



# The Ethiopian Herald

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## EDA

making strides to involve Diaspora in National Dialogue

• Paves way to active peace, business participation

BY YESUF ENDRIS

ADDIS ABABA - The Ethiopian Diaspora Association (EDA) called on the Diaspora community to support the successful conduct of the National Dialogue and the overall peace building processes in their home country.

The EDA has been partnering with relevant stakeholders to ensure the Diaspora's active involvement in national agendas notably in the National Dialogue, Association Deputy President Demeke Negasa told the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA).

See EDA making... page 3



Photo : MoFA

## UNDP unveils Ethiopia among Early Warning Initiative beneficiaries

• Demeke lauds Guterres's Early Warnings for All initiative

BY STAFF REPORTER

ADDIS ABABA - The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) announced that Ethiopia, Antigua, Barbuda, Cambodia, Chad, Ecuador, Fiji, and Somalia

will receive technical and financial support from the GCF and 'Early Warnings for All' partners to develop their own projects to mitigate climate change impact through implementing early warning systems.

During the UN Climate Ambition Summit

held on September 20, UNDP expressed that an initial injection of 1.3 million USD from the Green Climate Fund (GCF) will be used to kick-start a much larger initiative aimed

See UNDP unveils... page 3

## Air Algerie to start maiden flight to Ethiopia today

BY GIRMACHEW GASHAW

ADDIS ABABA - Air Algerie will conduct its maiden flight to Addis Ababa today, according to Director of African Affairs with the ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Onboard the maiden flight will be Algerian Minister of Transport as well as other Algerian Aviation Officials, the Director

See Air Algerie... page 3

## Forum weights regional approach towards managing security in Red Sea

• IFA holds first regional consultative forum

BY TSEGAYE TILAHUN

ADDIS ABABA - The growing presence of non-state actors in the Red Sea region necessitates security cooperation and alliances among states, an Ethiopian high-level military officer said.

See Forum weights... page 3



Lt. Gen. Alemshet Degefe



Mesafint Tefera

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# News



Photo: MoFA

Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Affairs Minister Demeke Mekonnen while discussing with Andrew Mitchell, UK's Minister for Development and Africa

## European countries show keenness to upgrade ties with Ethiopia

BY STAFF REPORTER

**ADDIS ABABA** - European countries are expressing enthusiasm to upgrade bilateral relations with Ethiopia in the area of mutual concerns.

On the sideline of the 78th UNGA, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Affairs Minister Demeke Mekonnen has conferred with representatives from UK, Ireland and Croatia about ways of leapfrogging the bilateral relations to reach new heights.

In his discussion with Andrew Mitchell, UK's Minister for Development and Africa, Demeke has learnt UK's desire of scaling up the diplomatic ties with Ethiopia to a strategic partnership level.

Andrew Mitchell told Demeke that this measure would help to further strengthen relations in trade, investment security, and immigration, among others, the information obtained from Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) indicated.

He also said Ethiopia is invited to attend the Africa Investment Summit to take place in April 2024 in the UK for its critical place and role on the continent.

Welcoming the invitation, Demeke expressed that Ethiopia considers the UK as an important development and humanitarian partner.

Likewise, Ethiopia welcomed the decision of the Republic of Ireland to resume strengthening bilateral ties, as the foreign ministers of the two nations met in New York on the sideline of the 78th UNGA.

It is the right moment to close the past chapter, normalize relations, and reactivate cooperation in various fields, said the Irish Foreign Minister Micheal Martin while discussing with Demeke.

"Ethiopia is important, and Ireland works for the long-term mutual benefit of our people," he noted.

Welcoming the commitment to resume cooperation, Demeke called on Ireland to support the reconstruction and rehabilitation program in Ethiopia.

Meanwhile, Demeke Mekonnen commended Croatia's decision to open mission in Addis Ababa as he conferred with his Croatian counterpart, Gordon Grlic, about the peace building efforts in Ethiopia and ways of deepening bilateral ties.

He also expressed Ethiopia's commitment to strengthening cooperation with Croatia on mutually important regional and global issues.

The Croatian Foreign Minister on his part noted that his government is keen to support Ethiopia. The two have agreed to take the diplomatic partnership to the next level by establishing a Joint Ministerial Commission.

## Telebirr ensures financial inclusion, digitization: Ethio Telecom

BY MISGANAW ASNAKE

**ADDIS ABABA** – Ethio Telecom said that its mobile money service, 'Telebirr' is improving financial inclusion as well as fostering the digital transformation of the country's mobile financial services.

Ethio Telecom CEO, Frehiwot Tamiru said that telebirr mobile financial services is transforming the nation's mobile finance, ensuring the inclusion of financially excluded and underserved segment of the society while bridging the gap in country's digitalization efforts.

It is realizing the digital transformation of the country and simplifying the lives of individuals, enabling businesses and public enterprises to digitalize their services to increase their productivity and efficiency.

"The Enterprise launched its Mobile Money service 'telebirr' in May 2021 to address the financially excluded and underserved segment of Ethiopian society and it has become the backbone of Ethiopia's financial inclusion. As the first mobile money platform, it acquired 36 million subscribers within just two years and transacted worth over 1 trillion Birr," she said.

In one year, over 2.7 million citizens have gotten six billion birr micro loans while over 880,000 customers saved over 5.2 billion birr using the platform, she added.

Telebirr has 136 master agents, 110,000 agents, 60,000 merchants, and 23 banks working in tandem.

Some 521 major telebirr integrators have been engaged to integrate merchant platforms across a wide network of retail and business partners, allowing customers in supermarkets, companies in entertainment and hospitals, pharmacies, and cafes to pay service charges using telebirr.



Frehiwot Tamiru

Since its launch telebirr offers different services from basic mobile wallet services to the enhanced mobile digital financial services. By using telebirr with a mobile phone, people can make deposits, pay bills, send money to family and friends, remit money internationally, get instant micro-credit, she noted.

Ethio telecom desires to facilitate the digitalization of industries such as education, agriculture, health, lifestyle, and more. It offers customers a one-stop shop for all of their financial service needs, the CEO stated.

Ethio telecom is engaging with the National Bank of Ethiopia to address the regulatory challenges associated with mobile payments. For example, the transaction limit should be eased so that customers get the flexibility to do more transactions with the convenience of a mobile connection, Frehiwot added.

## AAU embarks transition to autonomy

BY ESSEYE MENGISTE

**ADDIS ABABA** - Addis Ababa University (AAU) has prepared and implemented a plan that will allow its transition to autonomy to be properly managed and regulated, the Acting President announced.

AAU Acting President Samuel Kifle (PhD) told reporters yesterday that the university has prepared and implemented a plan that will allow the transition to autonomy to be managed properly.

Accordingly, student admission, resource and staff management will continue following the previous rules and regulations for the time being. When the work of drafting and approving the laws is completed by the relevant body, it will be replaced by the new law.

Mentioning learning, teaching, and research and community service will remain the



Photo : Agape Giyon

Samuel Kifle (PhD)

main missions of the university, Samuel indicated the transition will be carried out with special attention. The university will engage in income generation activities so that it could carry out its mission effectively

and efficiently.

Fundraising is not just from students and a large share of money collected from research and study, alliances with industries, and with former students. A convenient administrative and management system will be established and there will also be an emphasis on making AAU where qualified teachers and researchers can choose.

"There will be no work to convert AAU into a commercial institution. A study of students' fees will be done and reasonable fees will be implemented. Public universities transition into autonomy should start at AAU and experience will be gathered and expanded to other universities. For this, it is necessary to build a suitable infrastructure and resources," the acting president elaborated.

According to him, there is a need to create competent institutions and to make the university where qualified students study, where teachers teach effectively, where

effective research is conducted, and where qualified leaders lead.

"In order to create this capacity, it is necessary to build an up-to-date teaching-learning infrastructure. Resources are essential to pay teachers and staff well and use up-to-date technology."

The current level of resources in universities is not sufficient to attract international students and for this reason, universities should generate and use resources in addition to government subsidies without compromising their basic mission. The allocation of the government budget will gradually decrease.

Samuel pointed out that the transition to autonomy plays a significant role in ensuring academic freedom and ensuring the freedom of generating and using resources. It also entails the freedom to manpower and property management, and to establish a system for choosing leaders through competition.



# News

## Office to raise over 1.5 bln Birr for Abbay Dam

BY MESERET BEHAILU

**ADDIS ABABA** - The Grand Abbay Dam Coordination Project Office disclosed yesterday that it is working on collecting over 1.5 billion Birr this fiscal year.

In connection with the successful completion of the 4th round Abbay dam filling, the office conducted a national fundraising campaign with stakeholders under the theme: "I renew my promise to complete my dam." The campaign will continue to raise 500 million Birr to 700 million Birr in the upcoming 30 days.

Upon the launching of fundraising campaign, Office Deputy General Director, Fikert Tamir said that the office has been carrying out various activities in collaboration with various stakeholders such as Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA), Development Bank of Ethiopia (DBE), Commercial Bank of Ethiopia (CBE), and Ethiopian Electric Power (EEP.) particularly, DBE and CBE play significant role in reducing the bond shortage by distributing from Federal to locality/Kebele level in the country.



Photo - Eyob Teferi

Fikert Tamir

As to her, the main purpose of the campaign is encouraging the fundraising, increasing stakeholders' integration, and motivating the people to finalize the ongoing project. Over the past over 12 years, more than 18.4 billion Birr was collected from people till last July. It had also gained 1.44 billion Birr from purchasing bonds and gifts as well as 8100 A SMS solely during last Ethiopian year.

She further stated that 50 to 60 billion Birr required to finalize the overall construction of the grand project hereafter. Therefore, Ethiopians should continue exerting effort

through various mechanisms.

"Fundraising platform was established in the name of 'It's my Dam and it's my GERD' aiming at contributing from 5 USD to the ongoing mega project -Abbay Dam. Likewise, Millennium Bond is the other mechanism of fundraising lead by Ethiopian electric power and the MoFA," she added.

She called up on the media to play its part using various media in due course of fighting against external diplomatic pressure, encouraging society's participation, filling the information gap, and the likes.

DBE's Capital Marketing and Resource Mobilization Head Dawit Amare on his part said that administering the bond and distributing to the stakeholders is among the tasks of the bank. Over 16 billion Birr was collected from financial institutions over the past over 12 years.

As to him, worth of 3.3 billion Birr coupons are being distributed across the country at present whilst everybody can purchase the bond from the nearest financial institutions like bank and micro finance. He remembered that DBE collected 1.1 billion Birr last year.

## Forum weights...

The Institute of Foreign Affairs (IFA) in collaboration with the Ethiopian National Defense Forces (ENDF) War College held yesterday the- first-of-its-kind regional consultative forum on Red Sea Security dynamics.

Opening the conference, an Advisor to the ENDF Chief- of-Staff, Let. Gen. Alemshet Degefe stated that the Red Sea's strategic significance draws an intensified military interest among state and no-state actors far away from the region.

Since the strategic importance of the region grows, there are increasing security threats besides the growing job-economy projections and there is also the risk of military rivalries and confrontation between key regional and international actors.

The presence of non-state actors, piracy, cross border criminality, spreading radicalism, extremism and terrorism has also been challenging the proper functioning of states in the region, the military officer stressed.

"The situation requires security cooperation and alliance more than ever before. It also entails a sense of urgency and continuing commitment and cooperation across the region. Such kind of strategic high- level discussion could help to maintain momentum."

The IFA Deputy Executive Director Mesafint Tefera said for his part that for the last few years, the security landscape of the Red Sea region has been reshaped enormously due to various factors. Military rivalries, competition over resources, spread of protest movements and the potential for confrontation between regional and international actors are among the pressing challenges the region has been facing.

Also, a looming threat from non-state actors' involvement in human trafficking, cross border criminality, extremism, and terrorism have also made regional dialogue and cooperation crucial.

The IFA organized this consultative forum to achieve three main goals such as to raise awareness, enhance security interdependence and to promote collaboration among states. "We have an opportunity to transform the region into a beacon of peace and stability and prosperity," Mesafint remarked.

## UNDP unveils Ethiopia among...

at delivering 157 million USD from the GCF and partner governments to achieve universal early warning for all.

UNDP and its partners appealed for other donors to join forces, growing the initiative beyond the first group of the aforementioned beneficiary countries, the information from the UNDP website indicated.

Early Warnings for All is a goal set by the UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres to ensure universal early warning systems coverage by 2027. It is believed to ensure everyone on Earth is protected from hazardous weather, water, and climate events through life-saving early warning systems.

Early Warning Systems are effective and proven tools to save lives however, those nations that have contributed least to the

climate crisis lack coverage. This will require unprecedented levels of coordination and collaboration, said Selwin Hart, UN Secretary-General's Special Advisor on Climate Action and Just Transition.

"The power of science and technology to predict disasters is yet another demonstration of humanity's ability to confront climate change. Yet these vital early warning tools remain out of reach for too many," UNDP Administrator Achim Steiner said.

He believed that this new initiative will help to advance the UN Secretary-General's bold vision whereby everyone, everywhere can benefit from Early Warning Systems by 2027. "We invite partners and donors to join us in mobilizing the support needed to make this ambitious initiative a reality," he

noted.

Attending the Summit, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Demeke Mekonnen stressed the importance of increased international cooperation to facilitate essential coordination, collaboration, and financial support to develop efficient and effective early warning systems at the national, regional, and global levels.

He also commended the UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres for proposing the initiative of 'Early Warning for All' which designed to ensure that everyone on Earth is protected from climate change effects. The initiative is also intended link participating countries with international institutions for sustainable financing and technical support.

## Air Algeria to start...

Ambassador Fisseha Shawl told *The Ethiopian Herald*.

Fisseha said the flight that connects Addis Ababa with Algiers is outcome of the initiative by the leaders of the two countries. So far the two African cities were linked via

Istanbul, Cairo or Paris.

This will improve the people to people relations, business and investment activities between the two counties as there are a lot of opportunities that the two countries can exchange, Fisseha noted.

Africa's largest airline, Ethiopian Airlines will also start flight to the Algerian Capital in the near future; Fisseha said adding that the linkage of magreb states and north Africa like Libya, Tunisia, Morocco and Mauritania will help passengers from the region to connect with the rest of the world.

## EDA making strides to...

Demeke indicated the government understands that an integrated engagement of the Diaspora is important to conduct an inclusive National Dialogue that could successfully resolve the longstanding contentious issues. "The Diasporas' participation in peace building efforts is highly regarded since they are Ethiopia's diplomats in their respective countries of residence."

Ethiopian Diasporas' rich knowledge

and experience is a huge asset to resolve the existing and emerging challenges amicably and the former is also instrumental to help their home country to be respected in global stages.

He further noted that the EDA has been undertaking wide range of activities to create a favorable climate to the Diaspora's participation in trade and investment opportunities here. Accordingly, the legal and policy framework has been revised

to widely open the door to Diaspora businesses' engagement in priority sectors.

Due attention has been given to utilize the Diaspora's rich knowledge and expertise that they have been acquainted with in big corporations for Ethiopia's development. This kind of engagement will have an immense role in knowledge and technology transfer into Ethiopia and introduce new ways of doing things.

In related development, the deputy president mentioned Ethiopian Ambassador to Qatar Faisal Ali's recent deliberation with Diaspora members about the National Dialogue, peace and security issues.

During the discussion, the ambassador reportedly informed the community that Ethiopian Diasporas, irrespective of the places they are living, are entitled to participate in the dialogue.



# Opinion

## It is time for equal representation on international platforms

BY ABEBE WOLDEGIORGIS

The world's politics and economic issues on international platforms are characterized by the domination of the super power countries.

After the end of World War II in 1945, the allied powers become winners of the war. Following that, the inaugural ceremony of UN with other founding members took place in San-Francisco city, USA. Structurally, the UN has the general assembly and the members of the Security Council which were the winners of the World War II, USA, Great Britain, France and Former Soviet Union and later China joined the group that gave them veto power.

Veto power indicates that in decision making, the majority should prove its consent to the minority's decision which means one of the members of the Security Council has the right to reject the council's decision. This clearly indicates how the foundation of the UN is relied on injustice and for the last 70 years, the permanent members of the UN Security Council have entertained dominant power.

The developing countries have no equal power in decision making in very critical issues and only represented in the general assembly and their role in shaping the world since then has been negligible and subjected to the super power countries.

One of the objectives of the establishment of the UN, among others, is to bring peace to the world. But right after the end of World War II, the world was immersed in a cold war due to the ideological difference between the western world, led by the USA, and the eastern world, led by the former Soviet Union. The former pursued a capitalist economic system, while the latter later pursued a socialist economic system.

When the propaganda war exacerbated between them, western countries established the military pact known as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Eastern Block also established its own military pact known as "Warsaw" named after the capital city of Poland.

The political order created that time also reflected in the political equation of the developing countries. Some developing countries which pursue capitalist economic system developed strong ties with their former colonial masters and became pro-western countries while other countries which pursued the socialist economic system became pro socialist countries.

To withstand the mentioned pressure because of ideological differences in the world, developing countries established the G-77. The organization was established in 1955 known as the Non-Aligned Movement. The Movement was formally established in Belgrade, Yugoslavia, through the initiative of Yugoslav President Josip Broz Tito,

Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser and Ghanaian President Kwame Nkrumah. It is a forum of 120 countries, including Ethiopia that are not formally aligned with or against any major power. After the United Nations, it is the largest grouping of states worldwide.

The movement originated in the aftermath of the Korean war as an effort by some countries to counterbalance the rapid bipolarization of the world during the cold war, whereby two major powers formed blocs and embarked on a policy to pull the rest of the world into their orbits.

As mentioned above, one of these was the pro-Soviet socialist bloc whose best known alliance was the Warsaw pact, and the other the pro-American capitalist group of countries, many of which belonged to NATO. However, the role of the non aligned movement in upgrading the relevance of the developing countries in the world organization forum was negligible. Because all the members of the movement were either allied to the NATO or WARSAW Pacts and ultimately such stance weaken them and once again the western block emerged as a dominant power in the international political platform.

In the international organizations, agenda are crafted by powerful countries and the developing countries voices are not heard equally with their counter parts of rich countries.

The financial contribution of the advanced countries to the international organizations under the auspicious of the United Nations is higher than the developing ones and such situation enhanced the rich countries bargaining power in the international negotiations. Whenever agenda floured in the Security Council, any resolution will not be passed without their consent.

If the resolution seems against the interest of one member of the Security Council, that member can reject the resolution by using its veto power. On the other hand, super power countries use the UN platform as a tool to advance their interest. Whenever they want to impose economic sanction against a country regarded as their foe, they will make it through the UN.

The poor economic status of the developing countries also let them to be dominated by the mighty countries. Most of the developing nations, after the abolishment of colonialism, unable to bring peace and stability in their respective countries and such a situation again forced them to spend their time, resource and finance in maintaining peace.

Political upheaval and military coup has been common and still continued to be the feature of some African Countries.

After the end of the cold war in 1991, the western countries seemed dominant power but in the last twenty years, China has been

emerged as the second rich economy next to the United States and the power balance is shifting and some developing countries take this opportunity to exploit the new paradigm shift.

The Briton woods organizations such as IMF and the World Bank, which are manipulated by the western countries, highly influence the developing countries' macro-economic policies such as determining their local currency exchange rate against the Dollar, rescheduling debt payment, getting loan and aid. Hence, they should be alert to follow the new economic order.

Since poverty is rampant, poor countries are food insecure and survive only by the handouts of the western countries. These situations immensely reduce their bargaining power in the international platforms.

Political fragility in the part of the developing countries also makes their fate to be decided by foreign powers. Though 70 plus years have passed since their independence, there are about seven failed states in Africa and bringing peace in these countries in the near future can be said out of site.

The world trade arrangement also benefits more of rich countries while marginalizing the developing countries.

Africa still contributes only three percent to the world export but it imports three times more than it exports. This put the continent in to the disadvantageous position and in the negative trade balance.

The developing countries' economic main stay is agriculture which is sensitive to climate change and in time of adversity, the countries suffer from shortage of food and fill the balance through aid which is embarrassing.

Developing countries have insignificant role for carbon emission but they are the major victims of global warming induced by gas released from the advanced countries' industries. Yet, during the climate change negotiation on the international platforms, the bargaining power of the developing countries is negligible.

Due to the rampant corruption prevailed in Africa, according to the Transparent International; the continent loses three billion Dollars annually in the form of capital flight because of illicit trade. Africa and the rest of developing countries have their own continental organizations such as AU in Africa but the organizations themselves are financially dependent on the donor countries and such situation provided rich countries to involve in the internal affairs of these countries which further complicate their problems.

Some of the African countries even fail to pay their annual financial contribution to the African Union. As a result, the organization remains weak.

African Union dispatched The African Union

Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) is an active regional peacekeeping mission operated by the African Union. Countries such as Ethiopia, Kenya, Burundi and Uganda sent their troops there but all the financial cost is covered by USA and European Union. Such a situation also let the AU to be manipulated by foreign forces.

Recently, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Ethiopia, Demeke Mekonnen called for genuine reform of global institutions to accommodate the interests of the South while attending the Group 77+ China Summit took place in Havana, Cuba. The Summit is aimed at ensuring that technology works for all humanity and accelerates the Sustainable Development.

Speaking at the forum, he said that unilateral sanctions and coercive economic actions hamper progress in science, technology and economic development of the developing countries.

According to him, facilitating knowledge and technology transfer through South-South cooperation fosters innovation and the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals /SDGs/. In this respect, Ethiopia's digital strategy envisages inclusive digital economy with wider benefits to the wider public.

The deputy premier also said that Ethiopia has registered encouraging results in the implementation of the digital strategy.

As mentioned above, developing countries have very little influence in decision making on the international platforms. They are purely recipient of decisions made by the super power countries. Thus, they have to get organized and united and they have to reevaluate their relations with the western countries that make them economically disadvantaged. They should perceive China and other emerging economies as alternative partners to reshape their international relations.

The recently joining of Ethiopia to BRICS can be seen as exemplary in this regard. Currently, China plays vital role in stimulating the developing countries' economy through constructing infrastructure and expanding investment that enable them use their natural resources thereby pave the way for economic growth.

The volume of trade between the developing countries and China has reached to billions of Dollars. Hence, in order to change the existing international imbalanced relations which make developing countries voiceless, cooperating to each other and with the G77+ china can be a way out.

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

# Editorial

## Firm stance affirms promise!

This week, more than 140 leaders and state representatives from around the world gathered to address the 78th session of the UN General Assembly. One of the prominent issues that would take the attention of those leaders is the climate crisis, global warming and climate change, and their impacts. Here, it is certain that the global community would expect the leaders to urge aggressive climate change mitigation through recognizing the threat of global warming to humanity and the planet.

Interestingly, Ethiopia has been playing a commendable role in this regard as its national development plan predominantly focuses on cultivating the Climate Resilient Economy. Following this development plan, the country has devised a strategy to build a green economy through investing in its natural resources. The government along with the people has been transforming the strategy into action and registering praiseworthy achievements. Among these commendable achievements, the construction of the Abbay Dam on the Abbay River takes the lion's share in supporting Ethiopia's contribution in minimizing the effects of global warming and climate change.

Among its far-reaching benefits to the riparian countries and beyond, the Abbay Dam plays an immense role in moderating climate hydrological extremes. It also helps minimize downstream flood and drought severity by managing flow releases. Besides, the Dam lays the foundation for sustainable water management and reservoir operations that reinforces achieving food security, improving nutrition, generating employment and providing livelihood resilience.

Indeed, sustainable development cannot be fully achieved without clean air and sustainable use of water resources. In other words, a strong economy and a healthy environment are inseparably interwoven. Hence, Ethiopia has immensely invested in the green development that fosters the intended economic prosperity.

More importantly, Ethiopia has been showing unreserved commitment not to harm Nile lower riparian countries since the inception of the construction. And the former member of the Abbay Dam Negotiation Committee and senior water resource advisor Fekiahmed Negash has recently affirmed Ethiopia's relentless commitment not to create any significant harm on the lower riparian nations through considering all recommendations suggested by technical experts. Further, all recommendations forwarded by international water experts have been accepted by the Ethiopian side; even it has adopted some of the recommendations much better than their expectation. Moreover, according to researchers from the Humboldt University of Berlin, the Dam increases economic benefits and resilience in the riparian countries. Ethiopia believes this positive step would maximize the benefits of all the riparian nations.

On the contrary, it has been common to see Egyptian politicians failing to respect Ethiopia's inviolable right to utilize its natural resources. They also could not recognize Ethiopia's efforts to resolve disputes through negotiation. Despite the rhetoric against the construction of the Dam, Ethiopia pursued a firm stance to manage the disputes through peaceful negotiation.

All in all, Ethiopia continues affirming its promises not to cause any significant harm on the lower riparian countries of the Dam; it also pursues negotiation approaches to settle the disputes. Meanwhile, Egyptian officials ought to appreciate Ethiopia's unreserved commitment to consider the suggestions by experts; and its consistent willingness to resolve the disputes through discussions regardless of recurrent rejections. Above all, all the beneficiaries should realize the economic and regional integrations the Dam would bring among the riparian nations and beyond.

# Opinion

## Ethiopia revamps role in multinational blocs

BY SOLOMON DIBABA

In recent months Ethiopia has been participating in the conferences of many blocs especially that belong to the global south and seeks the creation of fair world. Such blocs include the BRICS summit held in Johannesburg, South Africa and G 77 plus China held in the Cuban capital Habana.

On the 10th of July 2023, Ethiopia hosted a meeting of the Heads of State and Government of the IGAD Quartet Group of Countries met in Addis Ababa, to discuss in depth the implementation of the IGAD Roadmap for peace in the Republic of Sudan. Ethiopia hosted the meeting chaired by the President of Kenya while the representatives of Djibouti, South Sudan, Secretary General of IGAD, Workneh Gebeyehu, and AU Commissioner for Political Affairs, UN-OCHA, representatives of Egypt, Saudi Arabia, UAE, USA AND UK have participated.

Ethiopia ceased the occasion to reaffirm her commitment to peace on the Horn of Africa and Sudan as well.

On yet another development, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed and President Abdel-Fattah El-Sisi met on the sidelines of a meeting organized by Egypt in a bid to find lasting solution to the war in Sudan and agreed on starting negotiations to finalize an agreement between Ethiopia, Egypt, and Sudan on the filling and the rules of operation of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) in four months' time.

Moreover, Ethiopia's high level delegation led by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed attended The UN Food Systems Summit +2 Stocktaking Moment which was conducted in Rome, Italy from 24 – 26 July 2023, at the premises of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in collaboration with Rome-based UN Agencies (FAO, IFAD, WFP), the UN Food Systems Coordination Hub and the wider UN system. Speaking on the occasion, PM Abiy Ahmed stresses that a new and robust agricultural global financing model is essential for food security, job creation and economic development.

Ethiopia also attended the Russia-Africa Summit and Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed conferred with the Russian

President Vladimir Putin on bilateral and regional issues and signed a number of agreements of cooperation including using nuclear power for peaceful purposes including power generation and for various scientific purposes. A Joint Biological Research Program was among several of the agreements signed between the two countries. The summit has been a diplomatic success for Ethiopia as multi-lateral agreements were of high value for the development of the nation.

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed has joined world leaders gathering in Paris aiming to overhaul the current global financial system.

The "New Global Financing Pact" Summit which seeks to rally political leaders, financial institutions, and the private sector to lay a foundation for a new financial system that addresses inequality, debt overhangs, and climate change.

It also aims to find consensus on how to progress a number of initiatives currently struggling in bodies like the G20, COP, IMF-World Bank and United Nations.

The PM participated in the roundtable entitled "Evolving the model of multilateral development Banks to address the 21st century challenges".

The PM told the session that the developing world, particularly African countries are facing "a cocktail of interconnected crises- a cost-of-living crisis, a financing crisis, a growth crisis, and a climate crisis".

Prime Minister Abiy suggested four areas in terms of reinstating the pledges on climate change access to liquidity and scaling up of MDBs and debt service suspension.

Abiy Ahmed received World Bank President Ajay Banga, who arrived in Ethiopia for a two-day visit at the end of July 2023.

The Premier conferred with Banga on ways and means to foster further relations with World Bank. This has helped to develop confidence and mutual trust and support and understanding with the Bank which appreciated Ethiopia's efforts in promote its national economy through the Home Grown National Economic Plan.

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



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The Ethiopian Herald



# Business & Economy

## Sustainability for success of national wheat cultivation

BY BACHA ZEWDIE

Ethiopia's wheat cultivation has saved the foreign currency that the country spends for importation. Apart from meeting the country's demand for wheat, it enabled to supply to neighboring countries for the first time in its history.

Documents indicate that the success of wheat cultivation has been recognized by various international institutions. Apart from recognition, the African Development Bank has supported the development. The American Foreign Agricultural Bureau described, "Ethiopia's wheat production is showing great progress and its productivity is increasing." In the report, this American institution also predicted that Ethiopia would produce 5.7 million tons of wheat in 2022 and 2023.

The cultivation of wheat continued more strongly, especially in summer irrigated wheat cultivation, and it is also known as the start of lowland wheat irrigated cultivation. This development is now continuing strongly in different regions in all climates.

When announcing the wheat export program for the first time in February 2023 in Bale Zone of Oromia Region, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) said; "The process of exporting wheat that we have seen in Bale is the least success we should do for Ethiopia. Because we have been showing what we are doing and planning with green legacy and Renaissance Dam. Now, we have not only stopped importing wheat, but also exported it to the world. We are proud to show the reverse of 'Ethiopia cannot get rid of wheat aid and export it' narrative, he said.

The Prime Minister mentioned that all regions contributed significantly to this success. In particular, Oromia, Somali and Amhara regions have announced that they have done a strong job in the cultivation of summer irrigated wheat. He pointed out that more than 250 million people in Africa, including Ethiopia, are in need of help. This is the problem that motivates us to work harder to donate wheat in the name of "Ethiopia Aid". Ethiopia will play its part in alleviating the wheat market problem in the world.

Meles Mekonen (PhD), State Minister for Agriculture and Horticulture Development in the Ministry of Agriculture said that irrigated wheat cultivation was started five years ago on three hectares of land in one region. But now the development has expanded in every level and spread in almost all regions. It has been possible to reach a total of nine regions by cultivating a large area of agricultural land and increasing the number of beneficiary farmers. In this way, it was possible to cover 1.35 million hectares of land with irrigated wheat cultivation in the 2022/23 production season. It was planned to produce 53 million quintals. At the end of the year, 47 million quintals was produced.

The State Minister said that although the



*Ethiopia's wheat production to increase*

country has a comfortable ecosystem, land and hardworking farmers, it used to earn a lot of foreign currency by importing wheat. Due to hard work done for the past three years to achieve this plan, it could be possible to completely avoid imported wheat in 2023. In this way, it was possible to save nearly one billion Dollars which was used for buying wheat as a country and use this huge amount for other services and development.

According to Dr. Meles, the success of wheat cultivation is not only due to irrigation; it is also done during other farming seasons. In the 2022/23 crop season, 4.47 million hectares of land was covered by wheat in the spring and autumn. As a result, almost 154 million quintals of wheat was produced in all the three seasons. In the fall of 2023/24, to further increase the results obtained, extensive work is being done in irrigated wheat cultivation.

It is planned to cultivate wheat alone on 3.6 million hectares of land in the main harvest season. According to the report so far, more than 2.9 million hectares of land has been covered with seeds. There are opportunities to achieve more in the coming days. This will allow the country to achieve more success in wheat production than planned.

According to Shawaferahu Shitahun, a political economy analyst, wheat cultivation is possible to achieve better production in terms of the landscape and manpower of the country. The country has a lot of potential to cover its wheat consumption with own production. Reinforcing the idea of Dr. Meles, he said that the proof of this is how much it has been able to produce in the work it has done during these three years.

Ethiopia feeds not only its citizens but also its neighbors. Dr. Meles said that Djibouti, Somaliland, Kenya, Sudan and Eritrea take many products from Ethiopia. The countries get products from Ethiopia not only legally but mostly illegally. Apart from canceling the results of the development, this act makes a proper marketing system disappear.

On the other hand, the country uses low

technology. Shewaferahu said that since the country has farmers who are still dependent on the rains, the production and productivity could not grow at the required rate and speed. Therefore, it is not possible to ensure the country's food security by producing surplus produce beyond self-consumption and bringing it to the market.

As he says, at present, whether it is in summer or autumn or under irrigation, the crop is growing. However, each production process needs to be tested. What has been achieved in terms of what is needed? How much can the country produce and export beyond covering its own consumption? How much did the farmers accept the idea? Such issues must be answered. In any case, the farmers' effort should be seen.

Ethiopia is known for its wheat production among sub-Saharan African countries. It demands more than 107 million quintals of wheat annually. To meet this demand, it spent between 700 million and one billion Dollars for importation. And to solve this, it is focusing on wheat cultivation. This way, it is believed that apart from fulfilling the wheat needs of the citizens, it will supply the leftovers from its own consumption to the foreign market and avoid buying from abroad.

As the data indicate, in Ethiopia's national wheat cultivation, 117 thousand hectares were covered by irrigated wheat cultivation only in 2020. This figure increased to 672 thousand hectares in 2021 and 1.3 million hectares in 2022. As a result, the production is increasing every year. For example, in the 2022/23 production season, 4.47 million hectares of land was covered with wheat through irrigation, during the spring and autumn farming seasons, nearly 154 million quintals was obtained.

The wheat production sector is showing great progress and productivity is increasing. In order to continue this production, the problems in the sector must be solved. The State Minister stated that various works are being done by the government to solve the problem. For this, he noted the activities

carried out through extension support, strengthening and expanding the irrigation development, modern equipment-assisted farming system and providing other inputs.

In order to ensure the continuity and sustainability of the development activities in summer and winter, provision of best seeds, fertilizers and pesticides to the farmers with reasonable prices is considered as another support and solution direction to tackle the existing increase in the prices.

According to Showaferahu, the first solution to make the development sustainable is to create peace and stability in the country. Above all, the issue of peace needs to be valued so that the farmer can work as he pleases and get resources. The government should work hard to create peace.

Wheat cultivation work should not be done as a campaign and should not be used for political purposes. Instead of that, the farmers should be encouraged to do the work and be convinced to take action. If they believe in it, they will be certainly effective and beneficial. They work hard day in and day out for their own profit, the economist said.

He further said that the farmers should have reliable farmland, the best seeds, and a healthy supply chain. It must also be believed that sometimes the product may go through informal commerce and disputes may arise. Thus, the government is required to strictly control the country's exit borders, starting from the brokers. He said that if the farmers are profitable and realize the results, both the country and the consumer society will be successful in all fields.

Dr. Meles mentioned that the countries that produce wheat extensively (Ukraine and Russia) are in trouble and the world is facing a shortage of wheat production. Ethiopia was able to overcome this international problem because of the work being done on wheat and the results obtained. It should be known that the issue of cultivating wheat is not a matter of political consumption but a matter of living or not.



# Art & Culture

## The tides of inner peace



BY BITANIYA TADELE

A vast and powerful force of nature—the ocean. It can be calm and serene, or it can be wild and destructive. In the same way, our inner peace can be calm and serene, or it can be troubled and chaotic—simply.

Inner peace (or peace of mind) refers to a deliberate state of psychological or spiritual calm despite the potential presence of stressors. Being "at peace" is considered by many to be healthy and the opposite of being stressed or anxious, and is considered to be a state where our mind performs at an optimal level, regardless of outcomes.

Coming back to the analogy of the ocean and our inner peace, when the ocean is calm, it is a beautiful sight to behold. The waves gently roll in and out, and the sun shines down on the water, making it sparkle. When our inner peace is calm, we feel happy, content, and at peace with ourselves. We are able to enjoy the present moment and appreciate the beauty of the world around us. However, just as the ocean can be calm one moment and wild the next, our inner peace can also be disrupted. A sudden storm can cause the ocean to become rough and choppy. The waves can crash against the shore, and the wind can howl through the trees. In the same way, a sudden event can cause our

inner peace to be disrupted. We may feel stressed, anxious, or angry. We may have difficulty sleeping or concentrating.

Just as a little wind can stir the ocean, a little thing can trouble our inner peace. A small argument with a friend, a bad day at work, or a financial setback can all cause us to feel upset. Like a castle in the sand, one should see its inner peace as a fragile yet powerful Element, because a simple wave could diminish hours of work. However, just as the ocean can eventually calm down after a storm, our inner peace can also be restored.

There are many things we can do to help restore our inner peace. We can spend time in

nature, meditate, or practice yoga. We can also talk to a therapist or counselor, who can help us to identify the source of our troubles and develop strategies for coping with them.

When our inner peace is restored, we feel happy, content, and at peace with ourselves. We are able to enjoy the present moment and appreciate the beauty of the world around us. We are also better able to cope with the challenges that life throws our way.

Just as the ocean is a vast and powerful force of nature, our inner peace is also a powerful force. When we nurture our inner peace, we are able to live happier, healthier, and more fulfilling lives.



## Womanizer

BY SENAIT G/HIWOT

He is the kind of guy  
Who is not really shy  
He is a womanizer  
And really seduces her  
She is a girl that's shy  
But keeps on putting that smile  
A smile that him beguile  
This makes him feel wanted  
He makes her feel devoured  
She becomes passionate  
And he thinks he found his mate  
But something turns her off  
The fact that he is aloof  
He wants her only for fun  
And his heart is distant  
When she realizes that  
She just gave him a kiss  
And never went to him  
Then he was in her dream  
She thought "what is the harm?"  
And again went to him  
She was disappointed  
By the things that he did  
Their energies mismatched  
They had different goals in life...

## A love potion

BY ALEM HAILU G/KRISTOS

My dear, with you  
A record moment of ecstasy  
Dispelling the gloomy cloud  
Of stress, anxiety and vexation  
Brightens my day,  
Darling, what a holy wind blew you  
In my way?  
Please with me forever stay  
You are  
The happiest thing that occurred  
To me till today.



## My princess

BY ALEM HAILU G/KRISTOS

A warm morning sun  
Flickering a ray of light  
Making my foggy  
Bachelor's heart bright,  
A curtain raiser  
Thawing the ice of solitude  
You afforded me  
A turn around  
That rendered my life sound.  
What a surprise  
You gave me children—  
God's gifts in a human guise!





# Science & Technology



## Ethio Space Kids Club: Nurturing next space scientists

BY DARGIE KAHSAY

**A**ncient Ethiopian religious manuscripts reveal that ancient Ethiopians have a thorough knowledge of astronomy and space science. The ancient Ethiopian manuscripts mainly written in Ge'ez language contain rare knowledge of space science particularly astronomy and stars known to ancient Ethiopians. These manuscripts documented the ancient Ethiopians deep knowledge of space science. They are living testaments that space science is not an area of study reserved for the Western world.

Ethiopia has an indigenous knowledge in the space sector since its ancient civilization. The ancient Ethiopian stargazers have a wide understanding of the stars and the astronomy sector, though this knowledge remains undiscovered for centuries due to different reasons.

After centuries of stalemate, in recent years the space science sector is getting new attention in Ethiopia. Ethiopia is working to exploit the space sector by establishing a Space Science Institute. It is an institute that helps it to administer the sector and the Entoto Observatory and Research Center. It also plays a role to develop researches in space science. Its continuous efforts in the space sector have helped Ethiopia to manage launching its first-ever-remote-sensing satellite in December 2019. On 20 December 2019, Ethiopia launched Ethiopia Remote Sensing Satellite (ETRSS-1) to the space and named December 20 as Ethiopian Space Day.

Since then, Ethiopia is celebrating space day on December 20 annually with different activities mainly in public awareness creation about space science. While celebrating the Space Day in 2020, the then Ethiopia Space Science Institute (the current Ethiopia Space Science and Geo-spatial Institute (SSGI)) organized a recognition program for youths who developed special talent in space science mostly by their own efforts.

While recognizing the talented youths during the space day, SSGI decided to establish a new platform to cultivate the talent of the youth and to develop their talent with continuous trainings. With this dream, Ethio Space Kids Club (ESKC) was established almost three years ago to provide summer trainings for space science talented youths. Immediately, the club started its activities and since the summer of 2021, the club



has started accepting talented youths and providing different trainings. The program focuses on youth from elementary to high school students which have special talent and interest in space science.

Last week, SSGI graduated the third batch talented youths trained at ESKC after over two months of training and announced that it is working to expand the program beyond Addis Ababa. There is a plan to take it to other big cities of Ethiopia. In addition, the program was limited to in person training during summer time. But starting this year the program aims to include an online learning platform to provide training service using online platforms, according to SSGI.

Thomas Belay, a 15 year old grade 11 student of Ethio Parents' School, is among the youths who got the opportunity to join Ethio Space Kids Club (ESKC). Speaking to From Earth to Space program, Thomas said that the training helped him to develop his talent in the space sector. Thomas is among the youths who have special interests in space science. The training has helped him to explore more scientific knowledge. "The training is very helpful for youths to develop the scientific knowledge of the space sector which is vital to explore the talents of youths," he said.

"We have got deep trainings in types and characteristics of satellites, astronomy and the stars, about the features and characteristics of planets and their orbit systems, geographic information system (GIS) and characteristic features of earth," Thomas said adding that the training would give the youth a chance to develop scientific knowledge to hone their talents and to live realize their dream of becoming scientists and researchers in space science. "I advise and recommend youths with special talent and interest in space science and astronomy

to take the training to develop their talents as the program is continuous," he noted.

Meron Tamirat is also a grade 11 student at Kidane Meheret School in Addis Ababa. She is among the youths joined the summer space talented youths training, ESKC this year. Meron said that as she is interested in space science, before she joined the training, she loves reading space science books.

The space science training at ESKC helped her to get a broad knowledge about the astronomy, space and planetary science, aerospace engineering, remote sensing, satellites, GIS and other space sectors. "Youths who have special passion to space science have to join the training to explore more knowledge in the sector in their early ages so as to develop their skills. The training helps youths to develop their skills one step forward in space science and astronomy," Meron reiterated.

Yeshurun Alemayehu (PhD) is Deputy Director-General of Space Science and Geospatial Institute (SSGI) of Ethiopia. Yeshurun said Ethio Space Kids Club was established to train youths who have passion and talent in space science. Following the launching of ETRSS-1 in 2019, December 20 has marked Ethiopia Space Day.

"While celebrating the 2020 Space Day, we recognize kids and youths performing different space activities who presented their works in different media outlets by their own efforts," Yeshurun stated adding during the recognition program SSGI decided to establish a new platform to support the talent and skills of the youth. Families of the talented youths were also asking the institute to support them and finally ESKC was established to sustainably support and train the space passionate kids.

"The program aims to help the passionate and talented youths to develop their knowledge and skills in the space science. By providing trainings and other continuous supports, the vision of ESKC is to support the talented youths to realize their dream of becoming next space scientists and researchers," the Deputy Director-General stated. The youth are the next professionals to lead the industry and it is important to cultivate these gifted kids and youths since their early ages.

Aerospace engineering, satellite development, drone development, rocket development, GIS, engineering, science and different application developments are part of the training, according to Yushurun and the training contains both practical and theoretical parts, including software developments. Remote sensing applications, astronomy and astrophysics and generally the space sector are part of the training.

So far, the program was limited to Addis Ababa, Ambo and Debre Berhan, Yushurun said adding since this budget year the institute has planned to start a pilot program in major cities across the regional states so as to expand the program throughout the country. Currently, the training program is providing at Burayu Talent Development Center, the center which was built to support talented innovators to develop their ideas in to entrepreneurship.

"We are in the era of technology and the development of the technology sector is unpredictable especially following the invention of Artificial Intelligence," Dr. Yushurun underlined adding "to keep abreast with the technological developments and to become competitive, it is critical to invest in the youth generation."

SSGI Director-General, Abdisa Yilma for his part stated that the center's goal is beyond providing short term trainings and certifying the youth. It aims to help the talented youths to their skills and knowledge in space science through continuous support. "These youth are the next researchers, astronomers and leaders of the space sector," he added.

"What surprises me is that youths who attended the training project since the beginning are starting developing projects. We are happy about the projects developed by the trained youths." The projects developed by the youth shows that the youth are learning important lessons from the training program. SSGI will expand the project and youths with special talent and passion in space science can join the training programs.



# Society

## Headway to autonomy of universities to ensure quality education

BY TEWODROS KASSA

As the access to education is growing, the quest for quality education is equally becoming an issue that everyone raises. Currently, the number of youths graduating from universities is increasing year after year. To alleviate the challenges associated with quality education, equip students with better performance and develop entrepreneurial skills will have a better opportunity to compete in their future life.

Subsequent to this, the Ethiopian government has been taking various initiatives to realizing the quality of education and nurturing youths with the needed skills and knowledge. As part of this effort, exit exam, tight rules against cheating in exams, self-governing universities among others have been taken as the new mechanisms being undertaken by the Ministry of Education.

Regarding the autonomy of universities various experts are supporting its implementation and gave thumbs up. Accordingly, Ministry of Education announced that the country's universities will become autonomous in upcoming two years. So far, some 10 first-generation universities will become autonomous in the next two years.

Administration and Basic Affairs Chief Executive Officer at the Ministry, Solomon Abraha said that the changes are being made based on the roadmap set to maintain the quality of education.

Making universities autonomous is one of the activities of the reform for which operational systems, legal frameworks, rules and guidelines are prepared, he added.

The CEO revealed that Addis Ababa University will be autonomous in a few months, and that would enable it to create the capacity to properly carry out its mission, ensure quality education as well as conduct research works.

The university was chosen as the first to become autonomous in view of its current capacity and educational programs.

In the next two years, 10 universities, including Addis Ababa University, which have been given a research mission and identified as the first generation would be autonomous, he reiterated.

Moreover, Solomon pointed out that being autonomous does not mean that the universities would never administer the institutions of higher learning. It means they would fulfill their missions with accountability and responsibility.

On his part, Addis Ababa University President, Prof. Tassew Woldehanna said that autonomy will allow the university to carry out its mission and to solve the country's political, economic and social issues through undertaking problem solving research.



The Prof. stated that being autonomous will give them the opportunity to strengthen their capabilities and do better work. It is also important to improve the quality of education.

Furthermore, Prof. Tassew said, it creates an opportunity for the university to execute community services successfully in an effective and cost-effective manner.

Financial, human resource recruitment, asset management and labor management laws will be introduced when the university becomes independent.

Following this, the Council of Ministers has decided to grant Addis Ababa University autonomous status, making it the first university in Ethiopia to have this level of independence. The decision was made in the belief that academic freedom will be better ensured and that the university will be able to carry out teaching and research activities more effectively without political or administrative interference.

As an autonomous university, Addis Ababa University will be able to act independently in matters of academic and administrative policy. This will allow it to be a pioneer in the reform movement that has started in the education sector, the experts underscored.

The decision to grant Addis Ababa University autonomous status is a significant step forward for the Ethiopian education system. It is hoped that the university will be able to use its new freedom to achieve even greater levels of academic excellence.

On the other hand, other universities are also working to realize autonomy in the coming years.

Among these, the Adama Science and Technology University (ASTU) revealed a plan to become the second autonomous

higher learning institution in the country next only to Addis Ababa University.

ASTU President Lemmi Gutta (PhD) told the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) that the University has been taking bold steps to materialize its accession to autonomy. Among other activities, the ASTU established a committee that is tasked to facilitate the transformation.

Lemmi further stated that efforts are also underway to improve the infrastructure, laboratory and ICT facilities, and create conducive teaching-learning environment for both teachers and students. Moreover, due attention has been given to provide skilled and competent students to the industry

“The University strives for education quality in Adama Town and the surrounding areas and we established standard schools both at elementary and secondary levels for sectors of the community who have been challenged by different factors. Currently, close to 900 students are enrolled at the primary school.”

ASTU has the Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics Center (STEM), which helps the university's students and youth from nearby towns practice robotics, laboratory, and the like. Partnership has been formed with the Adama Town Administration and other partners in research, capacity building, scholarship, and software development.

Furthermore, the University is conducting problem-solving research to improve the livelihoods of the community not only in Adama but also areas in the Oromia State at large. For example, Bishoftu and Holtea are among the towns that benefited from ASTU's research.

“We have conducted a large number of

researchers in the past so many years that have brought a significant improvement in the livelihoods of the community in Oromia,” the University President remarked.

Out of the 50-million Birr annual budget, the ASTU would employ 30 million Birr to teaching-learning and research; the remaining would be allocated to community service, it was learned.

Meanwhile, Education Minister Prof. Berhanu Nega underlined the irreplaceable role of advancing educational infrastructure in shaping the future generations' prospects.

At a side event held on the margins of the 78th United Nations General Assembly in New York, Prof. Berhanu, also the Chancellor of Addis Ababa University, said yesterday, Ethiopia, compared to many other African countries, has allocated 20% of its annual budget for education. However, since the allocated budget is not sufficient and cannot be covered solely by government's capacity, this year, the entire society is being made to do its part. Through government's initiative has started a national campaign dubbed “Education for Generation”, to improve the infrastructure of schools, he added.

Mentioning similar challenges in the Ethiopian education system, such as limited education infrastructure in schools, lavatories, laboratories, and reliable electric supply Prof. Berhanu said that it would be difficult to achieve the Global Sustainable Development Goals or resolve the existing challenges.

Thus, at the discussion it was said that it will not be feasible to accomplish the objectives of sustainable development or resolve the existing crisis unless it is possible to support education through investment, MoE reported.





# This is Ethiopia

## Conserving, registering heritages for socio-economic dev't

BY TEWODROS KASSA

Ethiopia has joined UNESCO since 1955. The nation had registered its first world heritages with the Rock-Hewn Churches of Lalibela as a cultural heritage and Simien National Park as a natural heritage in 1978. After this, the nation had got registered the Gondar Fasil Castle (1979), Axum Obelisk, Tiya, Lower Valley of the Awash and Omo rivers (1980), as well as the Harar Jugol, the Fortified Historic Town by 2006, the Konso Cultural Landscape in 2011, among others.

Recently, two more Ethiopian sites were inscribed on UNESCO's World Heritage list. The United Nations Education, Science and Cultural Organization in its 45th assembly held in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, inscribed the Ethiopian Bale Mountains National Park (BMNP) and the Gedeo Cultural Landscape.

According to the Ministry of Tourism, following the inscription of Gedeo Cultural Landscapes on the UNESCO World Heritage list, the number of UNESCO-inscribed cultural and natural heritages in Ethiopia has reached 10, the 100th in Africa.

The inscription of the sites brings prestige to raise greater awareness for heritage protection and preservation and immense social and economic return for local people and the country as well as to gain support activities for the preservation of the sites, it was learnt.

In an interview held with *The Ethiopian Herald*, weeks before the inscription of the two sites in UNESCO's Heritage list, Cultural Heritage Research Director with the Authority for Research and Conservation of Cultural Heritage Andualem Girmaye had confidently reflected his view regarding the registration of the Ethiopian Bale Mountains National Park (BMNP) and the Gedeo Cultural Landscape on the World Heritage List.

The country has submitted an advanced nomination dossier for the registration of the two heritages thereby anticipating the UNESCO to inscribe them in its world heritage list during the Extended 45th Session of the World Heritage Committee that will be held next month in Saudi Arabia, he had said optimistically while talking the efforts exerted to realize the objective of registering the sites.

In return, Ethiopia was appreciated for advanced dossier on the nomination of the two heritages during the World Heritage Nomination Workshop held in 2020. On the occasion, representatives from Ethiopia introduced the progress of the nomination of the two heritages which are currently inscribed on UNESCO's list of potential World Heritage sites, it was learnt.

At the workshop, UNESCO had reaffirmed its commitment to provide support to increase East African countries' representation on the World Heritage List.

According to Andualem, Ethiopia is one amongst the countries that have registered their tangible and intangible heritages in



*Bale Mountains National Park*

the UNESCO's world heritage list. So far, UNESCO has recognized a total of 15 - four intangible and 11 tangible Ethiopian heritages and additional heritages are on the way to be inscribed.

The Authority is working on the registration of additional heritages such as ShewalEid, the oral customary laws of Somali Issa community in Ethiopia, Wolaita's people's New Year celebration called Gifata, and the prehistory of Melka Kunture and Balchit archeological site in Oromia state, he noted.

It is to be recalled that Ethiopia was elected to the Intergovernmental Committee of Intangible Cultural Heritage during the 9th session of the General Assembly of States Parties to the 2003 UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2022.

The selection of Ethiopia as a member is a big achievement to the nation since Ethiopia has registered many tangible and intangible heritages and is working to register more in the UNESCO World Heritage list, Andualem remarked.

As one of the representatives of Africa, Ethiopia will work for a more balanced and truly representative heritage list reflecting the beauty and diversity of the world. It also works for the preservation of intangible cultural heritage that contributes to sustainable development, he added.

He also said that the Gedeo Cultural Landscape and Bale Mountains National Park are home to various fauna and flora and archeological sites.

Meanwhile, the Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority disclosed that it earned over 132 million Birr from those tourists visiting national parks across the country over the last fiscal year.

National Parks Administration Chief



*Gedeo Cultural Landscape*

Executive Officer Adane Tsegaye (PhD) told the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) that it secured the aforesaid amount of revenue over the just ended fiscal year as a total of 141,000 visitors (125,000 domestic and 16,000 foreign ones) visited the National parks.

The visited national parks with high rate of tourist flow are Nechisar National, Mago National, and Bale and Semen mountains national Parks, whereas parks with low visiting rate due to lack of infrastructure and remoteness of their location include Gambela National Park, Altash, and Geral, and Omo National Park, he said.

He said: "Ethiopia has not secured revenue out of its national parks as it deserves, and the system by which visitors are charged a small fee is not encouraging tourism. In addition, illegal hunting and settlement, deforestation in parks do have a direct bearing to the low level of tourists/visitors inflow. Yes, illegal settlement in parks, especially around elephant

shelters, is highly damaging the parks."

Although tourism can earn foreign currency as lucratively as other sectors, it has not so far helped the nation to benefit out of it following various security and development problems, he added.

The Authority has studied ways to make foreign visitors pay fees in USD during their stay in the country, and increase the quality of the parks thereby promoting the tourism potential. Upon approval, the study will help Ethiopia increase income from tourism and earn direct foreign currency, he said.

In sum, developing national parks for tourism destinations requires the commitment and active involvement of the local community, private partners, pertinent stakeholders and the government. Developing national parks as tourist spots would be a preferable approach to save the country's wildlife heritages and render local communities mutually beneficiaries.