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Reform game changer for job creation, enterprise dev't: MoLS

BY ASHENAFI ANIMUT

ADDIS ABABA – The national reform is setting a determinant business ecosystem for enterprises

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Ethiopia's diplomacy gaining momentum: MoFA

BY YESUF ENDRIS

ADDIS ABABA- Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) announced that Ethiopia's diplomacy is gaining momentum as partners consolidated cooperation and support in the first quarter of this fiscal year.

Several bilateral and multilateral diplomatic activities have been carried out as per the government's plan to reduce enormity and to strengthen partnerships, MoFA Spokesperson Ambassador Meles Alem said.

In the bi-weekly press briefing of the Ministry, Amb. Meles has elaborated various diplomatic engagements with countries and international organizations that protected the national interests of Ethiopia.

"It was our plan to grow partnerships and to reduce enemies, and it has already been accomplished in the concluded quarter of the ongoing fiscal year," he expressed.

He also indicated that numbers of international partners including European

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Ambassador Meles Alem

Germany, UNDP seal over 10 mln Euros financing pact

• Pact to support Ethiopia's peace, stabilization activities

BY TSEGAYE TILAHUN

ADDIS ABABA – Germany and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP-Ethiopia) have signed over 10 million Euros for peace support and stabilization program in Afar, Amhara and Tigray States.

The agreement sealed yesterday between the Germany Ambassador to Ethiopia Stephan Auera and UNDP Resident Representative Ethiopia Turhan Saleh.

Speaking at the occasion, UNDP Resident Representative Ethiopia Turhan Saleh said that Ethiopia is at an important juncture right now, between moving towards sustainable peace and development.

He, therefore, said that for sustainable peace to take hold, however, a key element will be continued progress towards implementation of Cessation of Hostilities Agreement (CoHA).

It was learnt that the support aims at helping people in conflict-impacted areas to reap a peace dividend apart from returning to normal life and living in a safe environment.

"We are already doing this work in Afar, Amhara and Tigray, in 13 woredas, directly and indirectly reaching 1.2 million people. With the help of Germany, we could double these numbers in 2024."

For his part, Germany Ambassador to

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News

University nurturing competent teachers for quality education

BY MISGANAW ASNAKE

ADDIS ABABA - Kotebe University of Education said it is laying down a strong foundation for country's education system through nurturing teachers to shape and transform the generation to play vital role for national development.

Approached by *The Ethiopian Herald*, Kotebe University of Education President, Berhanemeskel Tena (PhD) expressed that the university has produced over 100,000 teachers across the nation so that it will continue fostering the competence of teachers to enable them ensure equity and quality education in Ethiopia, he indicated.

He stated that the university is enrolling Ethiopian primary and secondary school teachers to providing them with the needed knowledge and skills trainings to be able to



Berhanemeskel Tena (PhD)

foster a competent generation that strive for the sustainable development of the nation.

"We have established University of

Education to create productive, competent teachers that transform the generation with good education to bring structural reform in education sector as well as fill the gap in the country's educational environment," he said.

Teaching is profession which comprises science, art and discipline so that instructors and teachers need consecutive training to be competent in nurturing the generation in a good manner and guiding students to climb the ladder of success, according to the President.

Berhanemeskel said: "Quality of education matters the most as students need to have a good knowledge and skills. Therefore, the university is producing policy documents and guidelines to achieve these goals."

He also pledged to do his level best in building a better educational environment that enroll knowledgeable students.



Solomon Soka

Call for engaging in local social media platforms infrastructure dev't

• Launches 4th cyber security awareness month

BY TSEGAYE TILAHUN

ADDIS ABABA - The Information Network Security Administration (INSA) called on the private sector to invest in local social media platforms infrastructure development.

INSA launched the 4th cyber security awareness month on Wednesday to well inform all members about the importance of cyber security.

Briefing media, INSA Director-General, Solomon Soka stated that since the country has developed its own social media platforms software for domestic use, it has been waiting for the private sector to invest in infrastructure development to apply it across the nation. Currently, the platform is operational.

The administration has been working to make the software accessible to security and government institutions. However, the administration requires huge infrastructure including huge data centers and othersto make it accessible to the general public, he said.

"We are seeking the private sector to make investments in local social media platforms and infrastructure development to use domestically. Due emphasis would be given for creating national capacity in various technologies especially low capacity technology sectors. The government highly encourages the private sector investors to invest in infrastructure development to apply the developed software," he added.

The administration needs a huge budget to develop its infrastructure to make it accessible to the general public though social media platforms software is operational, he said.

As to him, they would offer the software freely for investors, and locally developed technologies would not benefit only Ethiopia as they are of significantly useful in benefiting Africa and beyond.



Girl's defenders call for protection, education, policy change

BY BETELHEM BEDLU

ADDIS ABABA- International Day of Girls 2023 was marked with urgency of taking decisive action in investing in girls' education and child protection as well as advocacy for policy change.

The International Day of Girls 2023, which was celebrated under the theme of 'Invest in Girl's Rights: Our Leadership, Our Well-being' emphasized the critical need to support girls as leaders and champions of their own well-being.

In her keynote speech, Plan International Ethiopia Deputy Country Director Mekdim Gullilat noted that girls education and child protection should be given due emphasis in terms of dedicating financial resources, providing necessary support, and ensuring access to top-notch educational environments.

Mentioning that advocacy for policy change is another paramount of concern, she urged individuals, communities, governments, and organizations to rally for policies that safeguard and champion girl's education and child protection under all circumstances.

Encouraging governments to place education at the forefront of their emergency response strategies, as well as recognizing its pivotal role in crisis situations is significant, as to her.

On the event, Ambassador of Canada to Ethiopia Joshua Tabah reiterated his country's support to the government of Ethiopia and the communities who are committed to enabling girls to have a vision and realize their dreams.

"I encourage all girls in Ethiopia to seize your right, the opportunity and to be clear and be ambitious about what you

want and need. The governments of both Ethiopia and Canada support you and work together to do that," he underscored.

The Ambassador reminded that his government provides developmental assistance to communities across Ethiopia to allow girls realize their dreams, provide support to primary and secondary schools, economic livelihood and food security.

Canada's humanitarian assistance also focuses on water and sanitation, and emergency education for displaced people. The Ambassador pledged to provide more support to back the right and empowerment of all girls across Ethiopia.

It is to be recalled that Ministry of Women and Social Affairs join hands with Plan International Ethiopia to celebrate the power, potential, and rights of girls in Ethiopia.

News

Ministry set to produce 80 % construction inputs in Ethiopia

• 17th int'l construction exhibition opens to public

BY MISGANAW ASNAKE

ADDIS ABABA—Ministry of Urban and Infrastructure Development stated that Ethiopia has planned to produce 80 % input constructions locally within ten years.

Urban and Infrastructure Development State Minister Eng. Wondimu Seta said that “65 percent of construction inputs are being imported from overseas and we have to use properly local inputs and get better foreign currency rather than importing.”

He made the above remark during the opening of 17th international construction exhibition at the Exhibition center here yesterday .

As to him ,this lofty plan would be implemented in the upcoming ten year



through carrying out reforms on the construction industries of the country .

Despite finicancal shortages, the construction industries have been contributing greatly to Ethiopia's economic development, he said.

“We have to create fair market competition among construction industries in a bid to create conducive environment that benefits

all individual in the business apart from building the nation and ensuring rosy future for the generations to come.”

It was learnt , currently Ethiopia construction industry contributes 480 billion Birr GDP to the country, beyond creating ample jobs for the citizens.

Ethiopian Construction Contractors

Association President, Eng. Girma HabteMariam on his part said that construction industry in Ethiopia is the second employment opportunities provider next to the agriculture sector.

Construction industry has a great potential for growth as Ethiopia is a country with a developing economy and will attract foreign construction companies to work with the local ones.

Introducing ones products and services to the Ethiopian market is something expected to be achieved by participating in exhibition like this one and startup manufacturers will achieve their desired goals in the international market.

He called on other countries' construction industry actors to come to Ethiopia and work together with Ethiopian counterparts.

The exhibition will be opened to the public until October 15/2023 .

Ethiopia says UN under Secretary General report untrustworthy

BY ESSEYE MENGISTE

ADDIS ABABA—Ethiopia's Permanent Mission to the UN has expressed regret over the UN Under-secretary General's irresponsible statement regarding the situation in Ethiopia.

The charges in the ICHREE study has not been properly investigated on the ground, and assembled remotely from unreliable sources. As a result, the report's findings are no longer accurate or reckless statement on the situation in Ethiopia, the statement stated.

“This invalidates the accuracy and reliability of the findings contained in the report. It is thus deeply regrettable that the Special Advisor, entrusted with such an important mandate as preventing genocide, has chosen to make unsubstantiated allegations and inflammatory remark,” the statement explained.

Ethiopia thus rejects the Special Advisor's flawed assessment of the Pretoria Peace Agreement. In an outrageous assertion, she said, “An agreement to cease hostilities in the country more than a

year ago largely failed. This is false. The Special Advisor must retract her inaccurate statement that stands contrary to the consolidation of peace in the country.”

The expectation is that the international community will redouble support for the implementation of the Peace Agreement, including supporting rehabilitation and reconstruction of conflict-affected areas, the press released stated.

South Africa has signed the Agreement for Lasting Peace through a Permanent Cessation of Hostilities towards ending the conflict in northern Ethiopia. The African Union monitored the ceasefire and disarmament process. The Government is determined to ensure the full implementation of this Agreement. Ethiopia is in the final stages of formulating a Transitional Justice Policy to ensure accountability and justice, it was elucidated.

Ethiopia has also embarked on a nationwide dialogue to address past and present grievances and to forge a peaceful future for all Ethiopiansthrough the National Dialogue Commission.



Reform game changer for job...

to create jobs and expedite economic development, the Ministry of Labor and Skills (MoLS) said.

During the Enkopa Summit yesterday, MoLS State Minister Nigussu Tilahun said that Ethiopia is implementing the national reform which is a pushing factor to create decent jobs and the development of enterprises as well as assuring economic development through import substitution and wealth creation.

Having said Ethiopia is the historic land endowed with rich culture, vibrant diversity, and extraordinary achievements, the state minister added that the summit helps to hasten the journey towards embracing and harnessing the power of entrepreneurship to accelerate progress, innovation, job creation and sustainable development.

The greater number of the population in Africa represents median age with a huge workforce, he said, adding that it could be a blessing and huge asset if properly managed.

He stressed that Africans must join hands to tackle factors that cause poverty, economic stagnation, social unrest, increased crime, and brain drain among others.

“Ethiopia is striving to substantially change

its high rate of unemployment pattern by bridging 20 million jobs gap in 2030. Similarly, it is expected to create three million jobs annually while one million from the current unemployed backlog and two million to absorb the new entrants to the labor market,” Nigussu said.

The government of Ethiopia remains committed to create more jobs with successful implementations of digital entrepreneurship with integrated efforts of governments, private sectors, and other key stakeholders, he added.

The MoLS launched Enkopa Summit in 2021 with a view of promoting Ethiopian Entrepreneurships and it is a movement with a pan African ambition to increase collaboration between African countries and collectively own the narrative on Entrepreneurship, to essentially re-brand the continent, it was learnt.

Policy makers, continental institutions, international corporations, development partners, representatives of the private sector, entrepreneurs and technology experts drawn from 26 countries are attending the summit, which is being held from October 12-13, 2023 at Millennium Hall.

Ethiopia's diplomacy...

Union and United States resumed their formal relations with Ethiopia which was somehow affected by diplomatic glitches over the past years.

The European Union has normalized its cooperation with Ethiopia as the first granted 650 million euro under its Multiannual Indicative Programme, Ambassador Meles said, adding the alpha and omega of Ethiopia's foreign relations is reducing hostility and diversifying partners.

Likewise, Ethiopia and the U.S. have been undertakingconsultationsto agree on good governance, development and security affairs, according to the Spokesperson. Meles also

recalled that the country had held successful bilateral and multilateral discussions on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly in New York.

During the Summit, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, Demeke Mekonnen participated in 30 or more bilateral and multilateral discussions clarifying delegates from different countries about Ethiopia's current situation and ambitions, he stated.

The discussions enabled the country to strengthen its international cooperation since somecountries expressed interest to opendiplomatic missionsin Addis Ababa, he noted.

Germany, UNDP seal over...

Ethiopia Stephan Auera Germany is committed to our longstanding relations with Ethiopia and stands with the Ethiopian people during this time of hardship.

It is pleased to see efforts to implement the CoHA to end the conflict in the north and call upon all parties to redouble their implementation. Only dialogue and

mutual trust can contribute to overcoming division and conflict. Important steps in this regard have been taken, further steps have to follow. “We therefore encourage and support Ethiopia and her people in pursuing the path towards national healing with courage and foresight,” he added.

Opinion

Peaceful ending of outdoor festivals showcase peoples' commitment to peace, unity

BY HIZKEL HAILU

Ethiopia, a land steeped in history and rich cultural traditions, has recently celebrated a multitude of outdoor public holidays and festivals. From the founding of the Truth Cross (Meskel Demera) to Gishen Mariam, Mewlid, and Irreecha, these celebrations highlight the country's vibrant cultural tapestry.

Despite various challenges faced in different parts of the country, Ethiopians continue to demonstrate their unwavering commitment to peace and togetherness. Let the writer explore his view on the reasons behind Ethiopians' peaceful celebrations and the significance of national dialogue in fostering unity and understanding.

Ethiopia is a country of diversified assets. It is the home to numerous ethnic groups, languages, cultural assets and religions. This diversity is not only celebrated but also serves as a unifying force among Ethiopians. Festivals provide a platform for people from different backgrounds to come together, fostering mutual respect and understanding. These celebrations showcase the richness of Ethiopian culture and enhance social cohesion, emphasizing on the shared values that bind the peoples together.

Ethiopian outdoor festivals are marked by a remarkable sense of peace and harmony. This peaceful atmosphere is a testament to the Ethiopian people's commitment to resolving conflicts through dialogue and understanding. Despite the occasional challenges faced in certain regions, Ethiopians prioritize peaceful coexistence and utilize the festivals as a means to reinforce these values.

This year, Meskel Demera witnessed an awe-inspiring sight as thousands upon thousands of people gathered at Meskel Square to celebrate the festival. The atmosphere was filled with a profound sense of peace and unity, showcasing the remarkable capacity of Ethiopians to come together in harmony. Despite any challenges or conflicts that may exist, the celebration of Demera exemplified the nation's commitment to peaceful festivities.

The abundance of joyful faces, adorned in vibrant traditional attire, stood as a testament to the Ethiopian peoples' unwavering dedication to celebrating their cultural heritage in a peaceful and inclusive manner. The peaceful gathering at Meskel Square during Demera spoke volumes about the resilience, unity, and peaceful spirit of the Ethiopian people, serving as an uplifting example for the nation and the world. Apart from Meskel square, in Addis Ababa, the day was commemorated peacefully across the nation at different places.

Moreover, this year's Irreecha celebration also witnessed a magnificent gathering as millions of people flocked to both at Hora Finfine in Addis Ababa and Hora Arsede in Bishoftu for consecutive days of joyous festivities. The atmosphere was imbued with a profound sense of peace and tranquility, reflecting the deep-rooted values of unity and harmony held by the Ethiopian people. Despite any challenges or conflicts that may exist, the celebration of Irreecha showcased the nation's unwavering commitment to peaceful celebrations.

The diverse crowd, adorned in colorful traditional



Ethiopia: A nation of peace-lover people celebrating diverse festivals in peace

attire, came together in a spirit of camaraderie and solidarity, highlighting the Ethiopian people's deep connection with their cultural heritages. The peaceful and inclusive nature of the Irreecha celebration at Hora Finfine in Addis Ababa and Hora Arsede in Bishoftu demonstrated the remarkable ability of Ethiopians to celebrate their traditions harmoniously, fostering an atmosphere of joy, understanding, and peaceful coexistence.

By the same token, the peaceful celebration of Mewlid by Muslim brothers and sisters at Anwar Mosque and mosques across Ethiopia, despite the challenges faced by the country, also serves as a powerful testament to the peace-loving nature of the Ethiopian people. In the face of adversity, they continue to embrace their religious traditions peacefully, emphasizing the values of unity, compassion, and respect. The peaceful gatherings at these mosques reflected the unwavering commitment of Ethiopians to foster understanding and harmony, transcending any differences that may exist. By celebrating Mewlid with serenity and inclusiveness, the Ethiopian Muslim community portrayed their dedication to peaceful coexistence and demonstrates the country's enduring spirit of peace and tolerance.

Coupled with the peaceful celebration of the aforementioned festivals, Gishen Mariam Was also celebrated peacefully in Amhara region. In the face of some conflicts in certain parts of the region, Ethiopians demonstrated their commitment to peace through embarking on a peaceful pilgrimage to celebrate Gishen Mariam on October 2 this year. This celebration took place at Gishen Debre Kerbe, an Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church monastery located in the Ambassel woreda of the South Wollo Zone, Amhara Region. These events can illustrate how the peaceful pilgrimage to Gishen Mariam exemplified Ethiopians' unwavering dedication to unity and harmony, even in the midst of regional challenges.

Gishen Mariam holds immense religious significance for Orthodox Christians in Ethiopia. It is believed to house the original Ark of the Covenant, symbolizing the covenant between God and His people. Despite the conflicts in the Amhara region, thousands of faithful Christians traveled to Gishen Debre Kerbe from different corners of the country to pay homage to their religious heritage. This pilgrimage not only showcases their deep faith but also underscores their commitment to unity and togetherness.

The pilgrimage to Gishen Mariam also stands as a testament to the Ethiopian peoples' resilience and determination to maintain peace. Despite the tensions, people from different walks of life, irrespective of their different ethnic or social backgrounds, embarked on the journey to Gishen Debre Kerbe with a shared sense of purpose and devotion. This peaceful pilgrimage highlighted their ability to rise above differences and come together in pursuit of spiritual fulfillment and peace.

All the aforementioned holidays and festivals not only represent a religious observance but also serve as an avenue for dialogue and understanding. People from diverse backgrounds gather in different places, fostering conversations that transcend social, ethnic, and political barriers. Through engaging in dialogue, festivals can forge connections, dispel misconceptions, and promote peaceful coexistence. This collective experience of shared spirituality nurtures a sense of unity and solidarity among the participants.

Festivals also promote values of forgiveness, reconciliation, and love. They serve as a reminder for Ethiopians of their shared heritages and the need to preserve peace amidst some internal and external challenges. The peaceful public festivals' celebrations showcase Ethiopians commitment to resolving conflicts through peaceful means. It emphasizes the importance of dialogue, understanding, and respect for one another's beliefs as the path towards a harmonious society.

National dialogue plays a crucial role in Ethiopia's pursuit of peace. It provides a platform for open and inclusive discussions, enabling citizens to address grievances, share perspectives, and find common ground. Festivals serve as opportune moments to engage in dialogue, fostering understanding and empathy among diverse communities. By encouraging dialogue, Ethiopians can transcend differences and work towards a shared vision of peace and prosperity.

Ethiopian festivals often carry deep historical and religious significance, emphasizing on the themes of unity, forgiveness, and reconciliation. For instance, the founding of the Truth Cross reminds Ethiopians of the importance of truth and justice in building a harmonious society. Gishen Mariam signifies the unity of Ethiopian Orthodox Christians, while Mewlid celebrates the birth of the Prophet Muhammad, promoting values of compassion and peace. Irreecha, a festival of the Oromo people, honors nature and fosters an appreciation for the interconnectedness of all beings.

The Nation's commitment to peace is evident in their peaceful celebrations of festivals, despite challenges faced in different parts of the country. These festivals serve as powerful symbols of unity, diversity, and a shared desire for peace and harmony. Through national dialogue, Ethiopians can address underlying issues, promote understanding, and work towards sustainable solutions. Ethiopia can continue to nurture its identity as a nation of peace-lovers, celebrating its diversity while striving for a peaceful future through embracing the significance of these festivals and engaging in constructive dialogue.

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

Editorial

Concerted efforts crucial to improve migrants' wellbeing

The African Union Commission, in close collaboration with the International Organization for Migration (IOM), African Union Member States, Regional Economic Communities and other partners have over the week inaugurated the Africa Diplomatic Indaba (ADi) series on migration and mobility as well as Labour Migration.

According to information obtained from AU, the ADi is conceptualized as a platform aiming at uniting specifically the members of Diplomatic corps and Parliamentarians, and leaders for collective policy discussions to shape the governance of migration and labour migration in Africa.

The commitment of IOM to consolidate multifaceted engagement with Ethiopia is essential as it can help curb predicaments hovering in the continent of Africa and beyond.

There is no gainsaying the fact that the partnership between Ethiopia and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) has been instrumental in promoting the overall well-being of migrants and creating an environment where migration can contribute to development.

As a matter of fact, Ethiopia has been in cooperation with IOM for years now, and the government has actively engaged with the organization to address migration-related challenges and promote safe and orderly migration with commitment and determination. The country has also been collaborating with IOM in addressing emergency situations including the displacement of migrants as a result of conflicts, natural disasters and other related aspects.

In a similar vein, as one of the key areas of IOM's engagement on migration is providing humanitarian assistance to people who are displaced or affected by conflict or disaster, Ethiopia has been working hand-in-glove with the organization determinedly. Needless to say, IOM helps reunite families that have been separated due to migration and provides assistance to vulnerable groups over and over again.

It is worth nothing that Africa has made considerable strides in developing legal frameworks aimed at mitigating forced displacement arguably more than any other continent in the world.

Over the years, numerous African nations have developed legal instruments and policies that demonstrate their commitment to protecting the rights of the forcibly displaced. In addition to working with governments, International organizations and civil society, IOM is committed to facilitating the safe movement of people across borders.

It is essential that African countries continue to prioritize working towards building legal frameworks that not only protect the forcibly displaced, but also provide a framework for preventing displacement in the first place. Efforts made by a wide spectrum of stakeholders to develop and implement these frameworks underline the importance of collective action in charting a path towards a brighter future for all.

Africa's progress in developing legal frameworks around forced displacement is a testament to the confinement's commitment to creating a more just and equitable society for all its inhabitants.

Lately, the new Director-General of the International Organization for Migration (IOM), Amy E. Pope said that a multifaceted engagement with Ethiopia is a priority where the country serves as the seat for the African Union, according to information obtained from the Ethiopian News Agency.

The director-general said that the work of the International Organization for Migration really needs to prioritize engaging in Africa where migration is a pressing issue for the continent.

Over 80 % of migration occurs in the continent and across the continent, she revealed, adding that it is not to Europe or to the Gulf states. "Throughout my work on issues of migration, it has been clear that the challenges that exist here on the continent are significant. When you look at conflict, poverty, uneven development, and increasingly as we see the impacts of climate change on vulnerable communities, it is clear that the challenges are enormous," Pope elaborated.

Since time immemorial, Ethiopia has been serving as a refuge to many migrants and over the years the country has also deigned refugee friendly laws. While the country is recognized for its praiseworthy deeds, it needs adequate support from the international community to help migrants living in the country.

Opinion

Alternative advantages from Ethiopia's green legacy

BY STAFF REPORTER

CNN's recent report indicates that trouble is brewing for economies that depend on the production of beer, coffee and wines due to the impact of climate change on the ingredients and plantations that are vital inputs for these beverages.

For instance Arabica coffee, which is used by Starbucks and other major coffee sellers, is already a finicky crop that requires specific conditions to flourish.

Currently the most suitable areas for coffee growth are in Central and South America, particularly Brazil, as well as Central and West Africa and parts of South and Southeast Asia. Over the next 28 years, projected climate change impacts to those areas will make them far less friendly to coffee crops, according to a report published in the scientific journal Plos One.

According to the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) Ethiopia played a leading role in UNEP's Billion Tree Campaign and a total of 1.7 billion trees were planted since 2007, the third largest contribution after India and China. It was following the establishment of the Climate Change Forum-Ethiopia, as a preparation for COP15, that the 'Climate Hearings' were held across the country. These hearings were successful in addressing the need to bring the voices of vulnerable communities to international events.

Therefore, while fighting the impact of climate change Ethiopia's large scale greening initiative will have a significant contribution in serving as alternative means of income for coffee growers.

Ethiopia launched the National Green Legacy Initiative 4 years back under the leadership of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed and planted more than 20 billion trees across the country and extended the program to the neighboring countries like Somalia, Djibouti, and South Sudan sharing millions of tree seedlings with these countries. Ethiopia used the Green Legacy Initiative as a tool for peace building and promotion of friendship and economic integration.

Now the country is developing eco-tourism as an important strategy for tourism development which is expected to further promote the country's climate diplomacy. The Dine for Sheger, Dine for the Nation and Dine for the Generation Projects are already showing promising results not only at the national level but also at the regional level setting an example for the rest of African

The Government of Ethiopia has set up a national financial mechanism, the CRGE Facility, in order to support the realization of the priorities set out in the CRGE strategy, as well as the development and implementation of CRGE investment plans. The facility has also been established to help Ethiopia fully benefit from the different forms of finance currently and potentially available, and to help mobilize and allocate finance in accordance with the prioritized needs defined by the CRGE strategy.

This has resulted in the facility being accredited for the Adaptation Fund and Green Climate Fund (GCF). The Government of Ethiopia has already committed its contribution to the CDGE Facility on a continuous basis. Applicable contributions from the domestic sources.

Ethiopia is also closely working with the African Climate policy Center (ACPC) established in 2010 for sharing quality climate information that is used for the day-to-day activities of member countries and also to serve as an input for decision making. This support is provided through the ClimDev-Africa program, a joint initiative of UNECA, the African Development Bank (AfDB) and African Union Commission (AUC). Through this program countries have been supported in improving their analytical capability, knowledge management and dissemination mechanisms. ACPC serves communities and governments as well as the Regional Economic Communities in Africa. In order to contribute to addressing Africa's climate challenges, the center is working in partnership with different stakeholders. It has focused its work program into three broad areas including: Knowledge generation, sharing and networking that consists of research, knowledge management and peer learning, and outreach activities; Advocacy and consensus building; and Advisory services and technical cooperation, which comprises capacity mobilization, capacity building and technical assistance.

Ethiopia signed the 'Lima Declaration' with the United Kingdom, Norway, Germany, France, Denmark and Sweden. Its purpose is to work together for an ambitious outcome in Paris and also to support the realization of the CRGE. This declaration expanded and renewed the achievements of the strategic partnership between Ethiopia, UK and Norway, which was held during the international launching of the CRGE in Durban, South Africa during COP17.

IIED notes that the partnership aims to continue the already on-going political collaboration for advancing international climate policy, the UNFCCC process, for an ambitious and comprehensive agreement accepted by all parties, as well as technical and financial support for the implementation of the CRGE strategy. The European Union and the United States of America have recently joined the Lima Declaration. Climate diplomacy will have major impact if addressed at regional, continental as well as global level.

In Ethiopia, although there were some attempts in educating the public on the issues of climate change, mainstreaming environment issues and climate diplomacy is not being adequately addressed by the sector offices in the government and the CSOs.

Ethiopia's climate diplomacy and the skills being employed by the professionals in conducting multi-lateral negotiating need to be accelerated to ensure socio-economic and diplomatic successes for the country.

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Business & Economy

Ethio-Japan economic relation: Fostering growth, knowledge transfer

BY HIZKEL HAILU

Ethiopia and Japan have cultivated a notable economic relationship that spans several decades, characterized by mutual cooperation and growing bilateral ties. Japan, as one of the world's leading economies, has played a significant role in supporting Ethiopia's economic development through various investment and aid initiatives.

The partnership between these two nations has not only bolstered Ethiopia's infrastructure and industrial sectors but has also fostered cultural exchanges and knowledge sharing. With Ethiopia's abundant natural resources and Japan's technological expertise, the economic collaboration between the two countries has the potential to fuel sustainable growth and create new opportunities for both nations.

On top of that, Ethiopia and Japan continue to enhance their economic partnership through inaugurating new projects and providing aids. A new state-of-the-art training and research center on Kaizen was recently built and inaugurated in Addis Ababa with by 27.5 million USD (ETB 1.5 billion) grant from the Government of Japan.

Speaking on the inauguration ceremony, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Demeke Mekonnen accentuated that the center on Kaizen built in Addis Ababa offers several economic advantages for Ethiopia as well as for Africa. The center serves as a hub for African industrious human resource development, providing training and education on Kaizen methodology.

Through equipping employees of manufacturing companies, civil servants, vocational school teachers, and Kaizen consultants with the knowledge and skills of continuous improvement, productivity, and quality enhancement, the center helps build a highly skilled workforce. This, in turn, boosts the efficiency and competitiveness of Ethiopian industries, leading to increased productivity and economic growth.

He further explained that the establishment of this center is one of the many expressions of friendship and longstanding cordial bilateral relationship between Ethiopia and Japan. "We are glad that Ethiopia is becoming the Kaizen excellence center that serves the whole of Africa," he said, adding Kaizen is embraced in Ethiopian governance system through programs launched in 2009.

"We have been observing encouraging success stories in enterprises, which are utilizing Kaizen tools. It is time to scaling up the experience to realize our development agenda," he added.

Kaizen's focus on continuous improvement aligns with the "Let Ethiopia Produce" national movement. The training center enables Kaizen consultants to provide lectures and hands-on training to private sector employees, supporting the growth and development of manufacturing sites. By implementing Kaizen principles, manufacturing companies can optimize their operations, improve product quality, and increase production efficiency. These enhancements contribute to the growth of the manufacturing sector, attract investment, and promote economic diversification.



Inauguration of the Kaizen Center: Demeke Mekonnen center, Imoto Takako left and Melaku Alebel right

The economic collaboration between Ethiopia and Japan aligns with the developmental goals of both countries

Japanese Ambassador to Ethiopia, ITO Takako, on her part said that the center will serve as a hub for African industrial human resource development, and it is expected to spread from Ethiopia throughout Africa.

The Nairobi Declaration of TICAD 6 in 2018 pledged to increase the productivity in Africa by 30% through the expansion of the Kaizen Initiative throughout Africa as human infrastructure development is one of the priority areas of cooperation between Japan and Africa.

It is to be recalled that on September 30, 2019, a groundbreaking ceremony was held for the construction of the TICAD Human Resource Development Center for Business and Industry (TICAD-HRD) the fund covered through Grant Aid from the Government of Japan.

The center's establishment in Addis Ababa also positions Ethiopia as a regional leader in Kaizen excellence. With the aim of expanding Kaizen principles throughout Africa, the center becomes a focal point for collaboration among African countries. This regional impact fosters cooperation, knowledge sharing, and the exchange of best practices, leading to the overall advancement of industrial development and economic growth across the continent.

Minister of Industry, Melaku Alebel, said the Kaizen excellence center represents a significant step forward in the journey towards continuous improvement and growth. "It is a testament to the unwavering commitment of our government, in collaboration with the people and government of Japan to invest in the future of our workforce and industries."

Kaizen has had a great impact on Ethiopia's manufacturing industry. "We are aware that our industries have been benefiting from the Kaizen disseminations. The improvement of quality has been improved from 5-46%, productivity

from 15-39% and generally speaking from improvement activities, production waste reduction and elimination efforts above five billion birr in monetary value have been registered."

The Government of Ethiopia has adopted policies to use Kaizen to further develop the manufacturing and services sectors, as well as hospitals and schools.

The training center aligns with Ethiopia's policies and goals for economic development. By adopting Kaizen as a governance system and incorporating it into various sectors, such as manufacturing, services, hospitals, and schools. The Ethiopian government aims to improve productivity, quality, and efficiency. The center plays a significant role in supporting these objectives through providing the necessary training and resources to implement Kaizen effectively.

During the inauguration ceremony, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) Senior Vice President Sachiko Imoto said the center will allow Kaizen consultants to provide lectures and hands-on Kaizen training to private sector employees.

She noted Kaizen could be a solution for improving productivity at manufacturing sites planned under the 'Let Ethiopia Produce' national movement. Imoto added that the Kaizen Project is one of JICA's flagship projects in Ethiopia. The center is expected to train thousands of individuals annually and will play a major role in helping the Ministry of Industry achieve its goals.

Indeed, the state-of-the-art training and research center on Kaizen in Addis Ababa brings economic advantages by fostering industrious human resource development; strengthening the manufacturing sector; facilitating knowledge

sharing and cultural exchange; promoting regional collaboration; and supporting the Ethiopian government's development goals. These benefits contribute to the increased economic competitiveness, sustainable growth, and the realization of Ethiopia's developmental agenda.

It is also to be recalled that the JICA has been working with Addis Ababa City Administration. On top of that, JICA has handed over 79 heavy machineries for road maintenance to the Addis Ababa City Roads Authority (AACRA) last month.

During the ceremony, Mayor of Addis Ababa City Administration, Adanech Abiebie stated that the Ethio-Japan relationship has been strong for the last nine decades and Japan has been supporting Ethiopia in different areas. Acknowledging the deep respect that Ethiopians have for the support so far, she further mentioned that discussions with the Japanese Ambassador are on-going for further cooperation.

The Japanese Ambassador mentioned the importance of roads in vitalizing the economy. And adding she said that Japan has been providing road construction equipment for Ethiopia in addition to support in other areas.

This Grant Aid, worth approximately 10 million USD (ETB550 million), is to support road construction in Addis Ababa and to strengthen the city's road maintenance capacity. JICA has been working with AACRA to develop the capacity of its engineers through a technical cooperation project and providing training opportunities in Japan in addition to providing a JICA advisor to the AACRA office.

The Government of Japan has been actively supporting the development of Ethiopia and contributing to the improvement of people's lives through various schemes, particularly in the fields of agriculture, infrastructure, industry, education and health. Japan will continue to support Ethiopia's development efforts through various Japanese Assistance Projects as well as through other modalities of assistance.

All things considered, Ethiopia and Japan have built a robust economic relationship, marked by mutual cooperation and growing bilateral ties. Japan's support in investment and aid initiatives has played a vital role in Ethiopia's economic development, bolstering infrastructure, and fostering cultural exchanges. With abundant natural resources and Japan's technological expertise, the collaboration between the two countries holds the potential for sustainable growth and new opportunities.

The economic collaboration between the two countries goes beyond traditional investment and trade. It also encompasses cultural exchanges and knowledge sharing.

Furthermore, the economic collaboration between Ethiopia and Japan aligns with the developmental goals of both countries. This partnership is also characterized by mutual benefit, where both countries stand to gain from the collaboration. It holds the potential to fuel sustainable economic growth, create employment opportunities, and contribute to the overall development and prosperity of both nations.

Art & Culture

Never-ending fascination and stories of Ethiopian Coffee

BY MULUGETA GUDETA

The story of coffee is never ending one. Different facets of this magical bean are revealed now and then. Only recently, there were new stories appearing on Google regarding the various aspects of Ethiopian coffee. One of them is about Ethiopian coffee ceremonies as a fascinating and unique culture that celebrates the three different steps in the coffee-making process, particularly coffee prepared at home. Another article deals with Ethiopian coffee buying and brewing tips, saying that Ethiopia is the birthplace of Arabica coffee and the revered origin of the bean.

Still another piece deals with a new coffee brew “for runners who love their caffeine fix” which is an interesting story about an athlete’s experience with Ethiopian coffee that boosted his performance during marathon competitions. He is also the author of the article, in which he records his experience as follows: “Many articles have been penned, books written delving into the secrets behind Ethiopian dominance in distance running, well let me tell you, all that quasi-mystical talk about lifestyle and something in the air at altitude—it’s all wrong. I know the secret: it’s the coffee.”

The author went on to say that, had he known the performance-enhancing qualities of Ethiopian coffee, he would have drunk it before starting his journey and set a world record a long time ago. That is absolutely amazing and new as a statement from an athlete who adores Ethiopian coffee. By the way, the athlete is now in the business of promoting and distributing Haile Coffee. That comes straight from his coffee plantation and is exported around the world.

There is a quotation written on a sign hanging from one of the walls of arguably the best and oldest coffee shop in Addis Ababa called Tomoca on Churchill Road. The sign is extolling the virtues or benefits of drinking coffee by quoting a famous French classical writer who said that new ideas came to him in floods after drinking coffee. I don’t remember exactly the words of that quotation, but it comes to my mind every time I think of coffee houses or write something new regarding Ethiopian coffee. Another article in Neuroscience.com news says that there is a chemical component that prevents cognitive decline in old age.

The story of Ethiopian coffee goes on and on, going right into the various sources of the magic bean that may be shrouded in the legendary story of a shepherd named Kaldi. The shepherd is said to have observed one lucky day, just by chance, his goats unusually jumping up and down in the field after eating the coffee shrubs that were hitherto unknown. The shepherd apparently took home the beans that were roasted, brewed and drunk by the unsuspecting members of the village community, who could quickly feel the mood-boosting quality of the beans and fell into the habit of drinking it regularly.

Like all legends, the story of coffee may also sound nebulous. However, subsequent studies have established that coffee beans were taken as far as Yemen across the Red Sea, where they were adopted as regular beverages in the form of coffee. Whatever the case might be, the story



*Coffee has become ... serving
as the biggest foreign
currency earner that supports
the national economy for a long
time now*

of coffee has started as a legend and that has now changed into the most moving and still unfolding subject of fascination and realistic narratives.

Ethiopian folk tradition maintains that the word coffee has borrowed its name from a region in Ethiopia called Kaffa, where the beans were first discovered. This assertion, too, may be the subject of research into its etymology as the study of the origin and history of the word. Then, it has slowly conquered the entire world thanks to its flavor, aroma and other qualities not found even in countries like Brazil that are considered the biggest producers of the beans. Ethiopian coffee is great, not because of the number of bags that the country exports every year.

Ethiopia does not produce only one brand of coffee. There are at least seven or eight major types of coffee beans that are produced in Ethiopia but the best among them are Yirgacheffe and Sidamo coffee varieties that enjoy the biggest demand across the global coffee consuming communities as well as elite market from America to China and Europe.

Coffee has become not only the world’s most famous beverage but is serving as the biggest foreign currency earner that supports the national economy for a long time now.

Meanwhile, coffee has made the long journey from compete anonymity to global fame. However, the journey was not fast or easy. At one time, not far off, coffee was considered an unhealthy habit that was allegedly responsible for stomach aches, high blood pressure, tooth decay, mental disorders like hysteria—you name it. Fortunately, advances in the medical sciences and new researches have totally debunked such misconceptions born of either ignorance or misinformation. Even then, coffee lovers continued to enjoy their beverage and nothing bad happened to them. And as scientific knowledge around coffee and coffee drinking advanced, hitherto hidden or ignored health benefits of drinking coffee started to emerge.

Ethiopia is the seventh biggest coffee producer in the world and the first in Africa. As a longtime observer of the coffee market, and as a consumer of the magical mythical, and mysterious beans, I would consider Ethiopian coffee Arabica the best type, the most delicious and the most preferred coffee crop in the world. Quantity might be the determining factor in some cases other than coffee. However, in this world of ever changing choices and alternatives, quality should assume the upper hand over quantity in evaluating such delicious and healing beverages as coffee.

By the way, most coffee drinkers in Ethiopia or anywhere else in the world may not be addicts in the traditional sense of the term, although there may also be addicts in the way some people are food addicts who eat for the sake of eating. There is apparently nothing wrong with being a coffee addict because it is not like drug addiction, which is unhealthy and even devastating. You can quit drinking coffee any time you want and this shows that it would be better to speak of coffee love instead of coffee addiction.

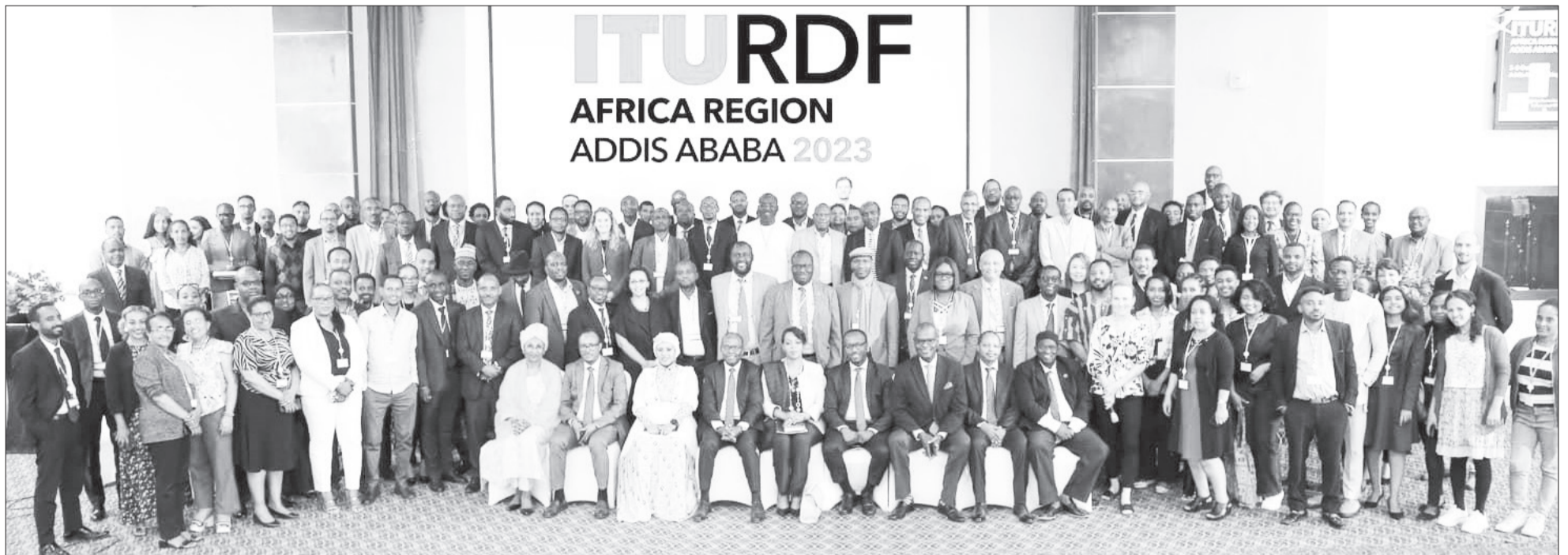
Many people are coffee lovers and they do not love coffee for its own sake, but because it gives them a healthy dose of pleasure, relaxation if not energy. These people are certainly coffee lovers in the broadest sense of the term. Some of the best lovers of coffee think of it as soon as they open their eyes in the morning and close them in the evening without counting the mid-day, post-nap serving of a cup of mood-elevating, inspiration-triggering and morale-boosting cup of coffee that turbo-charges their afternoons.

Some people tell you that the words of the sign hanging from the walls of Tomoca coffee joint are true. That must certainly be a remedy for many writers who spend long hours sitting in front of their laptops and praying for a trickle if not an avalanche of creative ideas or words, and staring at the blank screens. One may not be sure about the potential of coffee as a remedy against writer’s block. Yet, it may certainly be used as a fuel for moving the creative machine forward once the engine is started.

Although they may not know where exactly the avalanche of new ideas may be coming from, it is worth trying it during the dry periods of their creative lives or by sipping the afternoon post-nap cups of coffee that melt in their mouths and rush up to their frontal cortex, stimulating the myriads of brain nerves on its way to reach the centre where words are processed, and ideas take shape.

What is sometimes disturbing is the way the world is always fascinated about coffee while we, the originators, indifferently look on as the stories of coffee are unfolding. Kaldi’s story by itself could be the subject of a book or books. It could also be turned into educational materials for children to show them how keen observation of nature or the environment added with the right kind of curiosity can lead to many discoveries in many areas of endeavors. How about writing ‘coffee books’ that can be displayed at the best hotels in Addis about Ethiopian coffee that could stimulate the thirst of tourists but that of investors too? Not a bad idea eh?

Science & Technology



(International Telecommunication Union Regional Development Forum (ITU-RDF), Africa Region Participants in Addis Ababa, September 2023)

Fast attaining SDGs through digital transformation in Africa

BY DARGIE KAHSAY

Technological development helps transforming economic activities and fastening industrialization across the world. Thanks to technology, livelihoods are transforming, though access to technology varies from continent to continent, from country to country and even within countries. Countries with better technologies are winning the battle against poverty and ensuring their prosperity, while countries with limited technological advancements remain poor and still continue fighting poverty.

These days, sustainable development is becoming unthinkable without technological advancements. New innovations and technological advancements are vital in transforming developments at macro and micro levels. Technological development is becoming a key factor in combating poverty and ensuring prosperity. The United Nations (UN) launched the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015 with the goal of transforming the world where no one is left behind. The UN targets to achieve the SDGs by 2030 globally. Of the 17 SDGs, six have direct linkages with technology.

By making the latest technologies available for societies and making technological development inclusive, it would help accelerate and realize the SDGs and ensure that all people enjoy prosperity. In this regard, digitalization likely has a profound effect on accelerating the implementation of the SDGs as it helps transforming economic developments. Digitalization can be connected with human capital, industrialization, renewable energy, digital agriculture, smart cities and innovations.

Addis Ababa hosted the fifth International Telecommunication Union's (ITU) Regional Development Forum (RDF) from October 3 to 5, 2023, under the theme "Digital transformation for a sustainable and equitable digital future: Accelerating the implementation of the SDGs in Africa through digital transformation". During the discussion, the regional forum gives due focus to accelerating digitalization and achieving the SDGs in Africa.

During the forum, National ICT and Digital Economy Sector State Minister at Ethiopia's

The advancement of digital transformation is becoming key accelerator of economic development

Ministry of Innovation and Technology (MinT), Huria Ali said that accelerating digital transformation would help Africa to achieve SDGs. The forum, organized by ITU in collaboration with the Government of Ethiopia was attended by over 200 participants drawn from all parts of Africa. The State Minister said that the RDF which brings stakeholders of the continent to develop collaboration on ways of accelerating digital transformation and realizing SDGs in the continent. As to her, digital technology can play a vital role to overcome global challenges and build sustainable and equitable future for all.

"Africa is a young and dynamic continent with a rapidly growing population. We have a unique opportunity to leapfrog the traditional development process and inverse digital technologies to create a better future for our people. However, only 43% of the continent's population has access to the internet," Huria stated. The State Minister highlighted that solving the challenges needs timely collective action, especially in infrastructural investment and skill development, so as to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to participate in the digital economy as well as make sure that digital technologies are used in a way that is sustainable and equitable on the continent.

Recalling Ethiopia's Digital 2025 Strategy, Huria underlines Ethiopia's commitment to digital transformation mentioned the significant progress in recent years including liberalizing telecom sector, launching digital ID system and digital payment and promoting growth of e-commerce. The state minister

stressed that "despite the efforts put, there is much to be done in the sector. Thus, we are committed to work with our partners across Africa and the world to achieve a sustainable and equitable digital future for all."

Huria calls on all actors to invest in infrastructure and skill development to ensure that everyone has access to the internet and digital technologies on the continent. For her, ensuring technology, especially digital technology, would help to achieve the SDGs by the set period in Africa and across the planet. She calls for the promotion of the development and use of innovative digital solutions to address Africa's challenges, such as healthcare, education, agriculture, climate change and other economic activities.

For his part, ITU Department Partnerships for Digital Development Chief, Cosmas Zavazava said that the forum is a platform for views exchange and matchmaking among stakeholders. "The regional development forum is one of the key events that we hold and the idea is to bring stakeholders together to brainstorm, to exchange ideas. But most importantly, this regional development forum is unique, unique in the sense that we are going to engage in a matchmaking exercise."

It aims to convert pledges into concrete commitments that will result in the implementation of concrete impactful projects based on the priorities adopted and contained in the Kigali Action Plan, it was indicated. The Kigali Action Plan is a comprehensive package that will promote the equitable and sustainable development of telecommunication/ICT networks and services, it was learned.

Approached by EPA, Ethiopian Communication Authority (ECA) Director General, Balcha Roba said that it is the era of technology and without making technology inclusive; it is difficult to achieve the UN's 2030 target of achieving SDGs. The UN's 2030 target of SDGs has 17 goals and 169 targets to achieve by 2030 and the end goal is to eliminate poverty and hunger from the planet, he said.

For Balcha, by developing technology and making it inclusive, it creates job opportunities, promotes education, healthcare development, modernizes agriculture and other sectors that would help in improving

the livelihoods of the people. Hence, he said, technological development accelerates economic development and helps to realize prosperity.

As to Balcha realizing the 2030 target of SDGs needs strong cooperation of all stakeholders and countries and the cooperation in the technology sector is among the priority areas to accelerate the implementation and realization of SDGs globally. "The RDF attended by 45 African countries with over 200 participants which includes policy makers, regulatory authorities, technology solution providers, operators and other stakeholders aims at ways to accelerate the development of digital technology in Africa and to accelerate SDGs," he said.

"UN launched the 17 SDGs in 2015 to realize the goals by 2030, now only seven years are left as we are in 2023. Hence, the world needs strong collaborative efforts to realize the SDGs by the set target and technology would accelerate the realization," ECA Director General said adding the RDF gives due focus on experience sharing and promoting best practices in digitalization in Africa.

For him, the implementation of SDGs faces a lot of challenges like the outbreak of COVID-19 and other crises. Hence, to accelerate the implementation of the goals to achieve the plan by 2030, investing in technology and making the technological advancements inclusive would accelerate the efforts in realizing the goals. In this regard, the advancement of digital transformation is becoming key accelerator of economic development; he said adding that expanding and making the digital development inclusive in Africa can help to accelerate the realization of the SDGs.

Citing the UN's mid-term evaluation of the implementation of the SDGs, Blacha stated there are goals as intended that need further efforts to be realized during the set period. For him, to accelerate the implementation of the goals and realize them by 2030, it is critical to connect the goals with technology. Digital technology is among the accessible and easily expanded technology if countries and stakeholders give due attention to infrastructural development to make it inclusive. Making technology available to all societies would help accelerate the implementation efforts of the SDGs.

Society

Expediting African integration via art festivals

BY TEWODROS KASSA

For the past couple of years, various leaders of African countries have been preaching unity and African integration. Such unity and integration also sought to benefit the people. In doing so, numerous discussions and decisions have been made to expedite regional integration and facilitate free trade beyond borders.

No doubt all Africans also give thumbs up to the African Union's initiatives to realize African integration and promote people-to-people ties. Africans from all walks of life are expressing themselves through social media, being adorned with the colors of Africa. They are also more enthusiastic about promoting pan-Africanism by giving more attention to their own culture, music, dancing, and lifestyles.

According to the African Union Commission (AUC), regional integration has long been viewed as a catalyst for long-term prosperity. The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), which has now been operationalized, has created a platform and dialogue to support this. With COVID-19 placing severe strain on economies across the continent, regional coordination can be an effective approach to manage the response and promote post-pandemic recovery.

According to the 2020 and even the 2021 African Integration Report, the level of integration on the continent is low overall. This Report takes cognizance of the significant evolutions in the regional integration process and ambitions of the AU and the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and the challenges faced over the past year.

The AU has expressed enhanced ambitions for its regional integration agenda and launched major continental initiatives, the flagship projects that are captured in Agenda 2063, as well as revitalizing its work towards the attainment of the goals of the Abuja Treaty through the AfCFTA. While assessing the integration process, this Report captures the opportunities and challenges that come with these significant developments in the African regional integration agenda.

Currently, Africans are also giving more attention to their own culture, music, dancing, and other tangible and intangible assets. Thus, the continent could benefit more to promote its own culture and attract the other world in the tourism sector. Developing immense cultural assets significantly contributes to creating numerous job opportunities to the growing number of youths at home. Improving access to job opportunities in Africa will have tremendous benefits. The major benefits of improving access to job opportunities in Africa include limiting migration and loss of the competitive working power through creating an enabling environment for youths.



Africa Celebrates is an important event that aims to promote African culture, creativity and economic development

Recently, a plan was announced to stage a continental-wide art festival, 'Africa Celebrates, an annual Art and Fashion Event' in the capital of Africa-Addis Ababa, on which numerous artists, fashion designers, entrepreneurs, technology experts, among others from all African countries are taking part.

According to organizers of the event, the Africa Celebrates eyes to strengthen unity, accelerate the integration of Africa, and promote inter-African trade.

In connection with the event, an expert said that the Africa Celebrates, an annual art and fashion event to be held from October 25 -28/2023 at Ethiopian Skylight Hotel, embraces potential opportunities to speed up African integration and promote the socio-economic development of the region.

African Celebrates Event Manager and PMG Event Organizer CEO Nahom Senay told *The Ethiopian Herald* that the event is a big occasion that attracts numerous participants across Africa and beyond the continent.

As to him, Africa Celebrates mainly targets to promote African culture, arts, heritages, fashion, tourism, inter-African trade, business, technology, among others.

Accordingly, the event is organized in collaboration with Legendary Gold, the African Union, Embassy of Nigeria in Ethiopia, Pristine Marketing Group, 1888 and US mission to African Union.

Moreover, Africa Celebrates aims to showcase the rich cultural heritage of Africa through various activities and events. It will provide a platform for African designers, artists, musicians, and entrepreneurs to showcase their talents and promote African products and services.

The event will also include panel discussions and workshops on topics such as African fashion, technology, and

entrepreneurship.

Briefing journalists the event organizers indicated that the Gala fashion event Africa Fashion Reception will be a highlight of the celebration.

It will feature a runway show of African fashion designs, showcasing the creativity and craftsmanship of African designers. The event will also include live performances by African musicians and dancers, adding to the vibrant and lively atmosphere.

In addition to the fashion events, Africa Celebrates will also feature exhibitions and business forums, providing opportunities for networking and collaboration among African and international businesses. The event will also promote tourism in Africa, showcasing the beauty and attractions of the continent to visitors from around the world.

Africa Celebrates is an important event that aims to promote African culture, creativity and economic development. It is a celebration of the diversity and talent of the African continent, and a call to support and invest in African industries and businesses.

Eating our food, wearing our clothes, appreciating our local music, dancing and performances, exhibitions, business, technology and innovation, fashion summits as well as a tour of the beautiful city of Addis Ababa and a Gala fashion event - will be part of Africa Celebrates 2023, that will be carried out for four successive days, it was learned.

In sum, the need to go beyond the AfCFTA and address the Free Movement of Persons as an essential step towards the achievement of the African Economic Community includes diversifying such continental level art festivals. It looks at the Free Movement of Goods, Services, and capital; people as being essential for African integration and being collectively reinforcing, experts stressed.

International news

Saudi Arabia, Gulf powers crucial to regional environmental goals: UN officials

BY STAFF REPORTER

Middle East powerhouses Saudi Arabia and the UAE are helping regional partners needing more access and assistance to meet their climate goals, a United Nations Development Program official told Al Arabiya English.

Dr Kishan Kodhay said that events like the MENA Climate Week, which took place in Dubai ahead of COP27 in Sharm el-Sheikh last year, helped bring together countries in the region.

“We’ve seen large delegations of youth groups sharing their vision for the future, but also other partners such as industry, bringing together both UN agencies as well as IFIs (International Financial Institutions) and, of course, government representatives from across the region, and NGOs, universities. And this brings collective thinking on the challenges and solutions in advance of COP and a regional perspective into the COP,” Khoday told Al Arabiya English on the sidelines of the week-long event.

This sharing of knowledge bilaterally is beneficial for both the host nation and for delegates who can exploit tried and tested solutions.

For instance, energy efficiency, its study and implementation, is an aspect of renewable energy transition that Saudi Arabia is excelling in, Kodhay said. The UNDP, which has had a presence in the region for over 50 years, has reportedly been partnering with the Kingdom to offer “technical assistance.”

“For every unit of GDP growth, there’s less and less carbon footprint, less and less energy use. We’re trying to reduce the energy intensity of development and decarbonize the development pathway.”

He added that it was important to work with energy-intensive industries and provide new

technology and financial instruments to reign in the curve.

The UNDP official pointed out the policies, regulations, and industry partnerships of the Saudi Energy Efficiency Program, which was established in 2010 by the Kingdom to raise the efficiency of the industry, construction and land transport sectors.

“Having Saudi Arabia as a constructive partner on the global and regional development agenda, it’s good to see their support to other countries across the region and having this kind of dialog,” the UNDP official said.

Political stability

Countries like Saudi Arabia, with a high level of political stability, are a “great asset” for organizations like the UN Food and Agriculture Organization, another senior official told Al Arabiya English on the sidelines of the MENA Climate Week.

Ayman Omer, the FAO Program Director in Saudi Arabia, said in places of political and economic instability, there needs to be a contingency plan, something he has experienced in his home country, Sudan.

But in the GCC, where the political and economic situation is widely considered stable, Omer said one can “envision the future” and “contribute to the long-term vision of the content of the country.”

Despite being an arid, desert country with hot summers and scarce water resources, Saudi Arabia has regions in the south where agriculture thrives. Saudi Arabia is the second-largest date manufacturer in the world. It also has large poultry and cattle farms.

It does, however, depend on imports for its dietary needs – nearly 80 percent of the Kingdom’s food is imported.

The FAO, he said, works closely with the Saudi Ministry of Environment, Water and

Agriculture on improving the food system, natural resource management, efficient irrigation and mitigation of water scarcity, and technical assistance on building national capacity on critical areas.

The partnership has reportedly been in place for over 70 years, which Omer said helped put forth and see through to adaptation, policy matters backed by research and evidence.

This level of symbiosis has resulted in a secure food system despite its import dependency, Omer said.

“No one can deny that there is a very high level of security in the country,” the FAO official said, citing the example of the Kingdom’s resiliency to the global impact on food security during COVID-19 when international logistics were affected.

“There was disturbance in terms of food supply and food prices all over the world. But in Saudi Arabia, the impact of these extended factors on food security was quite minimal, and I think that is mainly due to the policies in terms of food imports.”

Part of Saudi Arabia’s means of adapting to its climate and environment in the food sector includes research and development of new tech that can enable growing crops in its desert landscape.

Al Arabiya English earlier heard from Saudi-based scientists on how they are developing seed technology and designing efficient greenhouses that can help grow plants in harsh conditions - perfect for the Middle East that is scorching hot and water scarce.

Measures to ensure food security and sufficiency also include international investments in agricultural companies and in new techs like vertical farming and alternative-to-meat produce.

Water, water everywhere... and drought

Despite the recognition and rapid rise in adapting to the changes brought by the deteriorating climate situation, the MENA region is still vulnerable to its effects that are already apparent through the wildfires, droughts and heat waves, Al Arabiya English learns.

“The impact in general or the vulnerability element of climate action in the region rotates around water, around sand and dust storms, and around sea level rise,” said Tarek Alkhoury, the Regional Coordinator for Climate Change at UNEP, specifically cautioning countries like Bahrain and Qatar.

And despite rising water levels being a threat to Gulf states, which are coastal, water shortage is already a reality in Iraq and Jordan – and this can intensify across the hot and arid Middle East.

Speaking to Al Arabiya English on the sidelines of the MENA Climate Week, Alkhoury said: “We need to do more assessment and we need to do more national adaptation planning to be ready to reduce the risk of climate change impacts in the future and to take action at the right time to prevent this impact of climate change on the people, wellbeing, health and security.”

Alkhoury advises senior management on climate change, identifies gaps in knowledge, plans strategic engagement of UNEP, and supports the government on the technical front.

“We are seeing a huge interest and political will to be part of the climate action” in the GCC, he said. “This is obvious by having two Arab countries hosting two COPs in the region,” he added, pointing at the upcoming 28th edition of the UN climate conference in Dubai.

Source: Alarabiya

ECA and RES4 Africa Foundation Kick Off Executive Seminar and Technical Training on Policy and Regulatory Reforms for Energy Access in Dakar

A technical training organized by the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and the RES4Africa Foundation on “Promoting the openness, attractiveness and readiness of electricity markets in Africa through policy and regulatory reforms to crowd-in private sector investment”. The program commenced today at the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning (IDEP) in Dakar, Senegal with the participation of experts from national electricity regulatory institutions and Ministries of energy from eight member States, namely Algeria, Cameroon, Democratic Republic of Congo, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Tunisia and Senegal.

This is the second edition of the training programme which was previously delivered from 29 to 30 March 2023 at ECA headquarters in Addis Ababa. Jointly organized by the Private Sector Development and Finance Division (ECA) and the RES4 Africa Foundation, the first edition took place on the margins of the High-Level Public-Private Dialogue on Private Sector Investment in

Electricity and Infrastructure Development in Africa, which fall in the portfolio of capacity building programmes delivered by IDEP.

One-fourth of the world population by 2050 will be African, along with 950 million new people living in African cities. Furthermore, 7 of the 10 fastest urbanizing countries by 2050 will be in Africa. One of the underlying critical conditions to meeting this prospect is putting in place infrastructure that supports growth and prosperity. African countries should also address the critical challenge of millions of the continent’s populations lacking access to electricity coupled with key challenges in our electricity sector requiring major investment.

Speaking at the opening session, Karima Bounemra, Director of IDEP underscored that “Africa is facing today multiple challenges, in a complex global and regional environment. The United Nations has prioritized urgent actions in the areas of energy and food security, as well as macroeconomic stability as critical challenges of our time, along with the long-term risks of climate change.” As a result, she urged facing these challenges by mobilizing

the required investments and the building the necessary capacity to guarantee our sustainable development, economic and social transformation and long-term prosperity.

“These investments must also help us close existing gaps and position us to successfully transition to a sustainable development path. To pursue these goals, we need conducive policy and regulatory environments encouraging investment”, she added.

Furthermore, Yohannes Hailu, energy policy expert with the Private Sector Development and Finance Division at ECA highlighted that “broadening the scope for private sector investment participation in Africa’s electricity markets through policy and regulatory improvements is essential for sustainable financing in the sector.” He indicated that ECA cooperation with member States in this regard is on-going through development and delivery of conducive regulatory instruments, capacity development efforts and technical support towards closing the investment gap in the sector.

“Now more than ever, energy pathways need to be shaped together, and the private sector

needs to be a significant driving force behind the roll-out of RE projects in Africa. However, to date, the contribution of the private sector in African energy infrastructure development has been marginal.” said Roberto Vigotti, Secretary General of RES4Africa, “RES4Africa is pleased to be working together with ECA and its African partners, the private sector, and civil society on furthering the energy transition and is eager to continue supporting the creation of opportunities for dialogue to design the most effective ways of tackling persistent challenges and taking advantage of the wealth of opportunities on the continent.”

During the technical training on regulation and private sector investment in the energy sector, the Regulatory Review of Openness, Attractiveness, and Readiness (R.O.A.R.) tool for the analysis of national regulatory preparedness and reform scenarios, jointly developed by the ECA and RES4Africa, was launched for use by experts in national policy and regulatory institutions in Africa and by the community of energy experts at large.

Source: UNECA

This is Ethiopia

Promoting domestic tourism via exhibitions

BY TEWODROS KASSA

While opening the 6th year and 3rd tenure of the joint session of the House of Peoples' Representatives (HPR) and House of Federation (HoF) this week, President Sahle-Work Zewde underscored the need to harnessing the country's vast endowments including in the tourism sector.

Addressing the joint session, President Sahle-Work Zewde presented some of the key social, economic and political directions and plans that the government will pursue in the new Ethiopian fiscal year, which started on July 8, 2023.

As to her, the tourism sector is a key sector that contributes a lot in realizing the country's journey of development. Despite several challenges, the country has registered promising progress in the sector.

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed also emphasized the incalculable socio-economic contributions of the tourism sector for country's overall development.

Launching a month long National Tourism and Hospitality Investment Fair last Tuesday- on October 10, 2023 at the Addis Ababa Science Museum, the Premier said that tourism is one of the main pillars for the economic sector, considering a rich history, heritage, culture and natural endowments, bird species, wildlife and unique events that Ethiopia is endowed with and that have highly marketable values.

"Ethiopia is rich with history, heritage, culture, natural endowments, birds, and wildlife that are the foundation for the development of tourism. The country is also endowed with magnificent bio-diversities that have potential tourism attractions and located at the highest mountains and lowlands with conducive weather," the PM reiterated.

"The world has scientifically proved that Ethiopia is a place where a fact about the origins of human beings is located. (And) there would be no human being that does not want to visit this. The highest and very lowest places are located in Ethiopia. We find the highest places at the Semen Mountains and Bale Mountains, as well as the lowest (place) Dallol Depression in Afar. There are also very hot and cold places in Ethiopia. In general, Ethiopia is a country with extremely extraordinary places," Abiy remarked.

In this regard, the Tourism and Hospitality Investment Fair gives visitors an opportunity to see a sample of what makes Ethiopia an ideal destination, the PM added.

The Prime Minister further stressed the need to put more efforts in order to augment the benefits of the country from the tourism sector. Identifying new tourism potentials as well as developing and intensively promoting the country's



Photo: Ministry of Tourism

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vast tourist attractions is also the major task of the sector, he noted.

He also underlined the need to provide the necessary services for tourists coming to Ethiopia and all stakeholders in the tourism industry work in collaboration to expedite the development of the sector.

Highlighting that the government has been working on the development of the tourism sector through its home grown economic reform, Prime Minister Abiy called upon all Ethiopians to serve in the interest of positioning Ethiopia as a destination with many splendors.

"I call upon all Ethiopians to explore what your country offers; to extract the potential of what you discover; to promote and serve in the interest of positioning Ethiopia as a destination with many splendors," the PM tweeted.

In her message regarding the exhibition, Tourism Minister Ambassador Nasise Chali on her part said that the National Tourism and Hospitality Investment Fair is part of the World Tourism Day and tourism month celebration.

The exhibition highly helps stakeholders to identify the country's immense tourism investment potentials, discover its wide



cultural assets, heritages, and natural tourist attractions, she added.

Ministry of Tourism Public Relations and Communication Director, Alemayehu Getachew told local media that the month of September marks the end of the rainy season and the beginning of sunny season, along with several outdoor religious and cultural festival activities that are significant to flourish tourism in Ethiopia.

As to him, the period between September and January is a peak season for tourist flow in Ethiopia. The flow in particular increases in September which marks the end of rainy season and the celebrations of number of outdoor religious and cultural festivals.

According to the Director, the Ethiopian New Year, *Meskel* (the Finding of the True Cross), *Gifata*, the New Year festival of the Wolayta people, and *Irreechaa*, the Thanks giving Day of the Oromo people, are among the festivals that have been enhancing tourism. The celebrations were included in tourism packages based on tourists' interest, time, and financial capacity.

Besides, tourists can also enjoy Ethiopian

foods, coffee ceremony, and visit the grand open market, Merkato, as part of the tourism package in Addis Ababa city, Alemayehu added.

In the city, transit passengers can also visit various places, including the National Museum, where the remains of Lucy are found, and historical places as well as the newly developed tourist destinations like Unity and Entoto Parks

In sum, the one month long exhibition launched last Tuesday will give visitors an opportunity to see a sample of what makes Ethiopia an ideal destination. Giving more attention to the tourism sector enables harnessing the country's immense tourism potentials and transforms the national economy, the tourism experts stressed.

Ethiopia has given a paramount attention to the tourism sector in its ten year national development plan. The government is working to improve policies and legal frameworks to make the sector play a key part in the local economic strategy.

The National Tourism and Hospitality Investment Fair opened at the Science Museum on October 10, 2023 will run until November 8, 2023, it was learnt.