

News



Youth underlines hardworking to change self, society

BY MISGANAW ASNAKE

A person to change his life and meet his demand, he should engage or expect to work in many jobs in day to day activity to change his life and care of his whole family in good manner. This would be true when he/she work at day and night that transfer from one task to another task without break.

This phenomena is some exceptional in the nation like Ethiopia but some individual are doing in silent by managing their time and getting productive even becoming exemplary, inspiring other community members. *The Ethiopian Herald* had a short stay with youth doing three jobs on a day.

His name is Minyisanew Berhanu. He graduated his MA in Adult Health Nursing in Kea-Med College in 2023. He is managing three jobs at a day by moving from one task to another task without break.

He is doing job such as teaching musical instrument, doing medical work at hospital and electrical work and completed his MA degree while managing marriage, taking care of his children as well.

He said that anyone can do other job apart from his /her first work to earn additional income as well as to change his life sustainable.

He noted there are so many income alternatives in Ethiopia but we aren't open our mind to do other job on 24 hours. We have to alter our view to do better and reach self- actualization.

"I have completed my BA and MA degree in this college. I passed many trouble to reach at this moment. Education is vital; we can achieve what we need. What expect from us is adjusting our time and does other job and earns additional income beyond the first job.

In this global world, we need to learn and update our life, education since the era is creating opportunity like accessibility of everything in our hand at any place to be productive and effective to guide successful life, he said.

"When we learn more, we brought significance behavioral change in our life, family, and society at large and be successful. When we learn more, we further contribute to our country's development and provide better service to community.

"I learned in discharging of three tasks effectively, and taking care of my family by adjusting my time meticulous. By doing so, i am realizing my goal and fulfilling my needs."

On behind of all these work, my wife always on beside me by inspiring me to do so."

College graduates combat engineering trainees

BY YESUF ENDRIS

ADDIS ABABA- Combat Engineering College graduated infantry commanders and soldiers trained in major courses of combat engineering for the past four months.

Graduates have been trained on anti-obstacle, bomb and explosive disposal and military bridge installation and trench construction courses, it was stated.

During the graduation ceremony, Ethiopian National Defense Force (ENDF) Education and Training Head Lt Gen Yimer Mekonnen said that ENDF has been reforming itself to build up its human resource capacity.

Trainings of modern combating systems are also a part of its plan to upgrade infantry commanders and soldiers' capability in war fronts, he said.

"The Combat Engineering division of the ENDF played unforgettable adventures during the past wars we faced. So, graduates should multiply their skills to their successors; because the army needs combat engineering basic skills this time," he said.



Photo: GebaboGebrie

He also stated that enemies based in and out of the country are still trying to attack Ethiopia. "Each trainings and missions of the ENDF is to protect national interest from those conspiring parties."

Commander of the Combat Engineering College, Col. Kitaba Ensarmo also stated that both practical and theoretical trainings have been delivered for four months day and night.

Medium level officers trained 60 percent practically and 40 percent theoretically. Meanwhile, junior officials trained with 70 percent practical works. All training courses are designed to meet all modern combating systems, he said.

Graduates also told *The Ethiopian Herald* that the training was supported by technologies of the modern warfare; so, it could help them to abort enemies' obstacle in front lines.

Office enhances regional cross border cooperation, peace: IGAD

BY ASHENAFI ANIMUT

ADDIS ABABA – A one stop Moyale cross-border development office was inaugurated in Moyale aimed at enhancing sustainable peace, prosperity and regional integration, so disclosed the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD).

During the launching ceremony held on Friday, IGAD Executive Secretary Workneh Gebeyehu said that the cross-border Development Facilitation Office is central part of the bloc's flagship agenda to take IGAD to its people and help boost cooperation among communities in Ethiopia-Kenya cross-border areas.

The Executive Secretary remarked that : " It is our commitment to fostering regional cross-border cooperation with the objective to propel mutual interests such as the promotion of trade, cultural ties among others."

"This office would also be serving as a catalyst for enhancing vision of IGAD in fostering sustainable peace, shared prosperity and sustainable regional integration," he noted.

He said, "IGAD has had a steadfast presence in the Moyale area for more than two decades, and also as we open the IGAD Cross Border Development Facilitation Office in Moyale, we are bringing all these various initiatives under one umbrella, united by the theme of "One IGAD".



It was also indicated that Workneh and his staff planted tree seedlings on arrival at the Moyale One Stop Border Post between Kenya and Ethiopia where the inauguration ceremony was presided over.

Moreover, several infrastructure projects will be implemented in Moyale on both sides of the boarder following the normalization of peace in the community.

"We have been working tirelessly to support our member states in implementing various border land programs, along with numerous projects. Besides, it is mandated to facilitate cross border cooperation among

actors, local government institutions and communities in their respective clusters," he said.

At the event, it was also indicated the office would have a paramount importance to foster cooperation around a common agenda, especially delivering social services to host communities, refugees, and migrants, per IGAD.

The event was attended by officials drawn from both Ethiopia and Kenya and local communities from Moyale area, it was learnt.

Editorial

To come off with flying colors in project implementation

“Better three hours too soon than a minute too late,” says Shakespeare to ram home the grotesqueness of procrastination, in most cases one of the manifestations of corruption. In other words, the adage emphasizes tasks like projects must see completion on time if not in time true to effective time as well as resource utilization.

Procrastination is a horrible drawback especially to countries flapping wings to kiss poverty goodbye opting soaring sky high.

Proverbs from where the sun goes around are in consonance with the aforementioned adage. “Early not late remedies are effective,” a Latin proverb and “A pain that pricks the conscience is more effective than a whiplash,” a Hebrew adage, making a confluence, corroborate the case in point—warding off procrastination.

Whenever we are faced with a pitfall of procrastination, taken aback, we have to seek troubleshooting strategies than suffer repercussions and a prodding of conscience for failure of not timely mending mistakes as a stitch in time saves nine.

For a lapse one experienced, there is always a price to pay since one has to make up for lost opportunities and precious wealth laid waste due to sloth and complacency.

Defeated by languor bequeathing coming generations a grim tomorrow is nothing but letting one’s nation indulge in a vicious cycle of poverty—“a self-perpetuating pattern of poverty in which poverty bequeaths poverty trapping people in poverty.”

Before Ethiopia embarked on the path of reform half a decade ago, projects including the ones at Mega level like the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) had been suffering from setbacks that strangled the projects’ push towards seeing the light of day. The tardiness in execution of such projects in which people vested high hope of shaping their fate with brighter hues had dumped the feelings of citizens fed up with false promises of the perks of projects that turn their lives around.

People were eagerly awaiting a crusader that gets on the ball of efficient if not effective project execution.

It is against this backdrop the incumbent lead by PM Abiy Ahmed (Ph.D) showed conviction to get off the ground projects that were sweltering under sluggishness by shaking off respective shackles that tied them down hand to foot. Here, it suffices to mention the works done to get GERD back in shape and revive citizens’ bashed hope of better days.

Not only giving a kiss of life to the projects subject to logjams but also bringing into life new ones, like the Kosha venture, and letting them surge ahead in the path of success comprise the feathers in the cap of the incumbent.

The gigantic kosha and Abbay hydroelectric dams warrant the electrification of the country. Needless to mention electricity is the life blood of industrialization and economic take off. It is not hard to surmise how this leap forward could help the country bolster investment.

The dams as well create artificial lakes that could serve for entertainment purposes like angling and cursing not to mention the benefits from fish farming. The lakes boasting scenery and greenery will add up to nation’s magnetic pulls that galvanize tourists worldwide to pay homage to Ethiopia and feast their eyes and refresh their souls.

The returns from the smokeless industry in turn fertilize the thrust towards development and betterment of people’s living standard.

To spare the environment friendly dams, especially the Koysha dam, nestled in green areas from siltation, conservation work, which is a burning issue, is underway. This is in keeping with the global green development program of coming up with more carbon dioxide sinks. The thriving of the flora and fauna will get Mother Nature, facing disfigurement due to man’s recklessness, back in shape. This by itself is a contenting duty.

People living round the dam absorbed in the construction task or the green development strategy or tourism facilitation activities could eke out a living temporarily or permanently employed. Here it is worth to note that new infrastructural facilities come in tandem with the projects underway rendering the lives of residents of the respective localities better. The visitation of tourists and the interests of investors will also display an upward trajectory

Let us wind up by the statement of the Government’s Communication Office State Minister, “Several economic reforms have been implemented to improve project execution capacity of the country.”

Opinion

Every peace effort meaningfully counts

BY MENGESHA AMARE

to run.

Any individual assignment or group project for peace and repose would undoubtedly be added to give a bigger picture- national stability and communal serenity. Many have thought and most of the time waited for others to bring peace and quietude to them. However, the very thing that has to be well comprehended in this regard is the issue of bringing about lasting peace, stable nation that can accommodate all citizens and address their queries for fair and just communal life, among others should not be left only to some segments of the society such as security forces or Ministry of Defense or Peace you name it, but it badly requires the combined effort of all regardless of sex, religion, social status, educational background, age level and so forth.

As far as I am concerned and as history of the nature of mankind would have it, peace knows no boundary and is color blind as every human race does have supreme desire for it, and everybody is duty bound to contribute their respective share to the effort geared towards ensuring peace and tranquility in return.

True, the prevalence of peace attracts all sorts of bounties and grants people with a sound stable life, appealing working and living atmosphere, state of peaceful coexistence, to mention but a few.

Most definitely as the prevalence of peace and stability provides people with non-fluctuating mindset, its absence also gets all suffered. That is why it is all the time said that the fruit of peace is harvested together and all the requirements to sow it deep have to be massed in a collaborative fashion.

Needless to state, all human race across the globe in general and in every single global spot like Ethiopia has to work towards connecting the dots glittering peace and avoid linking them acting otherwise thereby having a brighter and fairer land. So the saying goes, “A single-handed clap gives no sound,” a scattered and highly limited effort will by no means help citizens reap the yummy fruits of peace and composure.

So long as peace is an abstract concept solely manifested by concrete outcomes all the time reflected on the lives of human beings and should absolutely be sowed, nurtured and harvested together, it is a common concern towards which everyone has

No doubt, wholeheartedly striding for peace is equivalent to denoting intra-seren and enter-peace as well as highly nurturing individual, group or communal suitability, which is highly cemented with stringently tied sociocultural strata and politico-economic composition.

If this is so, citizens of all walks of life in a given nation have to capitalize on all the means that help reap peace and stability via avoiding attitude of overlooking impacts of instability somewhere far from their domicile as a nation is prettily considered as and equivalent with someone’s entire body, where an injury on a given body part causes unrest, commotion and tumultuous scenario on the whole.

No doubt, the lack of peace and tranquility in some parts of the world is born to a destructive step no matter how varied the degree would be and it would potentially give hard time to fellow citizens at the vicinity of unstable area and neighboring nations sharing borders and beyond, too.

Without a shadow of doubt, peace is the foundation of every activity and even a day-to-day individual as well as societal footstep. If this is so, the issue of peace and stability must be the serious concern of all. Every ounce of peace should be given due emphasis and nurtured well since it is instrumental in fueling optimistic attitude and keen interest thrown and twisted to have meaningful change, advancement and good fortune.

Yes, peace knows no boundary and any category of all human races are incorporated in the domain of having peaceful coexistence and stable atmosphere in a given nation such as Ethiopia. Thence, everyone has to work from the break of the day to nightfall towards ensuring peace and security across the nation.

Generally, no price can be fixed and no value would be imagined as peace has all the time provided human beings with extremely invaluable social, economic, political, psychological, and even material and spiritual bounties. The commutative of each and every drop for peace can make a stable nation, region, continent and globe. Consequently, no one would by any means be mistaken if they say every ounce of peace meaningfully counts and contributes a great deal to the greater peaceful world.

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Office of the CEO
Tel. 011-126-42-22
Fax. 251-011-156-98-62
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Advertisement and Dist.
Department

email: etpresspromotion@gmail.com
Tel. 011-156-98-73/011-811-13-15
Telegram :- 0976084707 - press

Editor-in-Chief: Worku Belachew
email- workubelachew@press.et
Address- Nifas Silk Lafto Sub-city
Woreda - 05, House No----
Tel- +251 111 26 41 98

Managing Editor: Wakuman Kudama
Email: wakuma220@gmail.com

Deputy Editors-in-Chief:
Alem Hailu
Elizabeth Mengistu
Zekarias Woldemariam
Desta Geberehiwot
Daniel Beyene

Website: www.press.et
email: ethiopianherald@press.et
Fb//Ethiopian Press Agency/
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News

Ambassador stresses expanding coffee export to Japan

BY BETELHEM BEDLU

ADDIS ABABA- Ethiopian coffee association, coffee growers and trade societies should play a significant role to expand coffee export to Japan and other countries thereby becoming more competitive in the sector internationally, so stressed Ambassador Daba Debele.

Coffee is the highest source of foreign currency earnings in the country. Thus, besides government institutions, the role of Ethiopian coffee association, coffee growers and exporters is crucial.

The Ambassador made the above statements during the discussion held on the lessons drawn from the expo at the Embassy following the conclusion of World Specialty Coffee Conference and Exhibition 2023.



Appreciating Embassy's effort, Ethiopian Coffee Association President Desalegne Jenna, urged concerned bodies to come together and join force with the embassy to properly utilize the coffee sector.

During the 2023 expo, the Ethiopian Coffee Association, along with the Embassy and coffee exporters and growers has conducted showcased a variety of Ethiopian specialty coffee beans, as well as Ethiopian Coffee

Ceremony supported with visual and video explanation.

Over 45 Ethiopian coffee growers and exporters took part at the event which is organized by the Specialty Coffee Association of Japan (SCAJ) while some 45,000 participants, coffee growers, exporters, importers and processors worldwide participated at the event.

Ambassador Daba held fruitful discussion with Deputy President of JETRO, Kazuya Nakajo about ways of enhancing coffee trade between the two countries.

Besides promoting Ethiopian coffee, side discussions were also held with representatives from Marubeni, Mitsui and Co Ltd as well as Japanese high level coffee growers, exporters aiming at improving coffee export to Japan.

Most 'Dine for Ethiopia'...

is one of areas selected for 'Dine for Ethiopia' Project. After two to three years, this area would be one of the top tourist attractions."

The residents of Jimma and its surroundings have to transform their surroundings making use local materials. Such efforts require ideas, time and budget. The community should work on creating an enabling environment for tourism development, he said.

According to him, Jimma's 'Dine For Ethiopia' project would make Ethiopians

proud creating ample jobs and becoming recreational center. "There is also a plan to inter-connect the projects found in the surrounding of western Ethiopia and others."

It is to be recalled that Prime Minister Abiy announced 'Dine for Ethiopia' Tourism Attraction Projects in Wenchi, Gorgora and Koysha located in Oromia, Amhara and other states on August 14, 2020. The projects will offer the untapped opportunity for investments in ecotourism, agro-processing, and apparel manufacturing and food industries.

Konta people...

Lt. Gen. Haile Tadesse works to maintain security and safety of the Park with a monthly salary of 4,000 Birr.

He hoped that his income would be increased as the number of tourist's inflow increases due to the development of new tourist facilities in the park.

Edeno Betla has been coordinating scouts at the park for the past 16 years.

"We protect many plants and animals in the park from illegal hunting of wild animals and poachers understanding their contribution for the sustainability of the park both for the benefit of us and country's economy," he said.

The tourism facilities being constructed in Konta woreda including the roads, bridges, lodges and others are believed to elongate tourists' stay in Ethiopia.

Dine for Nation projects have created an opportunity for areas with potential tourism resources such as Chebera Churchura to be stood out and developed, it was learnt.

This has created job opportunities for many youths and other sections of the society, State Minister for Government Communication Service, Selamawit Kassa said.

The state ministry said that the tourism infrastructures being built by the government and private owners in Chebera

Churchura Park will contribute greatly to the development of the sector.

Nega Abera, Konta Zone Administrator, said that since the last few years, there have been activities to stimulate the tourism sector in the zone.

He said that the zone couldn't benefit from the tourism sector as it was deprived of attention in the past years contrary to the fact being home to natural and manmade heritages.

According to the Administrator, there was no tourist aspect before and now the community hopes to gain benefit as the area has been embraced for the national project as planned by the Prime Minister.

He explained that the zone possesses various tangible and intangible heritages so that it has a huge development potentials.

Citing studies conducted so far, he said, there are more than 40 large and medium-sized wild animals in the park, except from the rhinoceros, African elephants, buffaloes, hippopotamuses, lions and endemic species of birds and fish, hot springs, waterfalls, caves and other natural resources.

Chebera Churchura Park was established in 2004/2005 by the request of Kontana and Dauro people and covers an area of 1,410 km. The park is located 13 km from Amaya city which makes it convenient for tourists.

Abbay dam ensures...

negotiating committee, Gedion Asfaw (Eng.) told FBC that the Dam has reached some 92 percent implementation performance stages. "We have exerted utmost effort to get the height of the Dam reached at this level since the other parties argued to get it reduced. Ideal exchange has been done to reach on consensus about the overall process of the dam filling, but it still demands close talks and discussions as Egypt and Sudan have still reflected reservations," he noted.

He said: "We have to effectively utilize our water resources for expanding manufacturing, irrigation, industries and others aspects thereby benefiting the country well apart from abiding by international accords on water utilization approaches."

According to him, the current status of the dam would determine the fate of the nation in the years to come.

Since water is Ethiopians' immense resource,

they all have to make the generation well aware of the invaluable significance of the water resources in general and that of the Abbay Dam in particular in schools up to framing in the curriculum to help the young generation well know about the water resources and a range of resources have to be done in detail along this line, he stated.

The project would not go back as it has now secured 42 billion cubic meters of water. Researches need to be widely done peculiarly revolving around water resource utilization, technological advancement to have optimal benefit out of the water, ways to ensure fair utilization, among others, Gedion stated.

Ethiopia should work hard to optimally utilize the Dam via devising a number of lucrative mechanisms without imposing significant harm on downstream riparian countries, such as Egypt and Sudan, he underlined.

Regional cooperation...

huge tourism potential which needs to be utilized to attain adequate benefit from the sector.

"This is my first time in Addis Ababa and I had never been encountered such a kind hospitality," he said.

Apart from the numerous tourism resources and hospitable atmosphere, Ethiopia needs to exert extra efforts with regard to developing the tourism sector so as to increase tourist inflow.

Of course Kenya has better preservation in the tourism destination though still many challenges there, he mentioned.

He suggested that Ethiopia has to draw important lesson from Kenya in terms of developing the tourism destination, promotion, marketing, and the likes. Ethiopia and Kenya need to work together to develop infrastructure and preserve tourism sites in adjacent areas.

He believed that Ethiopia is sitting on a gold mine given that it is not obtaining the needed benefit compared to its huge

tourism potentials.

Ethiopia accommodates various natural and manmade tourism resources including rich culture, home to influential athletes, land of origins, geographical landscape and so on, he elaborated.

However, it requires infrastructural development to utilize these potentials and increase tourist inflow, he underscored.

Vice Chairperson of Rwanda Hospitality Association, Sarah Kirenga on her part said that the tourism week held in Ethiopia helps to improve the cooperation between her country and Ethiopia in developing the tourism industry.

She said Rwanda has overcome many problems in the tourism sector so that the industry is now reviving.

She further stated that Ethiopia and Rwanda have a shared future in coffee, handcraft, and tourist destinations through it needs collaboration to promote the sector and ensure adequate benefit from it.

Opinion

Abbay Dam: Striving for survival and fighting false narratives

BY SILABAT MANAYE

Hydro-diplomacy plays a crucial role in fostering cooperation and negotiation among countries sharing water resources. The recent completion of the 4th filling of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) or Abbay Dam by Ethiopia without significant impacts on downstream countries, Sudan and Egypt, indicates positive developments in hydro-diplomacy efforts. This article analyzes key points derived from the recent statements of the Ethiopian Government on the completion of the 4th filling of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) and the potential for increased cooperation in managing water resources in the Nile basin.

No Significant Impact on Water Volume

With the first four fillings of the Abbay Dam showing no effect on the Nile River's flow towards Sudan and Egypt, Ethiopia's cautious management of the dam's operations becomes evident. This cautious approach indicates Ethiopia's commitment to mitigating potential negative impacts on downstream countries and promoting a constructive hydro-diplomatic approach. By safeguarding the interests of neighboring countries, Ethiopia exhibits a willingness to cooperate and maintain the ecological balance and livelihoods of communities in Sudan and Egypt.

Reassurance of Good Intentions

The completion of the first four fillings serves as evidence of Ethiopia's intentions to avoid causing significant harm to downstream countries. This accomplishment is crucial for building trust and fostering cooperation among riparian countries. By assuring Sudan and Egypt that the Abbay Dam operations will not cause significant harm to their livelihoods, Ethiopia aims to establish a foundation of trust and collaboration. This reassurance is a pivotal component of successful hydro diplomacy, highlighting Ethiopia's commitment to addressing concerns and promoting cooperation.

The Dam and Unwarranted Claims

The completion of the first four fillings challenges Egypt's exaggerated fears of a water shortage by emphasizing Ethiopia's successful completion of the fourth filling. By demonstrating that these exaggerated concerns are unwarranted, Ethiopia aims to invalidate Egypt's claims and reduce international support for these fears. Through dispelling misconceptions surrounding the GERD, Ethiopia strives to foster a more constructive and cooperative dialogue with Egypt and other riparian countries. Addressing misinterpretations is critical for advancing hydro diplomacy efforts and promoting understanding among all stakeholders.



Abbay Dam: No significant harm on Water Volume

The Dam and Population Growth

The construction of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) in the Nile Basin has been a subject of intense debate and controversy. However, understanding the rationale behind the decision to build this massive hydropower dam requires a closer examination of the social and economic shifts within Ethiopia. In the past century, Egypt held a position of social and economic dominance within the Nile Basin, fueled by its rapid population growth. However, this balance began to change over time as Ethiopia witnessed a surge in population growth. According to recent data from the Worldometer (2022), the population of Ethiopia surpassed that of Egypt.

The Dam and economic Growth

Ethiopia currently has a booming economically engaged population in need of energy, jobs, and economic possibilities as its population grows. Access to energy capacity has become a critical issue in Ethiopia's ability to sustain growth and development. Despite Ethiopia's expanding goals, the country's inability to obtain adequate energy capacity has limited its economic potential. As a result, Ethiopia's government looked to a massive hydroelectric dam as a way to fulfill its energy needs while also fostering economic growth.

Survival also became a driving force behind the construction of the Dam. With a rapidly expanding population and limited resources, Ethiopia faced pressing questions regarding its long-term sustainability. Developing the Abbay Dam became a strategic response to secure a sustainable future for Ethiopia, ensuring access to water, energy, and economic opportunities.

Abbay Dam and Egypt's Hegemony over Nile

Egypt's "water security" strategy is built

on a fixation with the Nile River, with the goal of obstructing all avenues that could lead to an equitable distribution of the Nile's waters. When any basin country lays out a strategy to utilize Nile water on its own territory, the Egyptians frequently respond with war threats and conflict-laden remarks. When requested to renegotiate the distribution of water in the basin, they set conditions by stating that colonial and postcolonial treaties are non-negotiable and that we can discuss anything else.

We believe that other riparian countries, like Egypt, have genuine ambitions to utilize the Nile's waters. Ethiopia has already done so by launching and building the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD). The contemporary geopolitical realities in the Nile Basin do not allow for the continuation of colonial-period agreements. Egypt's hegemony over the Nile River Basin has been stuck in time.

Abbay Dam and Hydro-diplomacy

Ethiopia's completion of the 4th filling of the Abbay Dam presents an opportunity to revitalize hydro-diplomacy in the region. By demonstrating its cautious approach and commitment to cooperation, Ethiopia is sending a clear message to Sudan, Egypt, and other riparian countries that it values their concerns and seeks a mutually beneficial solution. Rather than viewing the Dam as a threat, stakeholders should see it as an opportunity for collaboration in managing the Nile's resources for the greater benefit of all.

Negotiations and collaboration should be based on principles of equity, fairness, and respect for the sovereignty of all riparian countries. A fresh start is needed to address historical grievances and move towards a more inclusive and sustainable water management system. The completion of the fourth filling should serve as a catalyst for renewed dialogue and trust-building among

all involved parties.

In conclusion, the completion of the fourth filling of the Dam marks a significant achievement for Ethiopia. It showcases the country's ability to construct and manage a mega dam while minimizing harm to downstream countries.

Ethiopia's cautious approach and commitment to addressing concerns demonstrate its willingness to promote hydro diplomacy and collaboration among riparian countries. By dispelling misconceptions and challenging colonial-era agreements, Ethiopia aims to foster a more inclusive and equitable water management system for the Nile River.

The fourth filling presents an opportunity for all stakeholders to revitalize hydro diplomacy and work together towards a sustainable and mutually beneficial solution. The rationale behind the development of the Abbay Dam cannot be understood in isolation but must be viewed through the lens of social and economic shifts in the Nile Basin.

As upstream states experience rapid population growth and the emergence of a new economically active population, the need for energy capacity becomes critical. The Abbay Dam is a deliberate step to address these needs, assure long-term growth and development for the basin's states, and address Ethiopia's survival issue.

Silabat Manaye is international relations professional based in Addis Ababa. His research interests include water politics, geopolitics in the Horn of Africa, and War Journalism. He authored two books on Nile geopolitics.

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

Business & Economy

Fixing minimum wage: A timely question to be answered

BY DANIEL ALEMAYEHU

In the present climate, ensuring human rights in the working areas is one of the tools to penetrate global markets. Creating conducive environment for employees brings a number of benefits to the overall productivity of a company. Being a Fairtrade- certified company is a way that allows companies to be a part of global markets as it pushes employers to meet human rights principles. In horticulture sector in Ethiopia, out of hundred plus flower farms, only seven of them are certified and pass through all the human rights conventions.

From those human right principles, the issue of setting a minimum wage for employees has been evolving around. In order to get the best out of employees, companies must work on creating better and conducive environment for their employees. It is simple that employees must not get tired of fighting with the jobs that cannot fit with their life expenses. Such situations have a plausible effect on their work and productivity rate. Unable to set a minimum wage in the country greatly affects employees to earn less than they work.

Fixing minimum wage in Ethiopia is highly entertained by the workers' associations. The current incumbent and other stakeholders are working closely to answer the long-awaited question of setting minimum wage of employees. 'Fairtrade Africa' is playing the key role in fixing the minimum wage. It is implementing multiple projects in the horticulture sector in Ethiopia.

Documents show that Fairtrade Africa (FTA) is the umbrella network organization representing Fairtrade-certified producers and workers in Africa and the Middle East. It has four regional networks – Eastern & Central Africa; Southern Africa; West Africa; and the Middle East & North Africa. Established in 2005, FTA is a member of Fairtrade International and currently represents over one million farmers and workers in over 500 producer organizations spread across 33 countries in Africa, including Ethiopia, by providing services aiming at improving workers livelihoods.

Recently, Fairtrade Africa has organized a consultative advocacy event on minimum wage fixation here in Addis Ababa. During the event, responsible stakeholders including representative from the Ministry of Skills and Labor were participated.

Delivering the opening keynote speech at the event, Labor Inspection and Industrial Relations CEO at the Ministry of skills and Labor, Tekalegn Ayalew (PhD) said, "The workshop is very timely for it brought key actors of the issue of minimum wage together. The issue of minimum wage is very sensitive in the country." The Ministry of Skills and Labor is striving



to create decent work environment in all sectors including horticulture, service and other sectors.

In the last two years, as to Tekalegn, the ministry has been working on strategic reform areas including creating decent work areas.

"We have been reviewing all the legal frameworks and directives related to the issue. We have very complicated legal system as the nation signed international conventions including ILO. We are also inspecting occupational sect, health, and minimum wage directives. We are building the capacity of regions as we have more than 50 thousand industries with very limited labor inspectors."

Tekalegn further stated that one of the important areas to create safe environment is enforcing the law through improving the labor inspection system. Regarding occupational sect and health services, there are limited professionals in the country, so a new curriculum was designed and trained labor inspectors, occupational and health professionals to deploy them to the regions and privatize and outsource labor inspection services.

The other focal point of the ministry is creating industrial peace through collective and inclusive social dialogue. The culture of collective bargaining and negotiating is weak. It is essential to change the competition to collaboration via finding solutions for workers, companies and the government through social dialogue. "Once industrial peace is secured, it is all about productivity," Tekalegn noted.

As a nation, Tekalegn elucidated, "Our key pillar and priority is productivity. Through productivity, we all can benefit. Our country is naturally rich and big, but our productivity is so weak. Most of our labors are engaged in less productive sectors. Even the productivity of the manufacturing sector is very low."

Existing challenges are understandable, and setting a minimum wage is not an easy task. It has its own limitations, strength, and weakness. "Currently, the ministry is undertaking a national assessment to create a better minimal wage system." Once the minimal wage is set, the demand continues for a better work and living wage. To this regard, making an evidence- based policy and directives is underway, Tekalegn

elaborated.

By the same token, Flowers Manager at Fairtrade Africa, Gonzaga Mungai, on his part, "Fairtrade Africa is a global system under Fairtrade International which is responsible for setting standards. The organization has bigger markets in Europe especially in Germany."

Based on his presentation, minimum wage and having a life worth living is declared in Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) saying: "Everyone who works has the right to just and favorable remuneration ensuring for him (herself) and his/her family an existence worthy of human dignity. Workers should be self- defendant and not relied on charity."

Comparing the context in East Africa, for instance, in Kenya, the floriculture is the one with the lowest paying sector comparing with other sectors. Most recently, as to Gonzaga, new laws become emerging that focuses on securing human rights. The debate on setting minimum wage is important to establishing a foundation for progressive improvement on wages.

Latest living wage Benchmarks (2021) and World Bank Poverty Lines, as to Gonzaga, for workers who are working in banana and fresh fruit sector, the standard minimum wage in Kenya is 270 USD, in Ethiopia, it is 7993 Birr or 181 USD, and in Uganda, it is 203 USD.

"East Africa is the ideal place for the horticulture production with very vibrant labor force that can be able to support this sector including skilled- labor force. In Ethiopia, the government has put mission to attract foreign investors. There is also infrastructure put in place particularly the Ethiopian Airlines that has a very good connectivity of cargo planes with Europe," Gonzaga elaborated.

"Fairtrade Africa is a voluntary certification scheme and producers are free to apply to join and become certified because of market reasons as some markets in Europe demand Fairtrade certification. Producers who are Fairtrade- certified are required to pay workers standard wages. It also ensures they are not paying below the World Bank extreme poverty line," Gonzaga mentioned.

In the same way, Senior Project Officer at Fair-trade Africa, Wenedemeneh Engida said that the main objective of the event as Fairtrade Africa is to create the platform for different stakeholders to come together and discuss about minimum wage.

Wenedemeneh further explained, Ethiopia does not have minimum wage in the private sector. This is the right time to create the opportunity and platform for producer organizations, sector actors, and the government to come together and discuss on the progress made so far. It is a very sensitive issue, but it has to be discussed. Due to the current global scenarios like the

inflation is at its highest, workers cannot afford to live or buy grocery. Thus, it is the right time for the government to think about setting minimum wage.

Delivering a presentation on the projects in progress, Wenedemeneh added, the company is working on a project called Dignified Opportunities Nurtured through Trade and Sustainability (DONUTS). The program is designed for four consecutive years (2022-25) which is a human rights-based development program that comprises 12 projects in Africa financed by Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland and Aldi U.K.

As to Wenedemeneh, the objective of the "DONUTS-Ethiopian Flowers Project" is to contribute to the wider "Realization of agricultural workers' rights to decent work through achieving more favorable Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBAs) and working conditions". The project is targeting 7 Fair-trade certified Flowers and plants' farms in Ethiopia.

Similarly, National Federation of Farm, Plantation, Fishery and Agro-Industry Trade Unions (NFFPFATU) President, Gebeyehu Adugna to his part, the association is working with Fairtrade Africa and Fairtrade International. They are working aggressively on putting pressure on the government to implement the minimum wage in the country. They have submitted their questions to the Prime Minister.

Not having minimum wage, the President noted, has cost workers their arms and legs. It has a huge impact on their lives. Many workers couldn't even eat their lunch due to their low income. Both the federation and confederation have been asking the government to support workers. Besides, the bodies have asked the government to revise the taxing system.

Gebeyehu further added that parallel with waiting for the government's response, the association has formed a cluster salary payment system. The clusters are formed based on their places such as Zeway, Koka, Bishoftu, and Sendafa clusters. These clusters determine workers' wages based on companies' source of income and capacity.

To determine the wages, representatives from workers' association, the companies, national federation have sit together and decide. In the horticulture sector, at this time, the minimum wage is 3000 Birr. Again, they have decided that any Fair-trade member company should pay its workers not less than 3800 Birr. The wage increases based on experiences.

Based on the Fairtrade standards, Ethiopians' are still behind the bar. They are working to meet the standards in the years to come. In order to be more productive, such efforts should be entertained and work together to realize it. Workers should feel that their company is their own and protect it.

Planet Earth

Addis take a stand to set up against air pollution

BY FIKADU BELAY

In recent years, the rapid urbanization and population growth in Addis Ababa, the vibrant capital city of Ethiopia, have brought about numerous benefits and opportunities. However, this rapid expansion has also posed significant challenges, particularly in terms of environmental sustainability. One of the most pressing concerns is the deteriorating air quality, which not only affects the health and well-being of the city's inhabitants but also hampers the prospects of sustainable urban development.

With its bustling streets, industrial activities, and increasing vehicular traffic, Addis Ababa has experienced a surge in air pollution levels. The emission of pollutants from various sources, such as exhaust fumes, vehicle and industrial emissions, and burning biomass, and solid fuels for cooking and heating, has contributed to the decline in air quality.

This air pollution can lead to health consequences for the residents in the city through effects on the lungs and cause respiratory problems, such as asthma, bronchitis, and other respiratory diseases. Like cardiovascular diseases, lung cancer, other chronic health conditions, and reduced life expectancy.

According to WHO data, a third of the world's population, or around 2.4 billion people, still use open fires and inefficient stoves to cook using solid fuels including wood, charcoal, coal, and dung and kerosene. Most of these individuals are underprivileged and reside in low- and middle-income nations. Due to the lack of access to cleaner cooking options differs significantly between urban and rural areas.

In 2020, household air pollution was thought to be the cause of 3.2 million annual deaths in the world, among this air pollution is associated with nearly 30% of cerebrovascular heart disease deaths in the Middle East and North Africa. Due to their particular susceptibility and exposure, children are especially susceptible to the harmful health impacts of air pollution. Air pollution exposure is blamed for 20% of infant mortality worldwide. Generally, about seven million premature deaths per year are attributed to the effects of household and ambient air pollution combined.

Furthermore, air pollution has a negative impact on the city's ecosystem. Pollution emissions from a variety of sources that can affect ecosystems have a negative impact on plant life, and lower agricultural productivity. And also, air pollution can cause water bodies to become acidic and contribute to climate change. Moreover, air pollution can deter foreign investment and tourism, as it affects the city's overall livability and attractiveness.

Governments can take proactive measures to successfully manage air pollution by utilizing cutting-edge monitoring technologies and leveraging the power of data-driven decision-making. Addis Ababa can set the stage for a future where its citizens will live in a cleaner, healthier, and more sustainable environment through cooperative efforts, educated policies, and public involvement

However, the Ethiopian government has recognized the issue of air pollution in a nation and has taken some measures to address it. These include implementing vehicle emission standards, promoting the use of cleaner fuels, improving public transportation infrastructure, green legacy program, and raising public awareness about the health risks associated with air pollution.

Dida Diriba, General Manager of the

Addis Ababa Environmental Protection Authority, told to the Ethiopian press agency approximately five new air pollution measuring devices will be installed in the a few days in addition to the four that are currently being repaired and serviced.

He said that the in the past installed air pollution measuring equipment in the city has been repaired, restored, and has become operational. Based on him, the measuring equipment will be placed in areas where cars move frequently so that the city's population may be separated.

These devices contribute in policy decision-making, research, early warning, as well as identifying where and at which institution the highest level of pollution in the city is coming out, he stated, in addition to alerting users to the level of air pollution and enabling them to take action to prevent harm. In addition, he pointed out that new air pollution measuring equipment will be installed around Megegnagna, Wingate, Aqaki Kaliti, the American Embassy, and the Balestan gibi (official residency), and he also mentioned that the information provided is accurate and scientifically supported, making it easier to make a decision about the issue right away.

This installation of air quality measurement systems in Addis marks a critical milestone in the city's journey towards an attractive way. And also it's significant step towards addressing the pressing issue of air pollution in the city. The availability of accurate and up-to-date air quality data has provided valuable insights into the composition and concentration of pollutants, enabling policymakers and stakeholders to make informed decisions for sustainable urban development.

Governments can take proactive measures to successfully manage air pollution by utilizing cutting-edge monitoring technologies and leveraging the power of data-driven decision-making. Addis Ababa can set the stage for a future where its citizens will live in a cleaner, healthier, and more sustainable environment through cooperative efforts, educated policies, and public involvement.

It highlighted the negative consequences of poor air quality on ecosystems, human health, and the connection between air pollution and climate change, underscoring the need for an all-encompassing strategy that addresses both problems at once.

It also provides an overview of the existing air quality conditions in the city. Focus key pollutants of concern, such as toxic gasses like carbon dioxide, nitrogen dioxide, and to know the level of ozone layer (O3).

Through enhanced monitoring infrastructure and innovative technologies, Addis Ababa has gained a more comprehensive understanding of its air quality challenges. This newfound knowledge has paved

the way for evidence-based policies and interventions aimed at reducing pollution sources, improving urban planning, and promoting sustainable transport solutions. By using the power of data-driven decision-making, Addis Ababa is actively working towards a cleaner, healthier, and more livable city.

Furthermore, the integration of public awareness campaigns and citizen engagement has fostered a sense of collective responsibility among residents. By engaging the community in monitoring efforts and raising awareness about the adverse effects of air pollution, Addis is empowering its citizens to actively participate in creating a cleaner environment.

However, challenges remain on the path to sustainable air quality management. Adequate financial resources, technical capacity, and data management systems are essential for the continued success of monitoring initiatives. Sustained investment in infrastructure, capacity building, and advanced data analytics will be crucial to overcome these challenges and ensure the long-term sustainability of air quality monitoring efforts.

He mentioned that the public, the private sector, and the government should all collaborate closely to replace outdated vehicles with new ones, make the shift to electric vehicles, and utilize various fuel-efficient stoves in order to solve this issue. So far, he remarked that the institution are work resulted in a reduction of 0.166 million metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions and carbon emissions.

As Addis moves forward, it must continue to prioritize the integration of air quality considerations into urban planning and policy frameworks. By adopting a holistic approach that combines pollution control measures with sustainable development strategies.

By embracing cutting-edge technologies, fostering collaboration, and empowering its citizens, Addis Ababa is laying the foundation for a cleaner, healthier, and more sustainable city. Through sustained efforts and a collective commitment to environmental stewardship, Addis Ababa can serve as a beacon of sustainable urban development for other cities around the world.

Besides, the installation of air quality measurement systems in Addis Ababa signifies a significant milestone in the city's journey towards sustainable urban development. It is a testament to the city's commitment to improving the quality of life for its residents and protecting the environment. By harnessing the power of data, engaging the community, and implementing effective policies, Addis Ababa is forging a path towards a greener and more prosperous future.

Art & Culture



Ethiopia

BY LEA KNOWLES

Here among the Simien Mountains
following winter rains
you become the Blue Nile
of sparkling waterfalls and streams
gushing their way to join Lake Tana.
Your landscape is blooming its best
within sight of snow-capped Ras Dashen -
brief time of plenty for Gelada baboon,
the elusive ibex and red-coated Simien
wolf.

It is here King Lalibela began his quest
to build and fortify a homeland,
a Jewish Holy Land on Ethiopian soil.
Here too was Aksum built -
castles, monasteries, rock-hewn churches
where from misty, magical dawn to sunset
glow

yellow-robed pilgrims still follow the
scriptures

hoping that in these dark caves their
skeletal remains
may one day rest.

Here, a medieval world of incense and
parchment

beeswax candles and deep ritual
where travellers may thrill to
the spice of adventure in their veins
foot-slogging dusty trails
climbing with throbbing legs and heaving
chests

to reach destinations that seem mythical
yet glorious,

returning with stories guaranteed
and souls cleansed.

But for a certain generation



here is a land embossed with famine and
war
branded in the memory that apocalyptic
dawn,
splayed out across the world
on TV screens with scenes
that scream into the wind
shrouded in dust-storms from Hell.
The small bird comes to sit upon her hand
and listens to her long lament
recognises her beauty, her gentility
her sorrow

for this is the bird hatched in a thorny nest
above a shrinking pool, fending for herself.
This is Africa.

Here we first heard of Danakil and Ogaden-
of the hyena-man in that desolate wasteland
protecting weak and sickly children from
gruesome fate.

Here we saw Berhan rescued by kind hands
from her living grave, saved by a tear.
And the people of the world cried and
prayed
and among the sadness sang and gave.



Today I try to focus on a different dawn
where sun rises on a kinder dawn,
where all can be free to share a meal
of injera with spicy lentils and puréed chick
peas
perhaps a glass of Harar or spris
in the company of kind and generous
people
who, having been so close to the bitter ends
of earth
would sacrifice anything to save their
children
and endow them with just and lasting
peace.

Society

Gari Woro: Festival of Boro Shinasha community

BY LEULSEGED WORKU

Ethiopian New Year, Enkutatash, always falls on the first day of the Ethiopian calendar Meskerem 1 (on the 11th or 12th September in the Gregorian calendar). Ethiopians, throughout the country, celebrate Enkutatash warmly and colorfully with various events.

Recently, the Boro Shinasha people, following the conclusion of the rainy season and the beginning of the sunny, bright season, marked their New Year, Gari woro under the theme, “Gari-Woro for forgiveness, solidarity and peace.”

The Gari Woro festival in the Shinasha calendar represents a fusion of cultural, religious, and communal dimensions. The festival holds great importance in the cultural and religious life of the Shinasha community and serves as a time for reflection, celebration, and the reaffirmation of their shared identity as a distinct ethnic group in Ethiopia.

Not only that, but Gari-Woro, the New Year festival of Boro Shinasha people, is also the platform that further strengthens peace, dialogue resolution, reconciliation, and keeping brotherhood among the community, the surrounding community and beyond.

According to documents, the Gari Woro festival that is held in the middle of Meskerem is primarily dedicated to fertility and the renewal of life.

One remarkable aspect of the Gari Woro festival is the active involvement of all members of the Shinasha society. From youths to children, men to women, and the elderly, everyone plays an important role in the festivity. This inclusive participation highlights the communal spirit and collective identity of the Shinasha people.

The preparatory phase to the Gari Woro celebration is the first step that involves the active involvement of all people. On the eve of the actual festival, individual Shinasha organizes a service where all members of Shinasha meet and celebrate the Gari throughout the year.

It includes activities such as selecting the date for the festival, identifying the sacred site where the rituals take place and making arrangements for the necessary materials and resources. The community members come together to plan and organize various aspects of the festival, ensuring that everything is in place for the upcoming celebrations.

The ritual phase which is also the core of the Gari Woro celebration typically takes place over several days and involves a series of ceremonies and dances. One of the highlights of the festival is the “Woro” ritual, which involves the sacrifice of oxen or other cattle as an offering to the spirits and deities. The sacrifice is believed to bring blessings, fertility, and protection to the community.



The meat of the sacrificed animal is shared among the participants, symbolizing unity and communal harmony.

The Gari Woro festival involves a series of performances, entertainment, rites, and rituals. These elements contribute to the vibrancy and liveliness of the celebration. Traditional dances, music, and storytelling play a crucial role in conveying the cultural heritage and transmitting ancestral knowledge to younger generations.

Rituals and ceremonies include prayers, offerings, and symbolic acts that signify renewal, blessings, and gratitude and ceremonies that are performed to ensure the well-being of the community and the prosperity of the land.

The festival also includes storytelling, folklore performances, and cultural exhibitions, allowing the younger generations to learn about their heritages and traditions. Through the Gari Woro festival, the Shinasha people showcase their unique cultural practices, economic activities, and social customs. It serves as a platform for the people to get together, strengthen social bonds, express their ethnic identity; celebrate their

cultural practices and preserve their distinct traditions. The festival provides an opportunity for the Shinasha people, reinforce community values, and celebrate their heritage.

This act is believed to bring blessings, fertility, and protection to the community. The rituals are performed by designated individuals who hold specific roles within the community, such as spiritual leaders or elders. Music, singing, and dancing are integral parts of the rituals, adding to the festive special, impressive atmosphere.

During the Gari Woro festival, the Shinasha people gather in a designated area, often near a sacred site or river. The community members dress in traditional attire, adorned with colorful beads, feathers, and other decorative elements. Men and women participate in separate dances, accompanied by traditional music and drums.

The culinary phase marks the conclusion of the Gari Woro celebration. After the rituals and ceremonies, the community gathers to share a communal feast. Traditional foods, such as injera (a sourdough flatbread), meat dishes, and locally brewed beverages, are prepared and enjoyed together. This phase

is a time for the community to bond, reflect on the significance of the festival, and celebrate the abundance and blessings of the harvest season.

The majority of the Shinasha people follow the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, and their New Year celebration coincides with the Orthodox holiday of Meskel. This convergence of events adds a religious dimension to the festival, as the faithful commemorate the discovery of the True Cross. For this reason, it can be said that the Gari Woro festival serves as a platform to demonstrate and reinforce the cultural, social, and religious values cherished by the Shinasha community.

Speaking in relation to Gari Woro New Year festival of Boro Shinasha people, Benishangul Gumuz State Council Chief Speaker Temesgen Desisa (PhD) said that Gari Woro festival is the means of peace, dialogue resolution, reconciliation, and keeping brotherhood.

Temesegen also said that Gari-Woro festival for the people of Boro Shinasha has many advantages as it is quite important for the generations to come and nation building. Therefore, when celebrating the festival, the peace achieved in the State should be further strengthened through dialogue and reconciliation, and reinforced the existing brotherhood and solidarity.

Local media reports have also confirmed that various elderly people express the meaning and importance of the Gari Woro Boro Shinasha New Year. For instance, in his short stay with ENA, Elder Lema Alga said that it is impossible to move into the New Year with a grudge against one with the other. Before the plan for New Year is prepared, if there is a dispute, reconciliation should be sought and then the elders are blessed those who have had reservations.

Another Elder, Assefa Taye on his part said that disputes should be resolved through dialogue and respecting differences. In view of this, he always strives to play his part in that regard.

Furthermore, the elders stated that apart from preserving the nation’s culture and passing it on to the next generation and especially the youth, they are working to strengthen unity and solidarity using their being opinion leaders.

It is to be recalled that “Gari Woro” is a traditional turn of the year and it is celebrated with various events from the Eve of the New Year till the true Cross Festival. The festival is the symbol of forgiveness, unity, understanding, love, and peace.

All the cultural processes of Gari Woro celebration reflect the cultural and spiritual values of the Shinasha people, emphasizing unity, gratitude, and the renewal of life. It is a time for the community to come together, honor their traditions, and strengthen social ties.

Law & Politics

Ethiopia's comprehensive efforts in addressing refugees' immediate needs

BY ADDISALEM MULAT

Ethiopia's unwavering dedication to hosting and supporting refugees is a testament to its deep commitment to fundamental humanitarian values. Through its collaborative and proactive approach, Ethiopia has showcased its resilience, adaptability, and compassion in addressing the needs of displaced populations. With a focus on both immediate needs and long-term solutions, the country upholds the principles of dignity, respect, and solidarity offering a lifeline of hope to refugees.

Ethiopia's notable role as a host to a significant number of refugees serves as an admirable testament to the nation's unwavering dedication in upholding fundamental humanitarian values and principles. Despite the numerous obstacles presented by the presence of a substantial refugee population, Ethiopia has exhibited remarkable resilience, adaptability, and compassion in its approach towards addressing this pressing issue.

The compassion and empathy shown by Ethiopia in hosting refugees are truly awe-inspiring. The country's unwavering commitment to humanitarian values is evident through its notable role as a sanctuary for a significant number of individuals fleeing hardship and conflict. This remarkable dedication highlights Ethiopia's deep-rooted belief in the basic principles of humanity and the importance of extending a helping hand to those in need.

Ethiopia's significant role as a host nation for thousands of refugees exemplifies its profound dedication to upholding humanitarian values and principles. Despite the challenges associated with accommodating a large refugee population, Ethiopia has showcased its resilience, adaptability, and compassion in its response.

Despite the inherent challenges posed by the presence of a sizable refugee population, Ethiopia has risen to the occasion admirably. Rather than succumbing to the difficulties presented, the nation has displayed incredible resilience and adaptability in its response to this critical issue. By actively addressing the needs of refugees, Ethiopia proves not only its willingness to shoulder the burden but also its capacity for compassion and understanding.

Ethiopia has emerged as a commendable exemplar in its commitment to humanitarian principles as evidenced by its significant role as a haven for a considerable number of refugees. The nation's unwavering dedication to upholding fundamental values is visible in the compassionate and caring response it has demonstrated towards those seeking refuge within its borders.

Collaboration with international partners and humanitarian organizations plays a crucial role in strengthening Ethiopia's response to the refugee crisis. By actively engaging in partnerships, Ethiopia gains access to additional resources,



technical expertise, and best practices in addressing the unique challenges faced by refugees. This collaboration facilitates the implementation of more effective and sustainable interventions enhancing the overall support provided to refugees and ensuring efficient resource allocation.

Although the presence of a substantial refugee population has presented numerous challenges, Ethiopia has displayed an extraordinary ability to overcome these obstacles. Instead of being deterred by the complexity of the situation, the country has exhibited remarkable resilience and adaptability in its approach to addressing this pressing issue. It stands as a shining example of a nation that does not shy away from its responsibilities but instead rises to the occasion with compassion and empathy.

Ethiopia's exceptional commitment to hosting and supporting refugees exemplifies its unwavering dedication to humanitarian principles. Through comprehensive efforts in addressing immediate needs providing access to education and healthcare, promoting social integration, and facilitating economic empowerment, Ethiopia offers a lifeline of hope to refugees.

Ethiopia's admirable stance in hosting and supporting refugees showcases its recognition of the global crisis that has impacted millions of people across the world. As one of the countries prominently dealing with this issue, Ethiopia has taken significant measures to address the pressing needs of refugees within its borders. By ensuring their participation and representation, the government creates opportunities for refugees to have a voice and actively contribute to shaping policies and interventions that impact them.

In addition to addressing immediate concerns, Ethiopia places great importance on fostering social cohesion and peaceful coexistence between refugees and the host communities. By creating spaces for interaction and promoting cultural exchange, Ethiopia strives to facilitate social integration and harmony enhancing the overall well-being of both the refugee population and the host community.

By addressing the immediate needs of refugees and implementing long-term solutions particularly in the areas of education, healthcare, and social integration, Ethiopia offers hope and an

opportunity for refugees to rebuild their lives and make positive contributions to society. By encouraging global cooperation, the country strives to alleviate the strain on host countries and work towards a more comprehensive and sustainable response to the global refugee crisis.

Ethiopia's approach towards hosting and supporting refugees is deeply rooted in the belief that every individual regardless of their nationality or circumstances deserves to be treated with dignity and respect. In addition to addressing immediate needs, Ethiopia has actively pursued long-term solutions to assist refugees in rebuilding their lives. The commendable dedication of Ethiopia to extending refuge to vulnerable populations stands as a testament to the nation's deep sense of compassion and its unwavering commitment to upholding the fundamental principles of humanitarianism and solidarity.

Ethiopia's response to the refugee crisis demonstrates its deep commitment to addressing the needs of displaced populations within its borders. Through the establishment of refugee camps and settlements, provision of basic amenities, healthcare services, education opportunities, and efforts towards long-term solutions, Ethiopia strives to provide a safe and dignified environment for refugees to rebuild their lives.

The government's collaborative approach with international partners and the emphasis placed on social integration and economic empowerment showcase Ethiopia's dedication to upholding humanitarian values and working towards a sustainable resolution of the global refugee crisis. Ethiopia's role in hosting thousands of refugees is a commendable testament to the country's commitment to upholding humanitarian values and principles.

Ethiopia's role as a host to refugees showcases its steadfast commitment to humanitarian values. Overcoming numerous obstacles, the country goes above and beyond to assist those seeking refuge within its borders. Its resilience, adaptability, and compassion serve as inspiration reflecting Ethiopia's unwavering dedication to upholding the most fundamental principles of humanity.

The International Labor Organization (ILO) has reaffirmed commitment to supporting refugees and communities to improve

livelihoods.

Approached by *The Ethiopian Herald*, ILO Country Director in Ethiopia Alexio Musindo said that Ethiopia is one of the countries hosting thousands of refugees in the continent.

He stated that his organization along with governments and partners is working to improve the lives of the communities and refugees in terms of access to finance, skills development, among others.

"In addition to safeguarding the migrant workers, it has been working on providing financial loans and capacity building, business developments services that enable them to engage in any business fields," he added.

ILO is struggling to lift out the hosting communities and refugees from their situations through various initiatives such as job opportunities, businesses and economic empowerments and others which are the focus areas of the organization, he remarked.

He said, "So far we have been facilitating and domesticating the requirements that help make financial contributions. Moreover, as migration is becoming complex and multi-faceted in the East and Horn of Africa, international partners and donors need to strengthen advocacy and financial assistance."

As most of the migration accounting for 80% is intra-regional, cross border agreements between unions and countries would contribute a lot in addressing the problem, he said.

As of April 2023, Ethiopia has been hosting 253,616 Somali refugees and in parallel the latter has hosted 23,701 Ethiopian refugees and asylum seekers, it was learnt.

It is noted that the flow of people from every corner is characterized by mixed migration flows encompassing refugees, asylum-seekers and migrant workers. Hence, it has posed a strain on governments in regions as they struggle to cope with the large number of migrants crossing their border and moving through their countries.

"Countries in the East Africa and Horn of Africa region have increased efforts to boost migration governance at the national and regional levels based on continental and global initiatives and frameworks established to advance improved migration management."



Ephrem Endale
Contributor

Between you & me

Teff or Araki? It can't be that Bad!

A few days back a couple of us go into a recently refurbished restaurant in the town center. We used to frequent it before it closed down for repairs and facelift. Why did we frequent it? Well, isn't it obvious? The prices were reasonable and the treatment while it is nowhere near five star or nay star, it's not bad given the changing times when in some places they treat you as a panhandler and not a customer there begging for alms. It also was rather quite where you could have some serious talk with whoever you are without being forced to whisper.

So this time the place having undergone some quite impressive refurbishments with a lot of soothing ambience, we expected the same treatment if not the prices we were used to. It was only a question of how tough the price increases were. They were real tough. I order a small cup of macchiato, another one of us orders tea and the third wasn't interested in having anything, not at least with the morning still so early. I also order the most common, and the most reasonably priced of cakes. 'Reasonably' defined as cheap! Of course, these days 'cheap' is subjective. No genius in the field of economy could tell you what is cheap and what's not. I told you it's subjective.

So as I told you the cake I ordered was the very commonest of all and I would not be exaggerating to say that you deserve some prize if you can manage three bites before it disappears. They have shrunk it so drastically you don't need all the knife and fork stuff. The guy with the tea also ordered a piece of cake and given the size of his, mine was the Rock of Gibraltar! Being a guy who sees is given to those under the belt jabs he says, "Had they given me a glass of water I would have downed

the cake like a capsule." We laughed; laughed until the bill came! Two hundred and fifty-two birr! Being hit with such very unexpected dark surprise you might even think they wrongly brought some bill which should have gone to one of the other tables. Robbery! Simple daylight robbery. The piece of cake I ordered was labeled as 'English cake' and you know how much it was priced, more than ninety birr!

Of course, having devoted so much money for the refurbishment they need more money, and need it fast. As part of the community they two are victims to the bitter economic problems many find themselves in.

Not that we're new to shocks when any bill arrives. But it seems that everything has jumped all the logical lines where you could have said, and indeed they haven't their apologists too!, "Well what can they do. The price of everything has risen!" Look, outright condemnation of any and all price increases would be missing the facts by hundreds of miles. And that unfortunately isn't something you smile about

A couple of weeks back we saw the copy of some receipt for a damn piece of burger. You want to know how much it costs? You indeed should know if only to protect yourself from such blood-draining shocks; they call it Crave Burger and it costs 1,130.25 birr! An entire grand and more for a burger! Now, could you be denounced as a nonsense primitive-minded no-good creature for believing that the End Times or whatever rhymes with that must have already arrived or the knocks on the doors are getting louder?

The irony whenever the economic troubles

comes the business community seldom shares the joy. I mean of you made a cool million profit the other year what is wrong with settling for eight hundred thousand birr this time! Customers flocking to you have already started some meals and their dinner tables are being cleaned out faster than anything!

While many worry about the declining number of dishes on the dining table there are those whose most important worry is elsewhere. Someone was telling us about the hubby of a woman we knew who is almost going nuts because the fast increases on alcoholic drinks. He was a guy who used to have the 'real stuff' multiple nights a week. No more. Now he has joined the araki crowd! Aha! Doesn't that sound familiar!

While we are at it someone told me that the local araki business is spreading like anything as more and more alcohol 'fans' seek drinks to match their wallets. I can tell you the local araki is highly regarded in many circles with being the perfect medicine for stomach cramps and the like. I know a guy who takes a single shot of araki with the smallest of mini-cups before bed every night. You should hear him talking about what he calls the benefits. Now this is guy suffering with persistent stomach problems for years and years. At any time he had some medicine his doctors told him to take daily. But then looking deeper there horrific stories. Now he claims the araki is doing what all those expensive medicines and very expensive doctors failed to do.

Now the hubby mentioned earlier being a regular drinker isn't having it good with his health. In fact they say the signs are there

pointing to even more medical problems and he is still angry about the rising prices of alcoholic drinks!

I have told you about the araki house owner who got into trouble because a couple of her regular customers met their end in her watering hall. So she comes up with rules; you are not served because you just enter and demand to be served like you do in any other such places. No way; you have to get her approval. You're served only when she gives the go-ahead. It's said she always sat in a position from where she can see everyone. If say I'm a regular and take a friend of mine it is not easy to order without passing her questions. "Do you know him?"

"Yes I do."

"Does he have the energy to drink?"

"Yes, he does."

She tells the waiters to serve the new guy only one shot along with a bottle of water which works for all customers and she watches him as he drinks. Only if she is comfortable with the guy would he get a second and third shots. Now it is said the price of araki is increasing with such pace that it would soon be among those drinks only the VIP could afford. And still knowing it's astounding that some of us are complaining about alcohol while there are other more pressing problems like simple, good old food!

This is not about choosing between teff and araki; it is about being smart enough to realize there is no such choice. Or have things changed so much so that the choice is indeed between teff and araki?

'Negative Competition' ... Zero-Sum Game!

I've already 'confessed' that I'm a regular EPL follower. Yes, I've a favorite team and watching it play week in week out is an experience where your numbed nerves spring to life. At least they are there! If hard to find anything that makes you feel emptier than virtual lockdown of your nerves. But then your team is playing and...no! No! The rivals have scored! What was the center back doing when the striker of the rival team practically walks past him! And the goalie! "We have spent millions and millions on him and that is the best he can do! Yes believe me you think like, "We have bought him..." and even of you think about money. Look while we are at it MUN fans are yet to be impressed by the performance of their goalie who conceded a couple of really stupid goals. One fan wrote in the Social media "Manchester United released a goalie who didn't have legs and signed one who doesn't have hands!" It's all about competition.

Have you seen how childish could the adult coaches acts. It always makes me wonder that they never accept any decision against them even when everything is clear. I mean do their contracts include lines such as, "The coach should always protest any and all decisions given against our team!" or else how can they behave miles below the bar of acceptable behavior! Even decisions which come after being checked by the VAR they still act as if they aren't treated as fairly. Yes, it's all about competition and they have to act for the cameras.

You see some defender practically mowing down the legs of rival striker and you gasp, "What! He deliberately tried to hurt the poor fellow! They should send this guy to prison and not the dressing room!" And what happens is that the referee gives him the straight red which is as 'nice' as he could be. And the coach his immediate staff and the substitutes on the benches go into some war footing. It was like theirs was beyond riots and it would be war! Disgusting! Even when the fouled player is taken out on a stretcher many of them show no sign of regretting or even genuinely feeling sorry!

It's all about competition, and it seems in competitions there is no 'right' and 'wrong.'

Take the playacting of players on who fouls however insignificant has been committed. A little touch and the guy is on ground roiling like they have been hit by an ICBM.

Don't ask me why you feel the ants all over you sensing your team was to lose and lose heavy. Why do we take it that personally? I mean why should I care so and so team profits plunged into the red because they couldn't win any major trophies! Let the shareholders do the worrying about the money. We are concerned with their on-field performances, we want them to win. Well, that's where things get a little difficult. Difficult in the sense that good officiating, fair play, morale and the like as long as they don't work against us. Truly speaking most of us want 'our team' to win whatever way they can and that is all that matters. It is all

about the points climbing up the table and not about the right and wrong the referees or the linesmen or even the VAR guys make. The issue is, "What's in it for us!"

It's all about competition. And sadly in this age competition doesn't rhyme with fair play, neutrality and the strict respect of the laws and rules government the particular game or what appears like game.

These days there are completions all over the place, boutiques, restaurants, hotels, banks, brewers etc. seem to be tied neck and neck trying to outplay every other competitor. And how they do it is mostly rather secretive, isn't it? They don't want to give away their game plans written and legal or unwritten and illusive. What I and you the customers and clients know is what we see. Our knowhow about most things falls within those bounds. It's hard, very hard these days to claim, "What you see is what you get." Well, it would have been more appropriate to say, "What you see isn't always what you get." Especially when you go into the most traditional business areas like restaurants, drinking halls and other recreational places the behind-the-curtain stories you hear aren't nice at all. Many times you can't help wondering "Do people really go this far to outsmart their competitors!"

Here is a nice story about the wonderful spirit of fair competition according to an online article; "The 1992 Barcelona Olympics witnessed an unforgettable moment that captured the essence of sportsmanship.

Derek Redmond, a British sprinter, tore his hamstring halfway through the 400-meter semifinal race. Despite immense pain, he refused to give up. As Redmond hobbled towards the finish line, his father emerged from the stands, fighting through security to join his son. Together, they completed the race, inspiring a global audience. This heartfelt act of support demonstrated that sportsmanship extends not only to one's opponents but also to those who stand by our side during challenging times."

There is much talk about negative competition which sometimes tilts close to criminal behavior. From all fable-like talks of the occult methods to simple worldly immoral intentions you hear all kinds of stories. A piece in another online article goes on, "Negative competition occurs when we compete with others so that we want to win at the expense of the other person or people involved. In other words, our success is predicated on their failure. Negative competition is a zero-sum game and is based on the adolescent notion that if we win, we're 'good,' and if we lose, we're 'bad.'" Now despite the absence of credible fact based information with all the data making certain claims might make one sound some kind of 'the last pessimist standing.' But from our daily interactions there certain things we hear about and actually witness. And the verdict?

Well, the verdict is, "Negative Competition is Rampant." Case closed.

International



Many thousands of artisanal miners across Africa risk their lives looking for gold

Six dead and 15 trapped in Zimbabwe gold mine collapse

Six people have died and 15 others are trapped, after a mine shaft collapsed in Zimbabwe, state media report.

The collapse of Bay Horse gold mine in Chegutu, 100km (62 miles) west of the capital Harare on Friday morning left more than 30 people trapped.

Thirteen miners are said to have escaped or been rescued.

Efforts to reach those who remain underground are ongoing, television channel ZBC reported. It is not known what caused the collapse.

The Zimbabwe Miners Federation said its secretary general and the Chegutu Miners Association chairman would go to the site to try to establish what happened.

Mining accidents in Zimbabwe - which sits on vast reserves of gold, platinum and diamonds - are not uncommon. Mining methods are often rudimentary and safety standards are largely disregarded.

In 2019, dozens of miners drowned after heavy rain flooded the Silver Moon and Cricket mines near the town of Kadoma in the centre of the country.

BBC

Burkina Faso: 'elections not a priority compared to security', says military leader

Almost a year after seizing power in a coup, Captain Ibrahim Traore, who had promised a return to presidential elections by July 2024, in Burkina Faso, announced planned changes to the constitution to make it representative of the masses, declaring Friday, on state TV, that elections are not a priority.

"It's not a priority, clearly, security is the priority", stated Captain Traore.

Burkinabé authorities, on Thursday, said that four officers had been detained a day after the military government announced it had thwarted a coup attempt.

The junta disclosed late on Wednesday that the intelligence and security services had foiled the attempt the previous day.

The military government has vowed to shed all possible light on this plot.

Source: Africa news

Eswatini election: The vote in a kingdom where parties are banned

People in Eswatini, Africa's last absolute monarchy, are voting in parliamentary elections where candidates are not allowed to run for a political party.

This is the first poll there since 2021's deadly pro-democracy protests.

Critics have dismissed the elections as a farce meant to legitimise the absolute monarchy.

But King Mswati III has encouraged people to turn out to vote to ensure peace and stability is maintained.

More than half a million people registered to vote and they will be electing 59 members of the lower house of parliament. But the MPs only have an advisory role and do not wield any tangible power in the country previously known as Swaziland.

The 55-year-old king, who inherited the throne in 1986 aged just 18, will select 10 more representatives.

Reports from the capital, Mbabane, said calm prevailed at the polling stations on Friday morning.

Political parties have been banned in Eswatini since 1973, forcing individuals seeking elected positions to run as independent candidates in the parliamentary elections, which happen every five years.

The monarchy's crackdown on dissent and the country's political nomination system, which involves traditional chiefs choosing candidates, often produces elected officials supportive of the monarchy.

Ahead of the vote, some Swazis expressed scepticism that the elections would bring about change, as the parliament cannot criticise or take action against the executive or king.



People queued up to vote in the capital, Mbabane

The king also appoints the cabinet, prime minister and judges, approves laws proposed by parliament and commands all of Eswatini's security forces.

"Even if they got elected into parliament, they do not have the power to hold the executive accountable, including the absolute monarchy," Zweli Martin Dlamini, the editor of Swaziland News, told the BBC's Newsday programme.

Like other outspoken critics of Mswati III, Mr Dlamini has been prosecuted several times for what he has written about the king.

Two opposition lawmakers, elected in 2018, are currently detained for pushing for democratic rule, while a third fled into exile.

In 2021, student-led protests that began over alleged police brutality morphed into calls for political change. At least 46 people died in a series of clashes between the security forces and demonstrators, according to Human Rights Watch.

The government has disputed this figure and

said that the police were responding to violent attacks.

In January this year, Thulani Rudolf Maseko, a human rights lawyer who was opposed to the king, was killed in his home, hours after the monarch warned critics who go against him.

King Mswati appeared to dismiss criticism of his government as polling opened on Friday.

He said that the "outgoing government did an exceptional job" and urged voters to "vote for people who will ensure that the kingdom remains peaceful; who love Eswatini and the nation, and who will continue to advance the kingdom's development aspirations".

The king's polygamous and opulent lifestyle, which is characterised by luxury cars and watches, has long faced criticism.

More than a third of the country's 1.2 million people live below the international poverty line.

Election results are expected this weekend.

BBC

UK economy grew faster than estimated since Covid

The UK's economy has grown faster since the start of the Covid pandemic than initially thought, new figures show.

Revised data indicates that the UK has seen faster growth than France or Germany since the end of 2019.

The growth figures had been expected to be upgraded, after the Office for National Statistics (ONS) published new estimates earlier this month of how the economy had performed since Covid.

However, analysts said the UK was still suffering from lackluster growth.

The latest figures from the ONS indicated that the UK's economy has grown by 1.8% since the pandemic started, whereas the previous estimate was a 0.2% contraction.

They also showed that the economy grew by 0.3% in the first three months of this year, up from the 0.1% previously estimated.

The estimate for the April-to-June quarter was unchanged at 0.2%.

Following the latest set of revisions, ONS chief economist Grant Fitzner said the UK's growth rate was "almost unrevised over the last 18 months".

The size of an economy is measured by Gross Domestic Product, or GDP, which tries to cover all the activity of companies, governments and individuals in a country.

The ONS revises GDP figures over time as it receives more information about how the economy performed.

Earlier this month, the ONS had said that "richer data" from its annual survey meant that it now estimated the UK economy was larger than previously estimated in the final three months of 2021 compared to pre-pandemic levels.

The latest set of figures, means the UK's growth since the pandemic exceeds that of 1.7% in France and 0.2% in Germany.

Responding to the new data, Chancellor Jeremy Hunt said: "We know that the British economy recovered faster from the pandemic than anyone previously thought and data out today once again proves the doubters wrong."

"We were among the fastest countries in the G7 to recover from the pandemic and since 2020 we have grown faster than France and Germany."

However, Ruth Gregory, deputy chief UK

economist at Capital Economics, said the latest ONS release "changes very little".

"The data leaves the economy still only 0.6% above its level a year ago," she said.

"It does not change the big picture that the economy has lagged behind all other G7 countries aside from Germany and France since the pandemic. And that's before the full drag from higher interest rates has been felt."

Samuel Tombs, chief UK economist at Pantheon Macroeconomics, noted that when it came to international comparisons, "a stable picture might take some time to emerge, given that statistical authorities in other countries are revising their data too".

The most recent GDP figures showed that the economy shrank by 0.5% in July, due to a combination of strike action and the impact of wet weather, and there have been concerns over the economy's weak performance in recent months.

However, Mr Tombs said he thought that the UK would avoid a recession in the second half of this year, helped by the recent slowdown in the rate of consumer price rises.

(Source: BBC)

In Pictures

The colorful vibe of Meskel festival rippled across Ethiopia

BY DARGIE KAHSAY



Meskel, the founding of the true cross, is an annual festival commemorated on September 27 by the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahdo Church (EOTC) faithful. Demera, eve of Meskel and Meskel have just been colorfully celebrated across Ethiopia by EOTC followers, UNESCO has registered Meskel as intangible world heritage. During this year's Demera celebration, General Manager of EOTC, Abune Abraham, President Sahle-Work Zewde and other senior religious leaders and government officials together set the bonfire aglow lending color to the ceremony at Meskel Square, in Addis Ababa.

Religious Diplomacy

EOTC and Russian Orthodox Church (ROC) are sister churches. During this year's Meskel celebration, Russian Orthodox Church Sunday School students had partook in Meskel's commemoration here in Addis Ababa.

Beyond attending the festival, the ROC Sunday School students sang a religious song. The ROC Sunday school performance was part of this year's celebration and the singers performed in front of EOTC General Manager, President Sahle-Work Zewdue and other senior religious and political leaders on the stage. The guest performers accentuated the colorful celebration and it was a historic event for the two sister churches.

