making the country particularly susceptible to flooding and rising sea levels. Bangladesh is also prone to cyclones and other extreme weather events, which are becoming more frequent and severe due to climate change. The country has a long coastline, much of which is low-lying and vulnerable to flooding. As sea levels continue to rise, the risk of coastal flooding is increasing, devastatingly impacting the lives and livelihoods of the people in these areas. These events are causing widespread damage to homes and infrastructure and affecting the country's agricultural sector, a significant source of income for many people in Bangladesh. Many people in the coastal areas have lost their homes and livelihoods due to sea level rise and coastal flooding. They face food and water insecurity due to increased soil and water salinity.

Globally, rich countries can assist Bangladesh cope with climate change in several ways. One crucial way is by providing financial assistance to help the country adapt to the impacts of climate change. This may include funding for building sea walls and other flood protection infrastructure and programs to help people in coastal areas relocate to higher ground. Another way rich countries can help is by providing technical assistance



Credit: Mohammad Rakibul Hasan

*Climate conversations by world leaders are occurring worldwide but how much is changing ?*

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**Developed countries must be willing to take on more significant emissions reductions and provide financial assistance to developing countries to help them adapt to the effects of climate change**

to Bangladesh to develop and implement clean energy and other climate mitigation measures. This could include funding and expertise to help the country develop renewable energy sources such as solar and wind power, as well as to improve energy efficiency and to reduce emissions from the industrial and transportation sectors.

The Sundarbans forests, located in the coastal belt of Bangladesh, is one of the most vulnerable areas in the country to the impacts of climate change. The forests span over 10,000 square kilometers and are home to various plant and animal species, including the Royal Bengal tiger. Sea level rise is one of the most significant threats to the Sundarbans forest making it particularly susceptible to flooding and rising sea levels. According to a study by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, sea levels in the Bay of Bengal are projected to increase by up to 1 meter by the end of the century. This would devastate the Sundarban forests, as seawater would submerge large areas.

The impacts of climate change on the Sundarban forests are also likely to have knock-on effects on the people living in the surrounding areas. The forests are a significant source of livelihood for many people in the region, who rely on it for fishing, agriculture and other activities. As the forests are damaged by sea level rise and extreme weather events, these people will also be affected by food and water insecurity and the loss of their homes and livelihoods. Many people, who lost their homes and land to flooding, were forced to relocate to higher grounds.

The health impacts of climate change on people living around the Sundarban are also significant. As a result of sea level rise and increased flooding, many are at risk of waterborne diseases such as cholera

and diarrhea. Extreme weather events are accelerating salinity across the coastal belt of Bangladesh. Women are experiencing uterus cancers, infertility, and skin diseases, and men, too, are experiencing fertility problems and other health issues. Due to the loss of livelihoods and displacement, many people face food insecurity and malnutrition. In addition to these immediate impacts, climate change exacerbates the region's existing social and economic inequalities. People living in poverty and marginalized communities are disproportionately affected by climate change, as they have fewer resources to cope with the impacts and less access to services and support.

Climate change has led to a growing number of people migrating from these areas, searching for better opportunities and escaping the impacts of climate change. Most climate migrants from coastal belt areas of Bangladesh are moving to urban areas, such as the capital city of Dhaka and other major cities. These migrants often seek better job opportunities and access to services and support. However, many migrants face challenges in their new locations, such as a lack of affordable housing, discrimination, and limited access to services and support. The future is uncertain for those still living in coastal areas of Bangladesh and fighting the climate crisis. Many of the people living in these areas are among the country's most vulnerable and marginalized communities, making them particularly susceptible to the impacts of climate change. Climate conversations worldwide by world leaders and major organizations have been occurring every year. But they must see the severity of the situation for the people suffering and take concrete actions beyond being in a room to converse about the effects of climate change.

*Source (THE CONVERSATION)*



# Law & Politics

## Pretoria peace deal: Incontrovertible proof, living testimony of African wisdom

BY ADDISALEM MULAT

Unlike previous cessation of agreements signed in other African states, the African Union (AU) brokered Pretoria peace deal signed between the Ethiopia government and Tigray People Liberation Front (TPLF) continues to hold and deliver results in the shortest possible time.

The peace accord agreed under the auspicious of the continental bloc has been going on in the right direction in addition to drawing acclamation from the global community. The AU was credited not only for mediating the peace negotiation but for the successful effectuation of the deal. In fact, the resolve of the parties of the agreement so far has been remarkable in the course of the implementation period. Previously, ceasefires and peace deal break in conflict-ridden countries due to violations by conflicting parties.

The Pretoria peace accord however perfectly rings to the continental bloc's catchall phrase, "African solutions to African problems." If AU continues getting to the bottom of African problems in its own way devoid of the interference of third parties, the continental bloc beyond a shadow of a doubt will play a huge role in curtailing conflicts and violence unfolding in every corner of Africa. In light of the present situation, besides winning the hearts and minds of the wider international community, the peace implementation has been in full swing.

Due to the unreserved stance of the federal government to fully effectuate the peace deal peace has been taking root in the northern part of the country.

Even though some doomsayers went to great lengths to downplay the AU-brokered peace deal by fabricating barrages of fake stories, the peace implementation has been heading in the right direction.

Pessimists have sustained giving discredit to the role the continental bloc has been playing in making peace happen in the northern part of the country.

Although Ethiopia's opponents at all hours of the day and night give a lower profile to the role of the African Union, the federal government and TPLF have been smoothing the path of the peace agreement. The positive moves taken by the two parties in putting the peace implementation into effect have been serving as a springboard for the continental bloc.

On top of that, the AU-brokered peace deal can solve its problem in its own way devoid of the interference of third parties and dictation of backseat drivers.

In a similar vein, the peace agreement signed under the auspicious of AU has thrown a wet blanket on the efforts of Ethiopia's adversaries working many a time and oft to back the country into uncharted waters.

Some entities that are not happy about the peace implementation have been fully



engaged in besmirching the AU-brokered peace deal.

In the current circumstances, quite a lot of bodies have been fully determined inputting the peace deal agreement into effect and ensuring lasting peace in all quarters of the northern part of the country.

Needless to say, as peace is a cornerstone for everything in the world, the whole thing following the peace deal has set best example for resolving disputes and restoring peace and tranquility.

With the peace deal sprouting all over the country, Ethiopia has set in motion bringing home the bacon and safeguarding the unity and territorial integrity of the country. If truth be told, the peace agreement has been oiling the wheels of restoration of social infrastructure and delivery of humanitarian assistance.

Albeit some entities say negative things about the ongoing circumstances on the ground, the federal government and TPLF have been accelerating the peace implementation in accordance with the peace accord. But no matter what evil mongers says about the positive developments, the northern part of the country is already returning to normalcy.

Given the current circumstances, Ethiopia's adversaries that are dissatisfied with the cessation-of-hostilities agreement and its implementation have been spewing negative information about the positive developments. But no matter what they say, the incumbent in the present circumstances has sustained accelerating the delivery of humanitarian assistance by working in collaboration with the federal government. Reasoning from this fact, civilians in the northern part of the country have kicked-started breathing a sigh of relief.

It is public knowledge that in the present circumstances, the federal government has been paving the way for the restoration of social infrastructure and delivery of humanitarian assistance.

Discontented with the AU-brokered peace deal signed between the federal government and TPLF, some groups have been sparing no efforts to drag through the mud the ongoing positive achievements. No matter how hard

they attempted to throw cold water on the positive achievements, accomplishing the desired goal turned out to be a wild goose chase as a result of the unflinching stance of the people of Ethiopia and the federal government.

The AU-brokered Cessation of Hostilities Agreement (CoHA) between the government and TPLF demonstrates Africa's ability to solve internal problems thereby protecting its interest and bringing inclusive economic progress, experts in the issue said.

Bahir Dar University Political Science and International Relations Assistant Professor Yayew Genet told the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) that the ability to solve internal problems independently would have a significant impact in creating strong unity among the people of Ethiopia. The truce also has the ability to ensure sustainable peace and development in the country.

Likewise, resolving problems in accordance with the political culture of the country should ensure inclusive growth and also avoid external interference and pressure. The situation would also open the space for promoting the political culture and ability of countries to solve their problems by internal mechanisms.

The academician further noted that the CoHA aligns with AU's vision of seeking African solutions to African problems. The government of Ethiopia has, in practical terms, demonstrated its commitment to resolving the conflict peacefully through the auspices of the continental body.

"Ethiopia believes that the principle of 'seeking African solutions to African problems' shall dictate the policies of those involved in the conflict and those advocating for a negotiated peace."

As to him, most of Africa's problems are different from the rest of the world and addressing those problems requires special mechanisms. Accordingly, solving the issue needs indigenous and continental approach.

For Political Science and International Relations Lecturer Degu Asres (Ph.D.), resolving internal problems by own capacity would have a significant impact on building a strong continent and a self-confident

country. Similarly, it strengthens unity and cooperation among citizens thereby contributing to the development of the country.

Sharing the above rationale, the renowned economist Costantinos Berhetesfa (Ph.D.) stated that solving issues independently will have a significant impact on creating a strong economy and open space for new technological innovations. Similarly, such capability eases the burdens extorted on countries by creating strong economies.

Resolving international problems free from intervention and interface on the other hand creates strong unity among the people, and also protects the national interest of the country. The condition also creates a competitive economy which is crucial in averting external pressure, the scholar emphasized.

The Cessation of Hostilities Agreement (CoHA) has revitalized Ethiopia's commendable role in seeking African solution for African problems, experts in the area said, expressing Africans proud in Ethiopia's success in this regard.

History Assistant Professor Ayele Beker told local media that Ethiopia has proved Africans' capability to managing their problems by own capacity and without the need to third parties interference. Ethiopia has pursued its own technique to resolve the northern conflict peacefully thereby attesting Africans' ability to solve their problems by themselves.

The sole agenda of Ethiopians is defending the sovereignty and territorial integrity of their country the people is well known by the world for the noble sacrifice paid to fend off aggressors putting minor differences aside.

It was evident that Africans stand in unison and opposed the unwarranted interference and pressure some interest groups expert during the north Ethiopia conflict and expressed strong support the success of the CoHA, the historian added.

Social Sciences Expert Zelalem Gizachew said for his part that, patriotism and resisting foreign interference are among Ethiopians' all time strengths that have been passed from one generation to the other. "Africans are proud of the conclusion of CoHA, which is a historic event for Ethiopia as well as the whole continent."

Ethiopia has been hugely engaged in encouraging fellow African brothers and sisters to solve their problems by own capacity and employ African institutions. The country's trust on African negotiators conflict-resolving mechanisms is also an exemplary act. Ethiopia has been struggling for independence of African countries as well to prevent unnecessary pressures. There is a lesson for African brothers and sisters to apply the same thing to seek own solutions for their problems. The heroic activities of citizens are one of the truths that Ethiopians have developed time to time, the academician emphasized.

# International

## Ugandan exports to Rwanda flourish on food supplies, raw materials

The EastAfrican- Rwanda's appetite for imports from Uganda grew to a record 60.55 million USD in the fourth quarter of 2022 from 15.64 million USD in the first nine months to September as Kigali turned to her regional neighbours for food supplies and raw materials.

Latest Bank of Uganda trading data shows exports, which had stagnated in single-digit millions of dollars between January and September 2022, grew to an average of 20 million USD monthly between October-December.

Ugandan economist Fred Muhumuza attributed the growth to lower harvests in Rwanda that necessitated food imports.

"The importer ... has to import a lot of food to restock. In future, we might see export levels reduce," he told local media in Uganda.

Highlights published in the East African Cross Border Trade Bulletin by the Food Security and Nutrition Working Group (FSNWG) show that Rwandan authorities were under pressure to provide adequate food and also ensure sufficient supply for raw material, especially for breweries.

The FSNWG data shows Rwanda breweries



imported 3,991 tonnes of sorghum from Uganda, 2,065 tonnes of maize and 2,866 tonnes of rice from Tanzania.

However, small scale cross-border traders – who used to dominate the informal trade business – complain they have not fully benefited from the reopening of the border in January last year.

Previously most of the informal trade at the Gatuna-Katuna border was in foodstuff such as maize flour, rice, Irish potatoes and beans. But the traders say this has stopped

because Rwanda now demands for licences to bring in goods.

The license requirement has also drawn complaints from bigger exporters.

KanakulyaMulondo, the secretary for security, environment and mediation at the Kampala City Traders Association, said traders remain skeptical about exporting to Rwanda.

"We remain cagey about the Kigali export market because our push to be compensated

for losses when the border was closed in 2019 fell on deaf ears," he said.

The association had sued Rwanda at the East African Court of Justice for closing the border. The court ruled that the closure of the border and restriction of Rwandan nationals from accessing Uganda was in violation of the East African Treaty rules of free movement across member states.

The association says some Ugandan traders now prefer markets in DR Congo, South Sudan and Burundi. Bank of Uganda data shows that in the region, DR Congo remains the biggest informal export market for Uganda, closely followed by Kenya, South Sudan, Tanzania and Rwanda respectively.

Before the closure of the border in 2019, Ugandan exports to Rwanda – predominantly cement and food – totaled more than 211million USD in 2018, according to World Bank figures, while Rwanda exported 13million USD worth of goods to Uganda.

John Lwere, the exports executive at the Uganda Export Promotion Board, said trade was just picking up after the reopening of the border a year ago.

## Tanzania floats East Africa's largest freshwater vessel

The EastAfrican- Tanzania has floated East Africa's largest-ever domestically manufactured fresh water passenger and cargo ship, the MV MwanzaHapaKaziTu, on Lake Victoria.

The ship, launched at the Mwanza South Port on February 12, can carry 1,200 passengers, 400 tonnes of cargo, 20 small vehicles and three trucks. It is currently 82 percent complete.

"Up to this point of float-out, we can say the ship is complete and the remaining 18 percent is just minor installations that will be done in less than four months," said Eric Hamissi, the Chief Executive Officer of Tanzania's Marine Services Company Limited.

Hamissi explained that the next phase includes finishing internal aesthetics such as paintwork, fixing air conditioners, beds, and toilets and installing navigation equipment.

The ship's construction began in January 2019 and was led by two South Korean companies, Gas Entec and KangNam Corporation. The 92.6 metre-long, 17-metre wide and 20-metre-high vessel will cost the taxpayers over Tsh100 billion (43 millionUSD).

"Until now, the contractor has been paid more than 93.8 billion by the government, and when he completes the work, the remaining amount will be paid," said Hamissi.

Upon completion, the ship will weigh 3,500 tones.

MV Mwanza's design includes an elevator section for people with disabilities, a clinic to provide health services, a disco and facilities for a music band to entertain passengers.

The ship is expected to ply Lake Victoria,

providing a key transport and trade network between Jinja and Portbell in Uganda, Kisumu in Kenya, and Mwanza, Bukoba, Kemono and Musoma in Tanzania.

The vessel will have a VVIP section for national leaders as well as regular VIP facilities including a first-class section with a capacity for 60 people, business class for 100 people and second class for 200 people.

"The last will be the economy class which will be carrying 834 passengers and, in this class, passengers will enjoy a modern ambience with maximum relaxation, enabling them to tour comfortably," said Hamissi.

The Tanzanian government expects the ship to stimulate economic growth, especially after the 2026 railway project (SGR) completion from Dar es Salaam to Mwanza.

Tanzania's Deputy Minister for Works and Transport AtupeleMwakibete said that the ship would help "open new markets inside and outside the country by starting new trips that will help facilitate commercial, business, tourism and private trips".

Tanzania is also renovating the MV Umoja, a cargo vessel, the MT Nyangumi, for carrying petroleum products and the MT Ukerewe.

Kenya officially re-launched the refurbished MV Uhuru 1 in May 2021 after the project stalled for over 15 years.

Since it resumed operations, the MV Uhuru, with a 1,260-tonne capacity, has transported over 50 million litres of petroleum products.

The success of the Uhuru saw the government order a new vessel, MV Uhuru II, from Kenya Shipyard Limited (KSL) in Kisumu.

The 1,800-tonne, 100-meter vessel, with



an estimated capacity of 2 million litres of crude oil per trip, is the first ship to be made in Kenya by Kenyans. Dutch firm DamenDamen Construction Company, which has shipyards in South Africa and Egypt, provided consultancy services during the ship's construction.

The 19.2 millionUSD MV Uhuru II vessel was floated in August 2022 and is expected to start operations in May 2023.

KSL has received six new orders for the construction of ships from Tanzania and Uganda and another 11 orders from local firms.

Uganda also shipped its maiden fuel cargo from the Port of Kisumu using a newly-launched tanker, KabakaMutebi 11, in December 2022.

The 4.5 million liters of fuel ferried aboard that ship marked the revival of a water transport corridor between Kenya and Uganda. The MV Mwanza is expected to provide a further boost to burgeoning trade across Africa's great lakes.

"With the vessel's full utilization, fuel prices will reduce, resulting in fair commodity prices in the country," Geoffrey Balamaga, the assistant commissioner of field services, told Uganda's Independent, in an interview.

A cubic meter of fuel (1,000 liters) currently costs 40 USD to transport to Uganda by road, compared to a maximum of 25 USD by ship.

In 2021, the Ugandan government also commissioned the transportation of petroleum products aboard the MV Kaawa from Mwanza, Tanzania to Port Bell in Kampala. Uganda's Mahathi Infra Uganda Ltd is busy with the construction of three more vessels.

In 2019, the East African Community, at a joint ministerial meeting on strategy for Lake Victoria integrated transport program, revealed that the Lake Victoria's transport infrastructure has the potential of generating 60 billion USD worth of trade annually but currently only realizes around 6 billion USD for the three countries combined.

# Planet Earth



Photo 1:- Guna community reserved site

## Conserving the “Guna Mountain Community Reserve Site” in a sustainable manner

BY SOLOMON YIRDAW

If you call Ethiopia the “water tower of Africa,” Guna Mountain community reserved place, the source of 41 rivers and 77 springs, is one of the five highest angel lands in the world. Gashaw Eshetu, the Amhara National Regional State Environment and Forest Protection Office public relations head, stated that the strict area has been established by the State Council declaration number 180/2008 and is being protected and taken care of.

This community-reserve site, which spans over 4000 hectares and borders 11 kebeles in Gunabegemdr, Farta, and Este woredas in South Gondar Zone, is home to more than 41 species of mammals, 143 species of birds, more than 96 plant species, and numerous biodiversity resources. Gashaw, stated that it is a community-reserved site; however, he explained that due to the increasing illegality in the area, it is not being protected and developed as it should be “It is therefore necessary to work with the community in the area so that the area can get out of the problem of survival and be properly maintained and developed to become a source of tourism.” “For this, we are working in collaboration with the relevant stakeholders,” he said.

PGashaw told us that due to the anarchy that occurred in the area, it was suffering great damage and the diversity of life in it was becoming less and less. There are many problems at the community-reserved site of Mount Guna, and the main one is the wrong perception that the local community will not consider the long-term benefits and will affect my temporary benefits.

He said that when the community reserve site was developed, the people lost the area that they used for grazing and farming, and the question of alternative livelihood reform is another area where the head of public relations says that the authority is carrying out many activities to solve the problems. Representatives from the local community, the South Gondar zone governor, the head of the Prosperity Party office, religious leaders,



Photo 2: “Jebera” endemic plant discovered only in Ethiopia

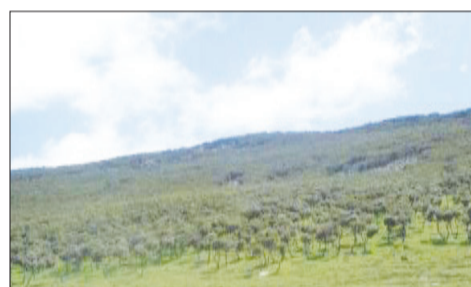


Photo 3 :- “Asta” endemic plant discovered only in Ethiopia

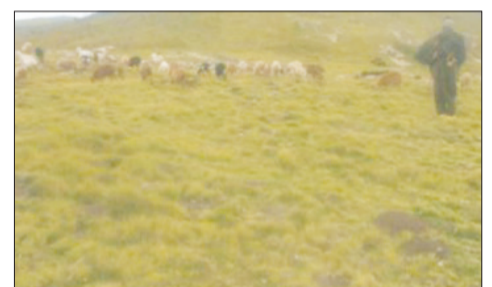


Photo 4 :- “Guasa” grass endemic grass discovered only in Ethiopia



Photo 5:- Walia Ibex



Photo 6:- Red fox



Photo 7:- Golden Backed Woodpecker



Photo 8:- Chilada baboon



Photo 9:- Yellow Fronted Parrot



Photo 10:- Black Headed Siskin

leaders of the four woredas, and 11 kebele leaders met with scholars from Debreabor, Gondar, and Bahirdar universities on January 18/2015 in Debreabor. Simultaneously, there are brief discussions with the local community. Gashaw explains that this is being done to remind the community that when the area is developed sustainably, the community will benefit from the tourists who come to visit the area.

Furthermore, the authority has budgeted over 1.5 million Birr per year to protect the Guna Mountain community site by employing 64 permanent and temporary scouts and guards. They informed us that the authority is constantly raising awareness in order to reassure the community about the importance of sustainably reserving the site. In response

to the community’s question, the head added that we should consider a livelihood option until the area begins to earn money from tourists. Because the people are involved in a lot of animal breeding activities, when the area is fenced off, the investors must open a fodder processing factory in the area, and both the people and the investors can use it. Concerned stakeholders from the woreda to the regional level must contribute, and people can sell the products they are currently producing and benefit from infrastructure such as road, lights, clean drinking water, and various organizations such as cooperatives and unions. The Forest Protection Authority stated that it will improve the effectiveness of the activities being carried out to develop and protect the Guna Mount Community

Area in a sustainable manner.

Finally, Mount Guna is a 4000-hectare community reserve that feeds Lake Tana, Africa’s second-largest lake, and the Nile basin. The head urged scholars in the field, including those at higher education institutions, to do their part by raising community awareness in the area to protect and develop the community reserved area, expanding basic alternative methods of living, and conducting research and research activities useful for the community reserved site.

It is known that the Amhara region has 13 community protected areas and national parks, 11 of which are managed by the Amhara regional government and two by the federal government.