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## Ethiopia working on building inclusive institutions towards integrated dev't

BY STAFF REPORTER

**ADDIS ABABA** – The Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Affairs Minister, Demeke Mekonnen yesterday addressed a “Regional Consultation on The Right to Development as a Tool for Transformation and Its Nexus with Peace and Security in Africa” at the African Union Headquarters in Addis Ababa.

In his keynote address, Demeke stressed the importance of the right to development as a human right encompassing social, economic, cultural, and political elements.

Despite numerous challenges in Africa, including conflicts and underdevelopment, he underscored, peace, development, and human

*See Ethiopia working... Page 3*



Tarekegn Bululta

## Ministry to institutionalize Let Ethiopia Produce campaign

BY BETELHEM BEDLU

**ADDIS ABABA**- A new system has been implemented to institutionalize the Let Ethiopia Produce campaign and to maintain its commendable outcomes in the manufacturing sector, the Ministry of Industry disclosed.

Industry State Minister Tarekegn Bululta told the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) that the measure aims to keep and cascade the good results

*See Ministry to ... Page 3*



Photo : Dagne Abera

## Premier urges public to uphold kindness

BY MENGESHA AMARE

**ADDIS ABABA**- Since benevolence does not have criteria to be measured and knows no boundary, all human beings have to implement the virtue continually and wherever they are, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) said.

Addressing the Benevolence Day gathering

at Friendship Square yesterday, Premier Abiy noted that kindness is a value innately given to human beings coming out of candid sources. “We should always be benevolent for the advantage of the human race as the virtue is given to all people to serve one another free of charge.”

According to him, benevolence does

not require down payment and it is devoid of interests and other opportunistic gestures. Hence, everyone needs to eternalize empathy and carry it out to make others happy and comfortable.

Abiy advised the youth to show their love and compassion for the disadvantaged that would help the former to lead a happy life.

*See Premier urges public... Page 3*

## Japan remains committed to supporting Africa seat on UNSC

BY ZEKARIAS WOLDEMARIAM

**ADDIS ABABA** - Japan reaffirms support for African Union’s bid for the permanent seat at the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). It also aspires to see a speedy implementation of AfCFTA as it holds due benefit for Japan too, said the outgoing Japanese Ambassador to the AU.

Ambassador Horiuchi Toshihiko, who has been serving as Ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary of Japan to the AU for the last three years told *The Ethiopian Herald* that Japan’s conviction is the same as Africa’s, as both believe that the UN Security Council should be reformed so that the Council can reflect the reality of today’s international community and that it can perform its missions with confidence.

He added Japan’s stance is openly

established and available in published formats and public domains.

Accordingly, he reiterated that Japan seconds the idea of AU’s common position that is, having two permanent seats with full-fledged rights as permanent members including the right to veto. “At the TICAD8 Summit in Tunis, we declared this Japanese support for the African common position on the UNSC reform,” Ambassador Horiuchi added.

According to him, the G4 countries, composed of Japan, Germany, India and Brazil, also support. For this end, he noted that concrete actions are necessary, and Japan wants to work closely with Africa.

*See Japan remains committed ... Page 3*



Amb. Horiuchi Toshihiko



# News



Akililu Tadesse

## Three sugar factories, IPS ink agreement to boost productivity

BY ESSEYE MENGISTE

**ADDIS ABABA-** Three sugar factories Industrial Projects Service (IPS) signed an agreement for research and consulting services thereby ensuring long-term productivity.

The agreement was signed by the Industrial Parks Development Corporation CEO and Wonji, Metahara, and Tana Beles sugar factories CEOs.

Industrial Parks Development Corporation (IPDC) CEO Akililu Tadesse on the occasion said that the main aim of the sign agreement is to increase the productivity of the production decline, renovate and change the factory machinery and prepare a research based document for the bank loan so as to make the factory efficient.

Wonji, Metahara and Tana Beles Sugar Factory, which have greatly contributed to the industrialization of Ethiopia, and the Ethiopian Industrial Projects Service, which is playing an irreplaceable role in the industrialization of Ethiopia, are committed to working together to boost productivity, he said.

As to him, industrial Projects Service is an institution that has made a great contribution to the field of large industries, factories and companies in Ethiopia over 40 years by doing feasibility study, establishing process, internal operation and management and profitability in general, corporate governance and various qualities to reach the level where the businesses in Ethiopia are today.

“Wonji Sugar Factory and Metahara Sugar Factory were the ones we were proud of regarding the manufacturing sector. They have been creating job opportunities for many citizens, fostering technology transfer towards economic revitalization targeting local residents.”

Currently, it is necessary to work together to make these factories more efficient and profitable. Tana Beles Sugar factory is a factory built from the experience of the two and established to contribute to the country’s GDP.

IPDC CEO said, “In order to get satisfying out of the sector, technology based and timely actions have to be taken. The agreement will help both parties ensure scientific and research based consulting, factories better restoration than even before.”

The three sugar factories CEOs on their part said the agreement will help sustainably ensure the successfulness of their respective factories.

The IPS has done more than 600 studies and consulting works so far. It is the founder of well-known companies in Ethiopia such as Muger Cement, Arba Minch Textiles, Bahardar Textiles and many others.

## Service vows to implement technology-based passport processing

• Resumes service with 190,000 passports

BY ASHENAFI ANIMUT

**ADDIS ABABA**—Immigration and Citizenship Services (ICS) disclosed that it has resumed services employing high-technology and facilities to reach to all citizens.

In her briefing to media yesterday, ICS Director-General Selamawit Dawit said that taking principal measures and holistic leadership reforms made, the service has started service delivery through mapping on prioritized areas.

For the last 30 days, she stated that the institution along with various stakeholders has been critically identifying and evaluating major spot areas where maladministration and corruption were practiced.

“The Service has been delivering passport issuing services to scholarship winners, government officials on priority over the last six months. Besides, Visa on arrival service would also be functional after two weeks and aviation related issues will be announced via its website,” she added.

As the sector is susceptible to corruption and fraud, she said that deep-rooted corruption and maladministration have



Selamawit Dawit

long been baffling the Visa, ID and passport admittance.

Shortage of hard currency, COVID 19, Russia-Ukraine crisis, communication and technology barriers, backwardness of facilities and other related glitches have been the major bottlenecks in this regard, she pinpointed.

So far, E-visa service has been made functional for tourists to help increase the tourist influx as Ethiopia is a strategic conference and diplomatic hub.

Marking the skill gaps and capacities, she

said that short and long training sessions were given to its employees and regional offices to create all-round personalities and quality services to meet the current demand.

“Not only is stringent follow-up made by intelligence workers, but legal and corrective measures are also taken on illegal agents who were participating in the deep-rooted corruption chain,” she said.

It was also indicated that the Service has launched modern technology to deliver full-fledged amenities and controlling systems.

Currently, there are about 300,000 applicants on the pipeline seeking passports throughout the country, including those who are seeking jobs from overseas.

“We were able to manage activities and produce 190,000 passports over the last 30 days; and some 16,712 and 4176 passports are dispatched to Gulf and African countries respectively.”

Advising the general public to utilize the Service’s exact website and link, she called on the community and stakeholders to contribute to the legal procedure and refrain from utilizing forgery documents and applying to unknown accounts.

## KOICA allots 10-mln- USD to supplement Ethiopia’s dairy farming

BY MESERET BEHAILU

**ADDIS ABABA** – The Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) said it allocated 10- million- USD finance to a five-year project that aims to enhance the product and productivity of Ethiopia’s dairy farming.

Recently, the KOICA Ethiopia Office hosted a knowledge sharing seminar to dairy farmers. The seminar was focused on ways to enhance product and productivity in the dairy farming, capacity building and agro-industry linkage among other issues.

Speaking at the seminar, KOICA Ethiopia Office Country Director Han-Deog indicated the agency is tirelessly working to back Ethiopia’s efforts to improve the product and productivity of the dairy sector and allocated 10 million USD to this end. The finance covers the period till 2028.

The finance is said to help Ethiopia to enhance its limited capacity to produce milk and milk products.

The country director further noted that knowledge and experience sharing are among the main areas of cooperation between the agency and the Ethiopian government including in the field of agriculture. Accordingly, KOICA is engaged to support Ethiopia to increase dairy production through knowledge and experience sharing.

“Though Ethiopia has an immense number of livestock, the milk production is not sufficiently enough both in quality and amount. Therefore, such type of training will be bringing significant change through



filling the knowledge and experience gap as well as help the people to get adequate nutrition, which is directly interacted with premier Abiy’s initiation last November. It means that it is useful to balance the milk demand (DD) and supply (SS) chain across the country.”

Approached by *The Ethiopian Herald*, an expert from Breed Improvement Institute at the Ministry of Agriculture Keefelegn Seyoum (PhD) stated that the country has been working to improve the productivity of dairy farming over many years. However, the result is not satisfactory due to various reasons.

Lack of skilled labor and limited knowledge and technology penetration are among the major setbacks that have been hindering Ethiopia from producing adequate milk. South Korea is Ethiopia’s benchmark in terms of producing sufficient meat and milk and the government has a firm desire to uphold the cooperation, he remarked.

Apart from agriculture, KOICA supports the Ethiopian government through various projects including the technical and vocational education and training (TVET), health care, climate change, regional development, and so on, it was learned.



# News

## All set to Ethiopia's first-ever aviation innovation expo

BY BETELHEM BEDLU

ADDIS ABABA—Ethiopia has finalized preparations to inaugurate its first-ever aviation innovation expo that going to be held between 24 and 28 October 2023 at the national science museum organized by Ethiopian Civil Aviation Authority, Ministry of Transport and Logistics and other partners.

The expo is designed to encourage and support aviation entrepreneurs and innovators thereby expand aviation technology and innovations, said Getachew Mengiste, Director-General of Ethiopian Civil Aviation Authority in a media briefing about the event.

The expo comprises of a drone contest, an exhibition and symposium in which over 80 youths and companies are expected to exhibit their works. Similarly, he noted that various agreements would be made with different government institutions over the course of five days, Getachew stated.

The Director-General further stated that the nation is striving to become Africa's



leading aviation hub in the next 15 years and build internationally competitive aviation industry that's why it is working on aviation innovation and technology.

“Though the Ethiopian aviation industry uses latest technologies, it is highly dependent on imported ones. Unless we start manufacturing indigenous technologies, we cannot ensure sustainable

growth in the industry,” he underscored.

The authority in tandem with Transport and Logistic Ministry is carrying out various activities to come up with National Aviation Technology Development Roadmap.

In addition, they have joined forces to establish aviation innovation center to create several aviation innovators and

provide training as well as technical support, as to him.

Having skilled man power in quality and quantity is mandatory since the industry is variable by nature, stated Denge Boru, State Minister of Transport and Logistics.

Despite its progress, the industry is reliant on foreign technologies over the past decades. Thus, the expo would play a significant role to identify the gaps as well as support aviation innovators to come up with great technologies, he said.

The government of Ethiopia has been undertaking several activities to inspire young generation to engage in science and technology sectors. Accordingly, he expressed that the authority strives to help youths to showcase their works at the expo and create linkage with professionals and investors.

The expo is that will be displayed for five days, co-organized by the Ministry of Skills and Labor, Ministry of Technology, Ethiopian Airlines, Information Network Security Agency (INSA), Artificial Intelligence Institute and others.

### Ministry to institutionalize...

that have been reaped in the implementation of the campaign. “If the campaign is being institutionalized, it would be easy and seamless to lead the entire activity with responsibility.”

According to him, high-level government officials, professionals and other stakeholders have been organized to identify the manufacturing sector gaps and provide the necessary support.

Mentioning the campaign's success in helping 350 manufacturing industries to get back to business last year, the state minister highlighted that consolidated efforts are also

underway to sustain the sector's growth.

“Owing to the *Let Ethiopia Produce* program, the private sector's interest to invest in the manufacturing industry has been intensified. Also, the progress that has been witnessed in financial provision and forex allocation are attributed to the campaign.”

Tarekegn further noted that the government has given prime attention to enhance productivity in the manufacturing industry that is witnessed in the Second Home Grown Economic Reform. Creating macroeconomic stability and enabling business environment as well

as improving productivity and administration systems are the four main points stipulated in the reform.

“Having capitalized on these points, it is possible to make Ethiopia the manufacturing industry's hub. Nonetheless, ‘*Let Ethiopia Produce*’ should not be regarded as a one time job. Rather the reform activities that were executed throughout the year should be supported through the campaign.”

In light of the above, this year's ‘*Let Ethiopia Produce*’ campaign will be carried out through different activities, it was learned.

### Ethiopia working...

rights are inextricably linked.

He added that Africa's foremost agenda remains achieving lasting peace, inclusivity, and sustainable development that respect the dignity of every African.

Demeke also pointed out that the right to development should be a crucial tool to accelerate the implementation of the UN Agenda 2030 and Agenda 2063: “The Africa We Want of the African Union that complements each other”

In particular, he stressed Ethiopia's recognition of the right to development and its crucial elements, including participation, equity, and property rights.

According to Ethiopia's Ten-Year Development Plan, respecting human rights and dignity, creating peace, and achieving sustainable development are all aspects of peace and development, he noted.

He also expressed Ethiopia's continued commitment to addressing all legitimate requests of its people peacefully, and will continue to build inclusive political and economic institutions to advance balanced and integrated development.

In addition, he pointed out that Ethiopia advocates and implements the right to development in accordance with national contexts and priorities.

He expressed his confidence that the conference would explore how the right to development should be prioritized in promoting climate justice, trade, and investment, including by harnessing the African Continental Free Trade Area.

Finally, he extended his gratitude to the African Union Commission and the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights for co-organizing the consultation meeting, as per Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) Ethiopia.

### Japan remains committed...

With regard to the speedy implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), he disclosed that the private sector in Japan has a very ambitious expectation.

“AfCFTA would enable a Japanese company that makes direct investments in any one country in Africa to reach out to all countries in the continent,” Ambassador Horiuchi noted.

To facilitate the realization of AfCFTA, Africa should streamline its infrastructure development, standardize its customs clearance system as well as boost industrialization, he explained.

In this regard, Ambassador Horiuchi said that Japan is working in partnership with the AUDANEPAD on the implementation of pan African project called Program for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA). Japan commends AfCFTA as it helps discourage the tendency for protectionism.

“AfCFTA demonstrates Africa's aspiration towards free trade. Japan is also at the forefront of free trade and works together to maximize intra-African trade,” the Ambassador indicated.

Ambassador Horiuchi has also expressed admiration to the efforts of the current African generation to apply the free trade

area to abolish the colonial borders that separated African countries away from each other.

Ambassador Horiuchi further recalled that Japan and Africa have been expediting multifaceted collaboration through the Tokyo International Conference on Africa's Development (TICAD) for almost three decades.

He appreciated the progresses the continent displayed over the years in many sectors especially in security, economy and health.

Next TICAD is scheduled to hold its upcoming summit in 2024 in the Japanese City of Yokohama.

### Premier urges public...

Commending the youth for their relentless efforts to keep the progress of their country, the PM stressed that no one gets suffered if Ethiopians especially the young generation exercise benevolence. “The youth need to capitalize on this sacred virtue to help Ethiopia achieve lasting peace and prosperity in the years to come.”

Some 24 million Ethiopian youth participated in various voluntary programs last year. The Ministry of Women and Social Affairs' estimation indicated that this voluntary service amounted to over 17 million Birr.

The Benevolence Day ceremony was attended by high-level government officials,

invited guests as well as a number of youth volunteers drawn from each state.

It is to be recalled that the government decided to celebrate the six days of Ethiopia's iconic month of *Pagumen* in different mottos and labeled *Pagumen* Three as the Day of Benevolence.



# Opinion

## Exchange in Civilizations: Language as a Bridge

BY BALEW DEMISSIE (PhD)

Joining BRICS is a new starting point for Ethiopia to strengthen the overall cooperation and exchange with other member countries. The exchange in civilizations is a fundamental aspect in which language and culture play a role. Language serves as a bridge that facilitates effective communication and enables deeper connections between nations. By cultivating language skills and promoting language exchange programs, Ethiopia can create an environment conducive to meaningful dialogue and collaboration. In addition, cultural exchange initiatives provide a unique opportunity for people-to-people interactions that foster mutual understanding, appreciation, and respect for the diverse cultural heritage of each country.

China is a cradle of world civilization with a history of over five thousand years. It has produced remarkable thinkers and left a rich philosophical heritage. These thinkers founded unique schools of thought that have been continuously interpreted and developed throughout history. The teachings of Confucius, such as the ideals of “humanity” and “harmony,” are still relevant and alive in today’s China and other Asian countries. Confucius, the founder of Confucianism, was a great educator, thinker, and philosopher. Confucius’ teachings emphasized moral and ethical principles, the importance of education for all, and the recognition of differences in human relationships. His ideas about benevolence and harmonious coexistence are valued to this day. His sayings and behaviors were summarized by his students in the *Analects* of Confucius. Confucius is widely revered in China and is recognized as a cultural celebrity by UNESCO.

The Confucius Institutes, named after the philosopher, play an important role in promoting Chinese language and culture around the world. They work with local educational institutions to support Chinese language teaching and have made significant contributions to China’s authentic stories through cultural diplomacy, language promotion and educational exchange. The institutes introduce China’s heritage, traditions and contemporary culture, and contribute to cultural exchange and strengthening China’s relations with other nations. In particular, the development of Confucius Institutes in Africa reflects the deepening of China-Africa trade and exchanges, promotes understanding, cooperation and economic development, and strengthens mutual trust between China and Africa.

According to the Chinese Ministry of Education, by the end of 2021, Chinese language learning was available in more than 180 countries and regions around the world. In addition, the Chinese language has been incorporated into the national education systems of 76 countries, and nearly 200 million people have received Chinese language training.

The Confucius Institute at Addis Ababa University, located on the main campus of Addis Ababa University, is co hosted by Tianjin University of Technology and Education (China) and Addis Ababa University (Ethiopia). The Institute aims to provide opportunities for Ethiopians to learn the Chinese language and understand Chinese culture. It serves as a platform for cultural exchange between China and Ethiopia and promotes friendship between

the two countries. The Institute primarily focuses on Chinese language teaching and training, but also organizes cultural activities and exchanges with the local community and the international community in Ethiopia. It can also empower individuals to contribute to Ethiopia’s economic growth and international trade relations, including diplomatic status, through language teaching, cultural exchange and educational cooperation. In cooperation with various institutions, the Institute has organized events such as the Chinese Bridge Competition, the Chinese Film Festival, the Chinese Singing Competition, the Chinese-Ethiopian Knowledge Competition and the Chinese New Year Festival. It also plans to participate in translation and interpretation work in the two countries.

In September 2012, Addis Ababa University introduced Chinese degree program and recruited local students, marking a historic breakthrough in the introduction of Chinese degree program in Ethiopia. Currently, Addis Ababa University offers bachelor’s and master’s degrees in Chinese majors. This underscores the increasing recognition and demand for Chinese language education in Ethiopia. In addition, the institute opened a Master’s degree program in Teaching Chinese to Speakers of Other Languages (MTC SOL) in 2022. This degree program, which teaches Chinese as a second language to non-native speakers, is designed to equip individuals with the necessary skills and knowledge to teach Chinese in various educational settings such as language institutes, schools, and universities.

The introduction of these BA and MA programs and short-term courses reflects the continuous efforts to promote and facilitate Chinese language learning at the higher education level. Since the official establishment of the Confucius Institute at Addis Ababa University in 2013, thousands of Ethiopian students have benefited from the various Chinese language programs. The Institute is co-managed by the Chinese and Ethiopian directors, with professional teachers taking the main teaching responsibilities. The Institute also offers additional Chinese courses and training programs beyond regular classes, including for officials of the Ethiopian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the African Union, the Ethiopian Immigration Service, and Civil Service, as well as for Ethiopian employees in Chinese companies and local Chinese language teachers in some secondary schools.

Chinese President Xi Jinping proposed the Global Civilization Initiative this year, indicated that in an increasingly interconnected world, cultural exchange and educational cooperation play an important role in shaping global relations. The Confucius Institute at Addis Ababa University in Ethiopia is a shining example of the Global Civilization Initiative. Established with the goal of promoting mutual understanding and friendship between Chinese and people from other countries, the Institute has become a significant force in Ethiopia’s pursuit of development and its commitment to the advancement of global civilization. With its focus on promoting Chinese language and culture, the Confucius Institute at Addis Ababa University acts as a catalyst for strengthening Ethiopia-China relations and as a bridge to promote exchanges between the two Great Civilizations with long histories and significant contributions to human civilization. The two

nations have left lasting traces in various fields of human development. The Institute plays an important role in promoting Chinese language teaching, cultural understanding and educational exchanges. Its contributions have a positive impact on Ethiopia-China bilateral and multilateral relations by strengthening mutual cooperation and fostering a deeper understanding of each other’s culture.

The Institute by providing quality language courses has enabled Ethiopian students, professionals, the Addis Ababa University community, and the general public to acquire a valuable skill that opens up numerous opportunities. Chinese language skills have become increasingly important in the global job market given China’s economic success and its role as a major player in international affairs. The Institute’s language programs give participants a competitive edge, improve their employability, and facilitate intercultural dialog. Beyond language instruction, the Institute serves as a hub for promoting cultural exchanges between Ethiopia and China. It organizes various cultural events, including traditional music and dance performances, art exhibitions, and lectures on Chinese tea, medicine, history, and philosophy. These activities serve not only to deepen mutual understanding but also to promote lasting people-to-people ties. By showcasing the richness of Chinese culture, the Institute helps bridge the gap between the two nations and promote friendship and cooperation. This year marked the 10th Anniversary of the Belt and Road initiative. Chinese President Xi Jinping proposed that the countries’ trust and cooperation lies in the people to people bond. As a booster of economic and trade cooperation, the people to people bond will enhance strategic mutual trust and open ideas, and help to have a better understanding of the Belt and Road Initiative.

The Confucius Institute at Addis Ababa University has played a pivotal role in strengthening educational ties between Ethiopia and China. It promotes academic exchanges that enable Ethiopian students and scholars to further their education in China and vice versa. Through scholarships and joint research projects, it promotes knowledge exchange and cooperation in various fields, including humanities, science, technology, agriculture and medicine. Such partnerships contribute to Ethiopia’s capacity-building efforts and facilitate the transfer of valuable expertise, ultimately promoting the country’s sustainable development.

Same in China, Beijing Foreign Studies University has introduced a groundbreaking program offering the Amharic language, the federal working language of Ethiopia, at the undergraduate level. This initiative is of great importance in strengthening the comprehensive strategic partnership between China and Ethiopia and for Africa as a whole. Given the strong trade and investment ties between China and Ethiopia, graduates proficient in Amharic are likely to be in high demand and offer promising job prospects. The initiative is the result of a cooperation agreement between the two Universities.

The program opens new opportunities for Chinese students who want to learn Amharic in China. Students have also the opportunity to study in Ethiopia for a few months during their

third year, further improving their language proficiency and cultural understanding. Ethiopian language and literature professors also pay a visit to Beijing Foreign Studies University, which holds a prestigious position as the country’s foreign language university and known for its language programs, foreign literature, and overseas sinology.

Ethiopia’s relationship with China has seen significant economic growth in recent years, with Chinese investment and infrastructure projects shaping the country’s development landscape. Thus, the Confucius Institute acts as a catalyst in this process, serving as a platform for promoting economic cooperation between Ethiopia and China. It offers Chinese language courses, facilitates exchanges between Ethiopian and Chinese entrepreneurs, and promotes economic partnerships. By cultivating a business-friendly ecosystem, the Institute contributes to Ethiopia’s economic diversification and promotes mutually beneficial trade relations.

The presence of the Confucius Institute at Addis Ababa University has made it an attractive destination for individuals and organizations seeking to engage with China and gain insights into the broader African context. The Institute’s activities extend beyond Ethiopia’s borders and promote regional integration through collaboration with other Confucius Institutes in Africa and higher education institutions in China. This network facilitates knowledge sharing, cultural exchange, and joint initiatives, and strengthens the relationship between African countries and China.

By learning the Chinese language, Ethiopians can better understand Chinese culture, history and society, which can foster people-to-people connections and improve economic, educational and diplomatic relations. In addition, cultural exchanges, such as art exhibitions, performances, and cultural festivals, provide a platform for people from both countries to share their traditions, values, and artistic expressions. These exchanges promote cultural appreciation, intercultural dialog, and the development of lasting friendships. By promoting mutual understanding, supporting educational opportunities, and facilitating economic cooperation, the Confucius Institute contributes to Ethiopia’s socioeconomic progress while fostering lasting partnerships. As Ethiopia continues to pave its way in the global order, the Confucius Institute remains an important pillar that builds bridges between cultures, broadens horizons, and enriches the country’s path to a brighter future.

As Ethiopia embraces its role as an emerging power, the Confucius Institute at Addis Ababa University and the Amharic degree program in the Beijing Foreign Studies University will continue to play a key role in empowering individuals, fostering cooperation, and contributing to the two countries’ relations by promoting understanding, facilitating language learning, and supporting cross-cultural connections.

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



# Editorial

## Productivity for all round change!

Productivity plays a key role in ensuring sustainable development of a given country. Productivity, in economics, measures output per unit of input, such as labor, capital, or any other resource. It is often calculated for the economy as a ratio of gross domestic product (GDP) to hours worked.

Ethiopia, as an emerging economy, has paid due attention to the sector not only to survive as a nation, but also to be competent in the ever changing global market. While marking today, (4th Pagumen), the thirteenth month, as a “Productivity Day”, it is exhibiting commitment to inculcate essentiality of the concept into the citizens thereby initiating for pragmatic action.

Productivity as a wide concept includes provision of sufficient inputs, healthy process or ease of doing business and competitive output.

The major input and the core engine in effectuating productivity is human capital and it begins with empowering this working force with knowledge, skills, use of technology and work discipline. Besides, availing technology and energy supply are among the main ingredients.

In order to aggrandize production and productivity, coordinated use of human capital, technology and energy are of great importance.

Let's take the agriculture sector, for instance. As it is the mainstay of the nation's economy, it is mandatory to apply effective use on wide arable land resource, trained human power, agricultural inputs and all options of production such as weather, landscape and appropriate technology. In so doing, agricultural productivity will be augmented; food self-sufficiency will be ensured and by large, export diversity will be attained that resulted in garnering foreign currency.

By the same token, it is the order of the day capitalizing on the manufacturing industry to be competent globally in terms of providing diversified products in quantity and quality. Extracting the ever growing international market and keeping up there being an actor is an imperative need to present with the products the global market needs more.

What the Ethiopian government is working diligently to enlarge production process is attracting investment especially the foreign direct investment, replicating industrial parks, and modernizing the process via improving legal frameworks and minimizing bureaucratic hurdles.

It is also essential to put on the ground “Made in Ethiopia” (ETHIOPIA TAMRT), a national program launched last year by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed with a view to creating a competitive manufacturing industry by addressing the challenges facing the sector in a sustainable, integrated, and comprehensive manner.

Going through all these, we can be beneficiary as a nation, as a community and as an individual from the outcomes of our concerted efforts. In due course, we can enlarge our foreign trade in quantity and diversity and we can reap increased forex. Plus, we can save remarkable amount of hard currency spent on importation by substituting imported goods with local products in a sufficient volume.

As long as productivity increases and investment expands, the bulging youth in need of job will become agent of development. This enables them not only to be productive in their country but also safeguards them from dangers they face in the wilderness and overseas when migrating illegally in search of better life.

The productivity trajectory, though it has ample of favorable conditions, it is not free from challenges. We have a long way to go in easing the way we do business. The reforms on sectoral, legal and other areas must gain a further momentum.

Thus, it is the responsibility of everyone especially the concerned government entities to take fundamental measure with commitment to circumvent the problems aiming to accelerate the economic growth. So, when observing “Productivity Day”, it is relevant to focus on decent jobs, convenient working environment, disciplined work culture and efficient bureaucracy.

# Opinion

## Enhancing Productivity for national economic development

BY SOLOMON DIBABA

On the fourth day of Pagumen, the two days before the New Year, Ethiopians in all walks of life are keen to enhance their productivity in every sector of the national socio-economic development.

Productivity is commonly defined as a ratio between the output volume and the volume of inputs. In other words, it measures how efficiently production inputs, such as labor and capital, are being used in an economy to produce a given level of output. Productivity is considered a key source of economic growth and competitiveness and, as such, is basic statistical information for many international comparisons and country performance assessments. (Paul Krugman, The Age of Diminishing Expectations (1994))

Productivity data are used to investigate the impact of product and labor market regulations on economic performance. Productivity growth constitutes an important element for modelling the productive capacity of economies. It also allows analysts to determine capacity utilization, which in turn allows one to gauge the position of economies in the business cycle and to forecast economic growth. In addition, production capacity is used to assess demand and inflationary pressures. There are different measures of productivity and the choice between them depends either on the purpose of the productivity measurement and/or data availability. One of the most widely used measures of productivity is Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per hour worked. This measure captures the use of labor inputs better than just output per employee. (Paul: 1994).

Productivity is an economic concept put to use for measuring the scale of input-output ration in various sector of the economy including manufacturing, service, and agriculture, mining and all relevant sectors. In Ethiopia as 85% of the labor force is engaged in agriculture, productivity and production are mostly attributed to this sector followed by the manufacturing sector. As indicated above, productivity, according to the author is not restricted only to few sectors of the economy but embraces all sectors in which the ration of input to output is measured.

The level of productivity in Ethiopian industries fairly depends upon the quality and quantity of inputs, the structure of industries including their low level of infrastructure development, the level of professional management and labor efficiency and the link between various branches of the manufacturing sector.

Establishing sustained connection between manufacturing industries that produce outputs that can be used by similar industries in the sector is very important for the promotion productivity in the various branches of the manufacturing industries.

The level of productivity in the Ethiopian manufacturing sector has been growing steadily since 2005 but due to low level of digitalization and lack of modern machinery and raw materials for the manufacturing industries and a host of other challenges related to finance and manpower development challenges have remained as some of the bottlenecks in the sector.

A number of manufacturing industries have applied the Kaizen Philosophy in their management of production at factory and

enterprise level. This has proved to increase productivity and also cost effective.

Technological innovations introduced in assembly line production in textile and apparel industries has helped to enhance productivity. The manufacturing sector in Ethiopia is still labor intensive but certainly employ a considerable number of the work force in the sector.

The government has been able to relatively improve agricultural production and productivity by providing various agricultural inputs and the introduction of cluster farming system across the country. This approach has proven to be useful for the increase in agricultural productivity. In addition, due to the measures taken in agricultural mechanization in most parts of the country has helped to improve productivity in the sector. The introduction of new technologies and promotion of mid-level and large scale irrigation schemes in various parts of the country along with supply of improved varieties of seeds, organic and inorganic fertilizers have help to improve productivity in the sector.

Reports that came out on the performance of the 2015 E.C fiscal year showed that as the result of measures taken to improve the quality and quantity of export from coffee the nation has been able to earn 897 million USD.

Over the last several years production and productivity in the agriculture sector has improved and their share in the national GDP has tended to increase.

What are some of the ways in which productivity can be increased in the manufacturing sector. The first step is to know what problems the workers are facing. The workers are at the center of manufacturing productivity, and project managers should begin by assessing the workforce. You need to understand the problems workers are facing that are reducing their productivity. First, the management has to establish that the right people working in the teams so that they can properly utilize the available resources and tools.

It is also very important to carefully evaluate existing workflow processes to determine how they can be improved. If there are any roadblocks in the process, ask for feedback from workers so you can plan a remedy. Also, you should explore the available technologies and equipment that can help workers improve their productivity with minimum effort.

One area of improving productivity is skill training and up grading for workers. If you find that workers lack essential skills, then it is vital to invest in training employees. Companies can improve manufacturing efficiency by implementing a training program to ensure proper coordination of workers and processes.

Industry experts agree that employee training is the cornerstone of every productivity strategy. Manufacturing companies should prioritize regular training and maintain detailed training logs of workers. To improve employee efficiency, as a manager, you can set up a personalized schedule for employees to track their progress over time.

Last but not least, implementing labor safety measures and creating a peaceful environment in and out of the manufacturing industries will help workers to accomplish their duties in a more relaxed manner.

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



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# Art & Culture

## Proving productive with one hand tied behind one's back

BY ALEM HAILU G/KRISTOS

At sundown, after tackling the task of covering the column of Herald's Art page when I was about to head home, at EPA's gate, I came across a middle-aged lady looking for a journalist that could write an open letter to her on Addis Zemen Gazette so that higher officials at the Ministry of Education (MoE), which she could not manage to get for some reasons, address her problem.

Tears were trickling down her cheeks. "You better come tomorrow as most of the journalists that concluded the day's work have just left,"

"Yes I should have come earlier. I came from the outskirts of Addis. We shifted from Abenet to Taffo recently," she wiped her tears with a handkerchief.

"But what is the pressing issue?" I eyed her.

"You see my daughter is deaf and mute. She was an intelligent girl and a top -ranking student. At elementary school level students of her liking with special needs were getting fair services. Also teachers conversant in sign language that know the respective subject matter were present for translation. But the assistance and services began to dwindle at high school level. Special need students, especially in preparatory school, observably, do not have relevant textbooks, references and teaching aids tailored for them."

"I see they struggle hard to go up the academic ladder!"

"Yes they are doomed to fight with one hand tied behind their back. You have got the point. How could they compete unlash their potential to the full in the red hot school leaving exam?"

"How is your daughter currently performing at school?"

"Comparing her past and present performances she has turned diffident. She was about to dropout had I not implored her on my knees to fight to the finish."

"Tell her the MOE has a policy that tilts the balance towards students living with disability and girl students who were suffering unfair treatments. Give me your phone number. I will inform your complaint to some journalists who adore addressing burning social issues. They could write articles or produce news out of your case."



"Please do that as soon as possible," she said.

"By the way there is an Ethiopian deaf blind lady acclaimed globally for outshining given her condition. I think her name is Haben Girma. She is an American disability rights advocate, and the first deaf blind graduate of Harvard Law School. Once Obama named her a White House Champion of Change. Tell this story to your daughter as the lady could serve her a role model."

"You are right. I will scour the internet to get her address."

"Yes she may be interested to establish NGO that works in the area by way of assisting the government in filling gaps."

"How helpful that would be," she put her arms on her heart.

Unfortunately days later when a journalist that was preparing news out of her case crunched her number to substantiate the news with interviewees he could not reach her. He used another interviewee. Later I learned, in a hurry, she forgot to grab her phone when she went out to report to duty.

I met her for the second time at the same spot. After exchanging greetings she said "the school leaving result is released. My daughter's result is a tad lower than the qualification point. What am I going to do?"

"Do not worry MoE has promised a second chance of examination after a tutorial service for students whose grades clustered around the lower boundary. For sure she will make

it," I expressed optimism.

When I met her for the third time it was with a sunlight stamped face she approached me.

"She made it as you prophesied!"

"Congratulations! How productive she is! With limited input she came up with a higher output! That is how individual productivity is established."

"Yes we could not compare the results of those living with disability with that of those fighting in full shape. We have to learn to favor those fighting against all odds."

This story made me to revert back and think about the poems I inked regarding fighting against all odds and emerging successful. I remember seeing firsthand a hand-deprived man making tables and chairs using his legs as hands. I also know a youngster in the same boat painting with his mouth.

Overcoming constraints like fertilizer, tractors and the like Ethiopia has emerged successful in bumper wheat production boasting quality wheat export.

Let me bow out with my poem I mentioned above.

Psychological dome

Forcing passersby

Curious for peep stand,

Swelling a throng

By every square

Or a roadside

Using his right leg

A nimble right hand

With the other holding

The artifact items hard

A hand-less man

Makes attractive tables

and stools

Hammering nails

and cutting woods

The way the task demand,

A task many normal people

imagine to handle hard.

Those who appreciate

his talent

Throw coins, Birr Notes—

A tip for his pocket,

While some buy

The artifact items

He puts up for market.

Aside from eking out

a leaving

He hits home

The psychological dome

"Disability is not inability!"

In its domain there is

Room for productivity "

In a similar case

An art mentor

And an apprentice

Draw many a

wonderful picture

With his mouth

the latter

In a manner

Attention that capture

Hitting home "Some qualities

If deprived by mother nature

Other qualities man could nurture! "

## To be more efficient

BY SENAIT G/HIWOT

According to Lila Landowski, a neuroscientist and lecturer at the University of Tasmania there are things we can do to learn faster and more efficiently.

For us to learn neuroplasticity needs to happen which is the brain's ability to physically change in response to experiences. Inability to learn quickly usually stems from

the disconnection of synapses in the brain... so for them to reconnect we have to

1. Pay attention: we have the ability to choose how much attention we pay to things. Don't use your phones too much it makes you less attentive. Exercise and meditation help.

2. Alertness: while chronic stress has the ability to diminish your alertness normal bits of stress help improve alertness by

increasing adrenaline. Exercise, breathing, and cold shower, caffeine also help. Eating big meals usually switches off our alertness.... sleep is crucial for alertness.

3. Repetition: It is key when it comes to learning. By neuroplasticity you are making brand new connections, and it is done by repetition.

4. Breaks: Are really important for learning

by giving a chance to replay the information afterwards. Take a 10-20 min break after you finish learning.

5. Mistakes: Mistakes increase the level of anxiety which serves a really important purpose by saying Hey! you need to be more efficient and open the window for neuroplasticity. Don't wait everything to be perfect.



## Law & Politics

# Connecting people and communities: How productivity serves as a bridge

BY ADDISALEM MULAT

Productivity, which is the act of being productive or industrious, plays a vital role in uniting members of society. Those who are committed to improving their lives and the lives of those around them are usually the most involved in society. These individuals are the ones who rally for change, actively search for relevant information, and play a crucial part in local initiatives geared towards enhancing the quality of life of residents.

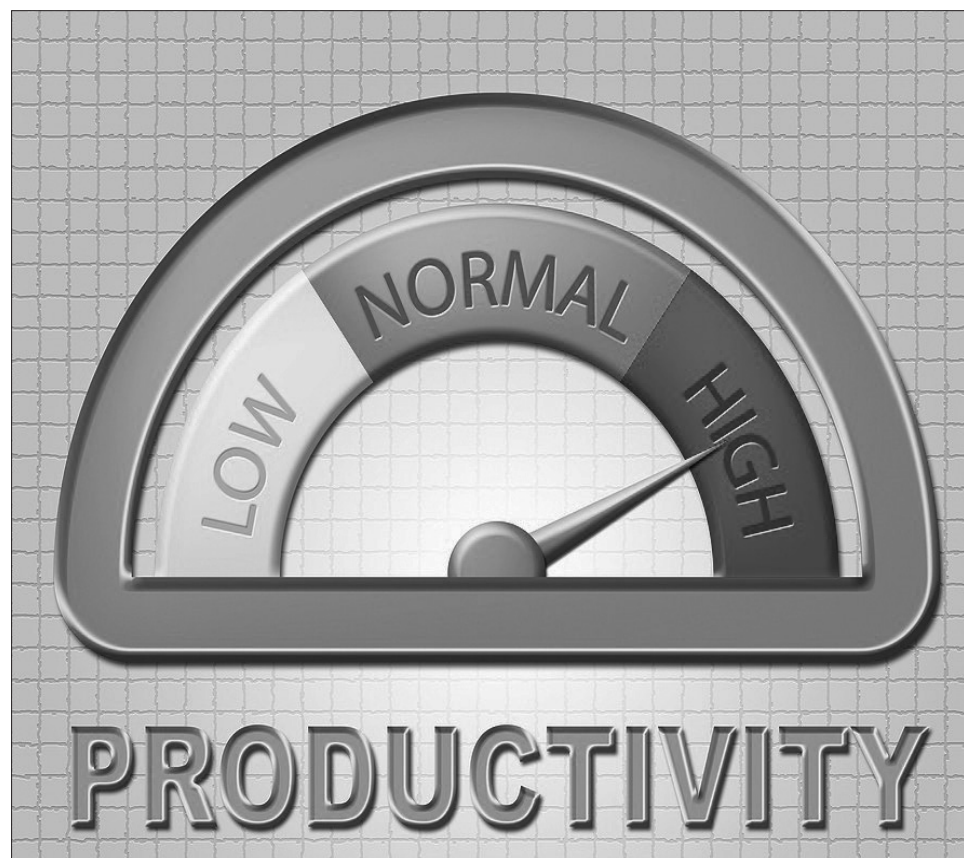
Productivity enhances economic growth, community development, and social well-being which are crucial to fostering unity and togetherness. People who are propelled by productivity take on the mantle of advocacy, socio-economic transformation, and community development which are all key drivers for societal growth and success. By recognizing the importance of being productive, individuals can become more responsible citizens who take an active role in creating positive societal change.

Productivity plays a significant role in bringing the general public together. People who work to create a better future for themselves and their communities are often those who are the most engaged with society. They are the ones who advocate for change, who seek out information, and who contribute to local efforts to improve living conditions.

Industriousness shows how as an individual, one can contribute to society by developing one's potential and using it to help others. It makes a difference in the social and economic outcomes of a community. Such people can enhance productivity and create jobs, making life better for others. Industrious people bring communities together by creating an environment of mutual support and cooperation. By working towards common goals, communities become more cohesive, and they become more proactive in solving shared problems and dealing with shared challenges.

Industriousness provides an alternate to social conflicts and unrest. When people are engaged in productive pursuits, they are less likely to get involved in activities that tear communities apart. Work and productivity keep the mind and body occupied, allowing people to focus on positive outcomes, rather than being predisposed to negativity.

Industriousness is a quality that is characterized by perseverance, diligence, and a strong work ethic. It involves consistently working hard and focusing on one's goals, while continuously improving one's skills. This quality has been instrumental in driving the success of communities and societies by enabling individuals to achieve their full potential and contribute to the development of their



communities.

Industrious people often take the initiative in community projects and seek out avenues to enhance living standards in their communities. They strive to make their communities more amenable by spearheading and taking part in projects that include cleaning up their neighborhoods, promoting cleanliness, planting trees, and addressing other social issues. This empowers people by giving them a stake in their communities and creates an atmosphere of collaboration, which is a key factor in building a unified society.

Productivity, therefore, has a significant impact on the mental and physical wellbeing of individuals, which in turn enhances their ability to contribute to society. When people are productive, they demonstrate a sense of purpose and feel more confident in their abilities. This, in turn, produces a positive feedback loop that creates a strong sense of community among people. As such, being industrious has an essential role to play in promoting happiness and contentment among individuals, which is a critical feature of social well-being.

When people work hard and are productive, they often exhibit a sense of responsibility towards their communities. They appreciate the benefits that come with working collaboratively, and tend to seek out others to ensure the continuation of this virtuous cycle. Through productivity, people develop leadership skills and other key attributes that are crucial in advancing a shared purpose. This mobilizes people behind common goals which promote more significant collaboration, pool of resources, and opportunities for investment.

Productivity is a crucial aspect of human life. People who strive for a better future for themselves and their communities through hard work and determination are the ones who bring about change. They are usually more engaged in society than those who are idle and do nothing to improve their lives or the lives of those around them.

As people achieve their goals, they inspire others to do the same, creating a ripple effect that spreads throughout their community. People who are productive tend to be more engaged with society. They are often the ones who advocate for change and seek out information about how they can make a difference in their community. They are not content with the status quo and actively work to improve living conditions for themselves and others.

Productivity also provides a sense of purpose and fulfillment. When people work hard and contribute to the betterment of their community, they feel a sense of pride and accomplishment. This sense of purpose is not limited to personal success but extends to the success of their community. People who are productive are invested in their community's success and strive to improve it in any way possible.

As they work towards their goals, they gain a sense of fulfillment that comes from making a positive impact on their world. Furthermore, productivity creates an opportunity for personal growth. Those who work hard and strive for success develop valuable skills that enable them to achieve their goals. As they work to improve their lives and their community, they learn to become more resourceful, creative, and adaptable. These skills are transferable to

other areas of life, allowing them to continue to grow and learn even after they have achieved their initial goals.

By being productive, individuals are able to demonstrate their sense of purpose and direction, which can be a powerful source of inspiration for others. Productive people serve as role models for their peers and those looking to improve their own lives. Their successes can encourage others to strive towards their goals, and to pursue excellence in their endeavors. They are not deterred by setbacks and are willing to work hard to overcome challenges.

Industriousness is important not just for individual success, but also for the prosperity of society as a whole. When individuals are productive, they can create value and contribute to economic growth. This, in turn, can lead to the creation of new jobs and opportunities, which can benefit the community as a whole. Industriousness is also important in promoting social development and cohesion. When individuals are engaged in productive work, they can contribute to the betterment of their communities and the development of social institutions.

This can foster a sense of shared purpose and camaraderie within the community as individuals work together towards a common goal. It is also an important factor in personal growth and fulfillment. By working hard and pursuing one's goals, individuals can achieve a sense of accomplishment and satisfaction that can be deeply fulfilling.

This, in turn, can help to foster a positive outlook on life and increase one's overall well-being. Thus, industriousness is a quality that is essential to success, personal growth, and societal development. By embodying this quality and striving for excellence in all that we do, individuals can achieve their full potential and contribute to the betterment of their communities and the world at large.

The modern world is characterized by fast-paced and ever-changing demands that require dynamic responses. This makes productivity all the more necessary as it provides leaders with the necessary tools to handle the challenges that arise. Productivity encourages transparency and accountability, ensuring that political leaders deliver tangible benefits that positively impact their constituents.

Industries that are productive tend to be more efficient, innovative, and profitable. This, in turn, leads to greater job growth and increased economic activity benefiting both individuals and society at large. Productivity in politics can also have a significant impact on social issues. It brings individuals and groups with diverse backgrounds together, creating a sense of unity and solidarity, leading to the realization of set goals. By embracing productivity and delivering tangible results, leaders can inspire the general public to get more involved in the political process.



# Astrophysicist explains about unique features of the Ethiopian calendar

BY GIRMACHEW GASHAW

According to the Ethiopian calendar, today is the 4th of Pagumen 2015. Ethiopians are bracing to celebrate the New Year, 2016 after two days. One of the unique cultural features of Ethiopia is its calendar. The country sticks to a Julian calendar based on solar days, which has 365 days where 12 months have 30 days each and the thirteenth month, Pagumen has five days normally and 6 days on leap years. Since this year is a leap year according to Ethiopian Calendar the month is 6 days long.

Today's guest, Getnet Feleke (PhD), is an Astrophysicist. He studied for a doctoral degree in South Africa. Back home, he is currently working in the physics department at Kotebe Education University. In his short stay with him, the Ethiopian Herald raised various inquiries related to the Ethiopian calendar, astronomy, and the New Year. Have a nice read!

## What does astronomy mean? What is its importance?

Astronomy is a science that deals with the origin, evolution, composition, distance, and motion of all bodies and scattered matter in the universe. It includes astrophysics, which discusses the physical properties and structure of all cosmic matter. So, we can study about stars, planets, galaxies, etc.

## Is there any difference between astrology and astronomy? How far has Ethiopia been going in this regard?

People confuse these two terms: astrology and astronomy. Astronomy is the actual science of stars. But astrology is not a science. It's a kind of pseudoscience. So it is related to fortune-telling. They may consider stars, planets, or other celestial objects. But it's kind of a prediction, not a science; it's not provable. So it is a way of determining the fate of humans. This is not the topic of astronomy and there is a huge difference between these two fields.

## How did Ethiopia manage to develop its calendar?

Well, that is a big question. Ethiopians have their calendar. First of all, we have to ask: when did we start counting time or using a calendar? To answer this question, we have considered the Ethiopian calendar and the Gregorian calendar specifically. We have had our coding system since the creation of human beings.

We started with our concept. So the creation of human beings is the baseline of coding for the Ethiopian calendar; Ethiopian counting is more than 7000 years old. For example, the coming New Year is 2016 according to the Ethiopian calendar. If you count the whole year—the years before and after the birth of Jesus Christ—it will be 7516 years. As I previously stated, the baseline of our calendar is the creation of the world. So, we have 5500 years before Jesus Christ and 2016 after the coming of Jesus. There is some kind of history there.

So, people were counting the time since Adam and Eve made some kinds of mistakes. They have been counting time using the stars, moon, and sun. So, different groups of people were counting

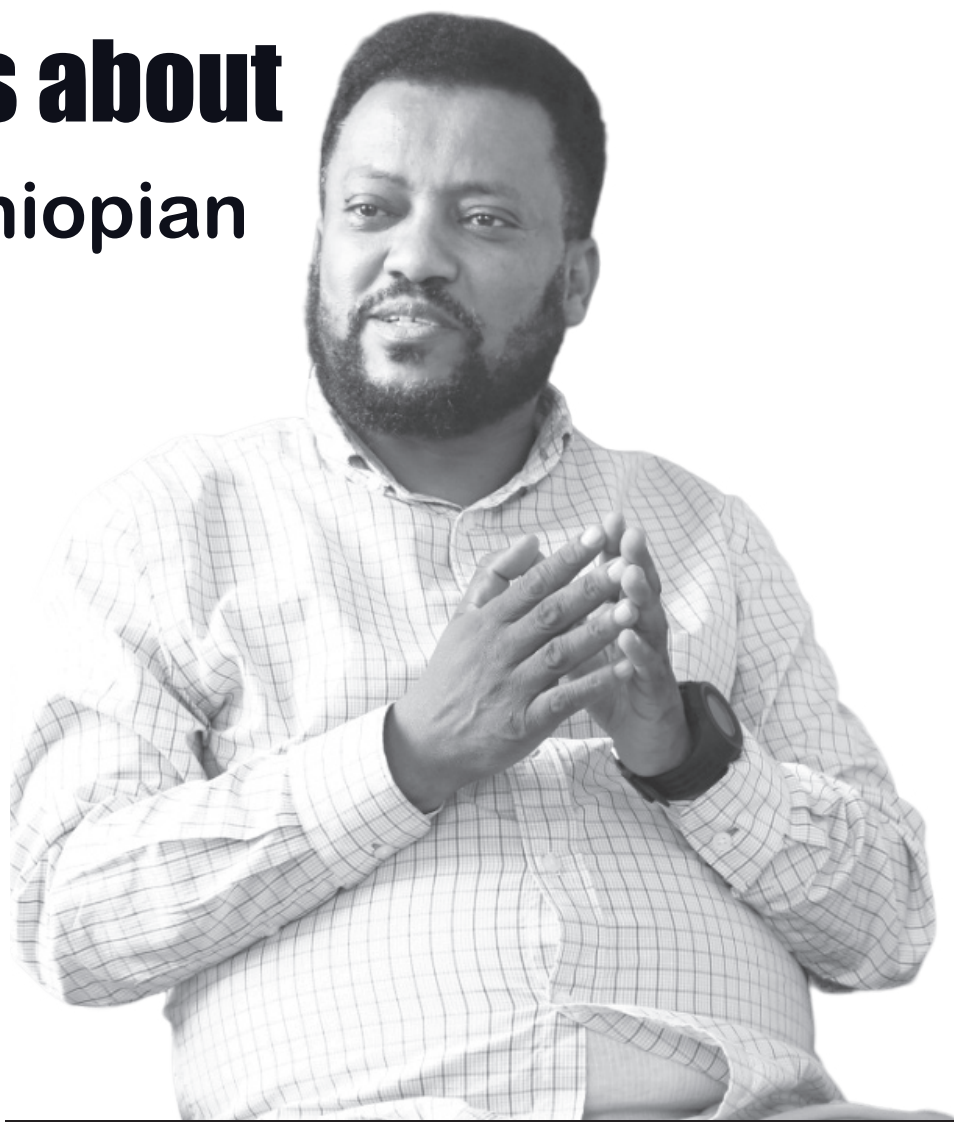
time. So they have been counting down from 5500 to the birth of Jesus Christ. We again started counting just after the birth of Jesus Christ, and this year it is 2016.

So our basis for counting calendars is the creation of the world. It goes to the history of Adam in the Bible. But when we consider the Gregorian calendar, it is not based on the Bible or such kinds of things; it is instead based on the establishment of Rome. It is about 503 years from the birth of Christ. So, their calendar is based on the establishment of Rome. This means we have a basic difference in how to start counting time. So, the baseline of counting time, or initial point of counting, brought a seven- and eight-year difference between the Ethiopian and Gregorian calendars. There was a *Roman monk named Dionysius Exiguus*. He was responsible for discovering the name of Christ as the starting point of computation. He considered the establishment of Rome, and he also actually tried to refer to many religious documents that made a seven- and eight-year difference. So they believed in different versions of Rome, and they were convinced that this man had made a mistake. Different professionals who wrote a book concerning calendar computation mentioned him as having made a mistake in calendar computation. So that's the basic difference between the Ethiopian and Gregorian calendars. The initial point of our calendar is different from theirs.

## Could you tell us about the 13th month of Ethiopia, known as Pagumen, and how it joined the list of months in the Ethiopian calendar?

When we consider the Ethiopian calendar, the other point people want to focus on is **Pagumen**, or Pagumenal, as we can say in Greek. Again, when we count time in astronomy, we have to define first what a day is, what a month is, and what a year is because the calculation of time is related to the celestial objects.

So when we try to find the definition of a day in Ethiopia and science, it is very different; a month and a year are also different. In science, a day might be considered an average of 24 hours. But it's still been in science for exactly 24



Getnet Feleke (PhD)

**We have had our coding system since the creation of human beings. We started with our concept. So the creation of human beings is the baseline of coding for the Ethiopian calendar; Ethiopian counting is more than 7000 years old**

hours. There is some variation because we consider the rotation or evolution of the Earth around the sun. So it's not exactly 24 hours. Sometimes it becomes less, and sometimes it's about 24 hours—taking an average solar day or a mean solar day. That is what we use currently for watches, computers and things like that. So when you consider an Ethiopian calendar, it's not twenty-four hours, or 24 hours, 21 minutes, and 0.4 seconds. There are additional time fractions.

So, what does this mean when we say we have additional minutes and seconds? What does that bring to our calendar? If you count these 21 minutes, or if you collect all these 21 minutes, it gives us five, six, or seven pagumenal days. Every year, the *Pagume* becomes five days. Once within four years, it becomes six. And every 600 years, it becomes seven *Pagume* days.

If there is a 0.4-second difference per day and if you collect the 0.4 seconds, it becomes a day every 600 years. This is how the difference has been raised in our calendar due to our definition of time: a day, a month, and a year.

## What was the reason for the Ethiopian calendar to start in September?

Human beings should count time. If you are not counting time, you cannot do any activity. Our calendar should be related to seasons, as the main objective of the calendar is to synchronize with seasons so we can accomplish our daily activities or lead our lives properly. So when it's a new year, especially for us, it means a lot because people plan for their future.

In the 2015 Ethiopian calendar, we have been doing a lot of things. When the New Year comes, people frame resolutions

*Continued to Page 9*





## Astrophysicist explains...

to do new things. They change a lot of things. The new year is a way of planning something for ourselves to make ourselves better than the previous year.

The New year is also related to our history. For example, if you want to write about Ethiopian history, you have to go back to the era of Noah and the big floods in the Bible. When we go to the time of Noah, they have been counting the time, especially the year starting from September or a month to start a year. And September is again related to the creation of the world, according to Ethiopians but not the Gregorian calendar.

According to the Ethiopian calendar, we usually celebrate our new year in September because we believe that the creation of human beings was in September. Noah (Character in the Bible) and his family came to Ethiopia in September. They started a new chapter of life. This month, they saw a yellow flower. There are some specific species in Ethiopia—about eight. So when they came here in September, the land was covered with yellow flowers. He said I have got some special gifts from this land.

So, the 1st of Meskerem (September 11) is a new year. Since then, we are still celebrating September as the first Month of the New Year. So, it is everything for us. We are also celebrating many of our traditions and religious festivals this month. If we take *Meskel*, the finding of the true cross is celebrated in this special month, September. *Irrecha*, a Thanksgiving day for the Oromo people, is also taking place this month. September is also a special day for girls who are chanting and dancing about the coming of the New Year. September is also related to our history: the queen of Sheba and King Solomon 2000 years ago, and *Enkutatash* is also related to that one. By and large, it is special for us.

**To what extent is astronomy studied and developed in Ethiopia? Some say Ethiopians were the first to invent the science of stars. So what is your impression of that?**

Some scholars argue that Ethiopians invented the science of the stars and even got the names of planets and stars. Many foreign authors wrote about Ethiopia, especially about astronomy-related cases. I said earlier that we have our calendar. This means if we do not know about astronomy, we basically cannot have our calendar. Unless it has documented knowledge of stars, planets, moons, or suns, a given country cannot bring its calendar. So, at least because we have our calendar, it means that we have a lot of knowledge back in time. That's the case. So many people wrote about us.

As I've said, our definition of time and day is different according to our astronomy than that of science. We have to define the first day and then the most important events throughout the year. So, our definition of a year's event is different from the Gregorian calendar due to the documented knowledge of this wisdom in astronomy.

**Could you say something about the level**



**of astronomy research in Ethiopia?**

Over the last 10 or 15 years, it has been growing fast, especially since the establishment of the Ethiopian Space Science Society (ESSS). A lot of things were done; for example, the Entoto Observatory Research Center is one result of ESSS. I was also part of this group. So, we have only two telescopes. I think the observatory is one of the indicators of space science growth in Ethiopia. And we have been trying to build a big telescope in Lalibela. So this telescope is still under construction.

There is also research conducted by professionals drawn from Bahir Dar University, Woldia University, and Mekelle University. So, we are doing a lot. Currently, for example, people can join Masters and PhD programs in astronomy, which is a big change. In our road map, which was launched seven years ago, we planned to start astronomy at the undergraduate level, but we still didn't do that. It may be a reality in the future.

**Previously, you mentioned some points about the Ethiopian Space Science Society and the Entoto Observatory Research Center. Could you say something about these two concepts?**

The Ethiopian Space Science Society is mostly doing outreach activities to raise awareness among the public. It is not engaged in the actual science. For example, they were teaching kids about astronomy concepts. To do the actual science, they need to have an observatory. Ethiopian Space Science Society started about 16 years ago, and it has been bringing Ethiopian space science and Geodesy institute. So this institute has come to mean a research center called an observatory. There is a research centre for other satellites in it.

At Entoto, you can find this telescope observatory and our satellites together with the receiver. So a lot of things are currently going on there. There are master's and PhD students who have already been conducting research. However, some construction gaps are observed due to various reasons. By and large, we have this science facility.

**As the board chairman of Ethiopian indigenous knowledge, what do you say about home-grown knowledge?**

I am also the board chairman of the Ethiopian Indigenous Knowledge Research and Educational Centre. We are doing a lot of things. For example, this year, for the first time, our students graduated with indigenous knowledge, which is very imperative for the country. So we have been examining indigenous astronomy manuscripts to those essays which were written in Geez.

We also have plant science or herbal science indigenous knowledge. Medicine is one important segment. Several home-grown experiments need to be supported and developed through scientific research. We have also been teaching them cultural conflict resolution methods. In modern science, there are such kinds of things. But we need additional religious, cultural, and indigenous conflict resolution methods to be part of this. And there are also other things that we have included in this year and the coming years. About six cases were observed; we have to adopt some indigenous knowledge. That's what we have been doing up until now.

**About astronomy, what do you wish for Ethiopia to do?**

Currently, especially among youngsters, the kids are highly motivated in astronomy. I wish to have special centres, especially for gifted and talented students. It is imperative to establish educational centres for such students in Addis Ababa and at least some major cities in Ethiopia. I want to have some because those highly motivated kids can solve a lot of problems in our country in science and different fields. I wish to have a huge telescope in the capital city. I wish to have big telescopes in different parts of our country. In addition to that, I wish to have additional space and satellites, especially communication satellites, for our country.

**Thank you very much for your time and we wish you a Happy New Year!**

It is my pleasure.

**According to the Ethiopian calendar, we usually celebrate our new year in September because we believe that the creation of human beings was in September**



# Society

## Enhancing productive capacity, seizing economic opportunities

BY STAFF REPORTER

Whenever the agenda of development is raised, effective utilization of resources and increasing production volume with reduced cost and with better quality, are raised for the reason the two are core matters in a business environment and country's growth.

As it is always indicated, when there is an increase in productivity, there is always an opportunity for competitiveness and growth. It is possible to meet the expectation of customers both at home and abroad, substitute import and promote export, increase foreign exchange earnings which lead to a flourishing economy and at the end of the day advance the socioeconomic development of any country.

However, to this end, devising policies and strategies and working on activities that can support the efforts and accelerate the effectiveness of the mechanism is critical. Equipping the human capital with the desired skills and knowledge, allocating sufficient resources, utilizing natural resources effectively and efficiently, and closing the gaps that hinders productivity is key.

In this regard, over the past three or four years, Ethiopia has been working persistently. It launched a comprehensive homegrown economic program that targets 'to expand



the country's economic capabilities, create employment opportunities for millions of unemployed youth, and promote inclusiveness, and seize the opportunity for growth and realize Ethiopia's prosperity.'

While launching the program, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed said: "The Reform Agenda is our pro-job, pro-growth, and pro-inclusivity pathway to prosperity." And this will be attained through enticing private investment in prioritized areas; agriculture, manufacturing, mining, tourism, and Information and Communication Technology- (ICT). As a result, a number of structural transformations and a supportive economic environment were carried out. In turn, though a lot remains to be done, substantial achievements, such as an

increment in wheat production and export revenues, are witnessed.

The 'Ethiopia Tamrit' (Let Ethiopia produce) initiative that was launched by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed with this same drive- to creating a competitive manufacturing industry, increasing productivity, widening the market destinations of Ethiopian manufacturing products across the global, increase export amount and strength import substitution and accelerates Ethiopia's development-is also the other initiative.

Speaking at the opening of 'Ethiopia Tamrit' expo held months ago in the capital Addis Ababa, Industry Minister Melaku Alebel said that the government has been working with due attention in order to strengthen the sector by taking the experiences of successful countries. And the 'Ethiopia Tamrit' movement aimed at enhancing the manufacturer's capacity, widens their market destination, increase export amount, as well as strengthen import substitution.

Today, *Pagumen* 4, 2015 (9 Sep. 2023), Ethiopians are marking 'Day of Productivity.' with various activities. While speaking in relation to the importance of designating each day of the month of *Pagumen* to various activities, Executive Member of the Joint Council of the Ethiopian Political Parties, Mebratu Alemu, (PhD) told ENA that

dedicating the days of the *Pagumen* month has a positive role in further cementing solidarity, inculcating good citizenship values, creating a sense of togetherness and national unity and for nation building. "And when we mark the fourth day of *Pagumen* today, which is dedicated to the 'Day of Productivity', the natural resources Ethiopia endowed with will be commemorated," he said.

However, in order to bring about the expected changes in all areas- social, economic and political - in the coming Ethiopian New Year, cascading the alias of those days and working on the ground is of the utmost importance. More energy should also be exerted to increase productivity by improving peoples' work culture, solving challenges related to resource supply, he remarked.

True, increasing the participation of the young people, as they are key agents for social change and economic growth, promoting inclusiveness, alleviating the problems witnessed in input provision are key steps to increase product and productivity and ensure sustainable socioeconomic growth. In this regard, observing the 'Day of Productivity' can help raise public's awareness and motivate the community to strive accordingly- to bring about substantial social, economic health, and environmental change.

## Cultivating productivity, reinforcing youths participation

BY TEWODROS KASSA

The role of well-educated and skilled human capital in any country's social and economic development is immense. For countries to reduce the level of poverty, improve the living standard of their citizens, and build a sustained economic development, investing in their human resources is not only necessary but also mandatory.

Thus, they invest massively, and exert utmost effort to educate and capacitate their citizens with the required knowledge and skills.

Ethiopia has also been applying more energy and huge capital to produce a more educated society and foster positive change within the community. As part of this effort, a number of schools, ranging from kindergarten to primary, secondary and higher institutions, were expanded across the country. Equally important, with the aim to meet the demands in the labor market and increase the employment opportunity of the younger people, various expanded technical and vocational education and training institutes were opened.

Recently, the FDRE Technical and Vocational Education and Training Institute (TVETI) graduated some 3,651 in Bachelor and post graduate programs from different disciplines.

Speaking at the graduation ceremony held on Sunday, Institute Director General Biruk Kider (PhD) said that among the total number of graduates, some 2,786 are bachelor holders and some 865 students are post graduate ones. In terms of gender composi-



tion, graduates are composed of some 2,284 males and 502 female ones respectively.

He said: "The institute enrolled and educated some 253 students from neighboring countries at present. Of the 3,651 total graduates, some 73 students came from South Sudan and Somaliland."

As to him, the institute has been working hard to produce proficient human power since its inception. Conducting problem solving research and investigation, developing technology, formulating reform, encour-

aging innovation and creativity are among the critical activities that have been directly linked with national development.

Labor and Skills Minister Muferihat Kamil on her part said: "As Ethiopia expects a lot from graduates, they have to develop skills and knowledge."

Approached by the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA), Yonas Amesalu a Bachelor holder from Technical Automation and Control Department and scored 3.98 cumulative GPA, said that joining TVETI is tantamount

to investing on oneself. "I had a chance to join Debre Birhan University when I had accomplished 12th grade. However, I am interested in attending technical issues rather than engaging myself in theoretical aspects. That is why I am found at TVETI," he added.

He advised that Ethiopia should expand TVETI with a view to producing quality and competent human power in the industry and to bring holistic advantages for the country.



# Verbatim and Caption



*The disastrous impact of climate change is badly affecting Africa. We are gathered at the Africa Climate Summit 2023, our summit should not be a talk show, but a place where concrete actions are being taken. Common position is always needed in African Union forums.*

*Our future depends on our decisions being made now. Urgent action is needed in limiting global warming into 1.5 degree Celsius to avoid the worst impact. Eight years after its signature, ensuring the implementation of the Paris Agreement is not an option again.*

**President Sahle-Work Zewde, Speaking at Africa Climate Summit 2023 in Nairobi, Kenya**

*The commemoration Sacrifice Day would inspire the young generation to replicate Ethiopian heroes' commitment and sacrifice to maintain their country's sovereignty. A patriot citizen never retreated from sacrificing his time, labor or even life for the nation's cause. To be that kind of person, all should know the history of their country.*

*Sacrifice and Ethiopia are intertwined. The path that the country had gone through could simply signify that. We will pay the necessary sacrifice to withstand the current challenges and sustain the nation."*

**Brigadier General Worku Kebede, Defense Ministry Office Head**



*I celebrate the National Service Day together with heroes who have served in Federal Government institutions for more than 38 years. There is no greater courage than serving one's country. These national heroes are also role models for the next generation.*

**Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD), said while observing Service Day on Pagume 1**

*Addis Ababa City administration is striving to make Addis Ababa comfortable city for its residents. There are various nationalities in Ethiopia in which the city is exploiting every potentials and values to achieve development.*

*Addis Ababa is home to all and we need to have common consensus about the capital city that cherishes love. The city administration intensifies efforts to sustain the diplomatic victory that the city achieved so far through adding new values.*

**Addis Ababa City Mayor, Adanech Abebie said at the 14th "About Ethiopia" edition**



*We build a strong culture of completing projects on time. The implementation of the national homegrown economic reform has enabled Ethiopians to witness the completion of projects on time.*

*As we are striving to achieve our ambition to make the country the biggest economy in Africa, we need to work more to improve our project execution capacity. Finishing projects per plan is very crucial in facilitating development and Ethiopia builds a strong culture of completing projects on time, thanks to the reform.*

**Eyob Tekalign (PhD), State Minister of Ministry of Finance**

