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Photo: GebaboGebrie

## Ethio- China political trust hits high: Chinese Ambassador

BY YESUF ENDRIS

ADDIS ABABA-The transformation of Ethio-Chinese diplomacy to 'all weather strategic partnership' showcases the growing political trust between the two countries, Chinese Ambassador to Ethiopia said.

In a press briefing he gave here yesterday, Ambassador Zhao Zhiyuan stated that Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed's (PhD) to China was full of success in achieving three major issues. The two countries diplomatic ties have been transformed into all-weather strategic partnership which was the major news heralded following Premier Abiy's

See Ethio- China political ... page 3



Ambassador Nassise Chali, Minister of Tourism



Sileshi Girma, State Minister of Tourism

## Ethiopia's appeal to gain sea access fosters mutual benefits

BY TSEGAYE TILAHUN

ADDIS ABABA – Ethiopia's quest for securing access to sea and port diversification is supported by international development laws to foster mutual benefit, according to a noted economist.

Addis Ababa University Economics Lecturer Birhanu Denu (PhD) told local media that Ethiopia's pursuit to sea access has the backing of international development laws and the current geopolitical circumstances. Realizing access to the sea would ensure mutual benefit and strengthen regional economic integration.

"To overcome economic and inflation challenges, all citizens should support the government's peaceful and diplomatic access to the sea."

Apart from being the seat for international and continental organizations, Ethiopia provides ample opportunities to mutual growth with coastal neighbors and it has carried out massive infrastructural projects to ensure regional economic integration, the economist elaborated



Birhanu further stated that international laws, mainly the United Nations (UN), insists member countries to solve the quest to port access via discussion and negotiation and bring shared economic development. "Our coastal neighbors could benefit more from Ethiopia by allowing uninterrupted access to the sea."

Ethiopia's sea pursuit would provide a great opportunity for neighboring countries as the former's initiative would bring holistic growth and prosperity in the Horn of Africa. Meeting Ethiopia's demand, coastal neighbors are

expected to create strong regional partnerships.

He urged the media to avail timely and accurate information for the general public and some interest groups in a bid to curtail the dissemination of false information regarding Ethiopia's appeal to sea outlets. "The media is also expected to inform neighboring countries and the international community to learn about Ethiopia's commitment to handle the issue diplomatically and peacefully.

Ethiopia had been accessing the sea for a long time since the Axumite kingdom, but it lost direct access to ports in 1991, it was learnt.

**Ethiopia expects over 200,000 tourists to visit tourism exhibition**

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**Ethiopia taking part in trilateral talks with negotiated outcome**

• **Trilateral talks on Abbay dam kicks off in Cairo**

BY STAFF REPORTER

ADDIS ABABA – Ethiopia is participating in the third round trilateral talks on Abbay Dam with

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# News

## Ministry urges institutions to join forces against human trafficking

BY MESERET BEHAILU

**BISHOFTU**— Ministry of Labor and Skills (MoLS) stated that it is working in close collaboration with concerned bodies for acclimatizing citizens returned from overseas. Speaking at half day awareness creation forum organized on last Saturday with a view to heightening thoughtful about the regulation of re-establishing citizens returned from abroad and evaluating the 1st quarter performance of this fiscal year plan.

On the occasion, MoLS State Minister Nigusu Tilahun said that the ministry is working together with the government and non-government bodies in combating illegal human trafficking, reorganizing the refugees and victims and the likes. The ministry has planned to export some 500,000 trained/ eligible citizens for various countries this year.

Nigusu remembered that over 3.5 million jobs were created over the past fiscal year, and some 106,000 jobs were created abroad. This means that the country eyes on searching for home potential for creating jobs locally.

“Though some states like Oromia and Amhara have registered appreciable outcomes in reestablishing victims who returned from abroad, other states like Tigray and Sidama have come up with weak performance for various reasons. Following this, the total performance of the reestablishing of victims doesn’t exceed 45% in this 1st quarter of this fiscal year,” he noted.

MoLS Jobs Employment and Labor Market Sector Advisor Assefa Fered on his part said that citizens are leaving for abroad illegally and are exposed serious difficulty. Therefore, the combined effort of all is needed to reduce illegal migration and save the lives of hundreds of thousands of citizens.

As to Assefa, some 45,111 Ethiopians were registered from Sudan due to civil war in the 1st quarter of this fiscal year. In terms of training accessibility, some 1,139 citizens were benefited and 83,065 have gained adequate health treatment from Ministry of Health. Besides, 6585 jobs were created for repatriated citizens over the past three months.

Moreover, participants from various states presented their performance and discussed the challenges and opportunities on the issue of rehabilitating returnees and the way how to combat illegal human trafficking.

## INSA prioritizes youth dev’t, private sector involvement to cyber resilience

BY BETELHEM BEDLU

**ADDIS ABABA**— The Information Network Security Administration (INSA) disclosed that nurturing young technology innovators and encouraging the participation of the private sector in cyber security remain its priorities.

As part of the 4th National Cyber Security Program being marked under the theme ‘Resilient Cyber Security Capability for National Sovereignty,’ Information Network Security Administration (INSA) hosted a conference and exhibition here yesterday.

Opening the conference, INSA Director-General Solomon Soka mentioned the center’s priority to nurture young professionals and streamline the involvement of the private sector in cyber security. “If a nation fails to build a strong cyber security system, its sovereignty and national interest would be put at risk. Thus, enhancing the cyber literacy of the society, securing information infrastructure developments, and promoting technology innovators should be given top priority.”

Mentioning cyber illiteracy and poor usage of technologies are the major source of cyber-attacks, Solomon said INSA has carried out several awareness creation activities using various mediums.

In line with this, the government is undertaking several activities through Digital Ethiopia 2025 vision to ensure holistic digital transformation and has



garnered promising results thus far. Hence, the country managed to thwart attempts of cyber-attacks that could incur it 23.2 billion-Birr damage last fiscal year. “Despite these achievements, there is a lot to do to ensure the country’s cyber resilience.”

For Defense Minister Abraham Belay (PhD), cyber security requires not only capacity but talent and encouraging youth innovators is so crucial. “Other institutions must follow INSA’s suit in encouraging youth entrepreneurs and innovators.”

The Minister further highlighted that ensuring cyber security would not be realized without engaging the society, thus, activities must be carried out to enhance the public’s cyber literacy. Media houses,

education sector, cyber institutions as well as private and government institutions must take the leading role. Also, cyber diplomacy is another area that Ethiopia has given due priority.

In order to materialize Ethiopia’s digital transformation plan, due attention must go to engage the private sector. In doing so, the government needs to support studies, and technology innovations, Abraham emphasized.

Youth innovators displayed their technological innovations at the exhibition, which are believed to serve the nation in years to come.

It was learned that the 4th national cyber security month is being held from 12 October to November 10, 2023.

## University improving livelihoods via research-driven innovations

BY ASHENAFI ANIMUT

**ADDIS ABABA** — Wollo University along with its partners is creating and providing innovations that improve the livelihood of the community, University Research Community Service (RCS) said.

Speaking to the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA), Wollo University Vice President for RCS, Faris Hailu (PhD) said that the university along with other development partners has been deploying tested innovations to the youth and women at Berbere Woreda in Oromia State.

He further stated that the researchers have conducted community based findings which would be recommendable for policymakers especially on the local crops such as Taro root plants, coffee, and maize that have not been utilized for long due to lack of awareness.

Researcher at the university Samuel Tadesse (Asst. Prof.) for his part said that Wollo University has joined hands with Bule Hora University and Cordaid Ethiopia in undertaking various technology-based researches that brought valuable contributions for unemployed and women livelihoods up the streaming value chain.

He said: “We have been implementing the briquette value addition innovation

and stove production project with the active involvement of different actors for the last two years.”

He further pinpointed that the pilot project would have a significant importance on carbon trade protocol that helps generate more income and reduces environmental pollution and access to clean energy. Also, it sheds light on the implications of using value addition innovations for household income and livelihood enhancement.

Accordingly, the project created jobs for 120 women and youths, with 90% of them being women, he added. The project aimed at benefiting 5,000 and 30,000 at family and individual level via technologies respectively, he noted.

Moreover, about eight shades are constructed by government bodies ranging from federal to kebele levels benefiting the youth. In response to environmental related challenges, the RESET PLUS value addition innovation project transforms agro-waste into a renewable energy source with energy efficient stove production, he stated.

“As it is an imperative project, implementers, development partners, government institutions and policy makers to scale up and expand the practical lessons learned,” he stressed.

As to the researcher, about 98.7% of the beneficiaries are implementing the value

addition innovation technology, however, few project participants withdrew from the stove production activities due the increment of the price of inputs such as cement and iron sheet.

Addressing the challenges faced during project implementation such as delays in starting production, power interruptions, and lack of technical support and safety materials, he emphasized on restructuring the carbonization system to improve the quality of the briquette and reduce the smoke released.

Oromia Coffee Farmer Cooperative Project Officer Mekete Kassahun added that about 12 coffee processing owners and the Energy Minister agreed to scale up the pilot project to enhance the carbonate production capacity.

The project, which is implemented by Oromia Coffee Farmers Cooperatives Union at Berbere Woreda, Bale Zone of Oromia Region, changes agro-waste (husk) into renewable energy source.

“Currently, these unions produce about nine quintals of charcoal per hour at Harudma Town,” he added.

They called on the government, private sectors, universities and development partners to give due emphasis and invest in areas where the input would be available to bring about sustainable energy and preserve the general ecosystem.



# News

## Dashen Bank, Shoa Super market launch co-branded gift card

BY STAFF REPORTER

**ADDIS ABABA-** Dashen Bank, one of the leading private banks in the country along with Shoa Supermarket Company launched over the weekend a co-branded electronic gift card for the latter's customers.

Speaking at the event, Dashen Bank's Chief Digital Banking Officer Yohannes Million stated that the card is rechargeable at any branches and gives a convenient service for customers.

Mentioning the 1,000 Birr minimum deposit in the card, Yohannes indicated the card is unique as it is only meant for buying. "Apart from its benefits to customers, the issuance of this card avails the opportunity to the supermarket to increase sales."

The card enables customers to purchase commodities from any Shoa Supermarket branches without Dashen bank account and card holder's name. Customers are expected to register via sending their names to 8833 short code to use the card.



Dashen has been exerting utmost efforts to enable customers to attain safe and unlimited transactions and issue different co-branded e-cards, the domestic ATM cards as well as international prepaid cards, the officer remarked.

Shoa Shopping Center General Manager Makeda Busier said in her representative

that the card would enhance the center's sales volume apart from enabling it to provide seamless service for its growing customers.

Invited guests, officials of the bank and the supermarket, the business community, and the media attended the product unveiling program.



## Ethiopia taking part...

a commitment to a negotiated outcome, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA).

The third round trilateral talks on Abbay dam among Ethiopia, Egypt and Sudan kicked off in Cairo yesterday.

In connection with the talks, MoFA issued a press release and stated that Ethiopia's positive expectation for these talks is based on the foundation provided by the Agreement on the Declaration of Principles (DoP).

Thus, these talks are part of the efforts of the three countries to forge stronger partnerships. For this purpose, the three countries are expected to discharge their

shared responsibility of ensuring equitable and reasonable utilization of the Nile River.

The release further stated that these talks enable the three countries to work collaboratively if they endeavor to come up with creative solutions catering to the interests of all.

"Ethiopia believes that this platform enables the three parties to understand and respond to the interests and concerns of all riparian States based on the principle of equitable and reasonable utilization and reach a negotiated settlement."

The two-day meeting is expected to make

progress on unresolved technical and legal differences; Head of the Ethiopian negotiation team, Ambassador Seleshi Bekele (PhD) tweeted.

Ethiopia is guided by the principle of equitable and reasonable utilization of the Nile River and as per the DoP signed in 2015 by the leaders of the three countries.

It is to be recalled the second round of trilateral talks on Abbay dam was held in Addis Ababa on 23-24 December 2023, where the three sides exchanged constructive ideas on various outstanding issues with a view to bridging the differences among them.

## Ethiopia expects over 200,000 tourists to visit tourism exhibition

BY YOHANES JEMANEH

**ADDIS ABABA** – Ethiopia is hosting tourism and hospitality exhibition aimed at boosting tourism development through promoting potential resources to investors and more than 200,000 local and foreign tourists expected to visit the display.

Tourism Minister Amb. Nasise Chali believed that the exhibition which is being held at Science Museum in the capital is promising to attract more investment in tourism development since over 85 institutions are displaying their products and services to an expected number of 200,000 visitors.

Minister Amb. Nasise told the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) that technology and tourism service providers are participating in the exhibition which is important to attract more investors in the sphere.

The exhibition helps to promote nation's tourism resources starting with the concept behind the tourism slogan that popularizes Ethiopia as Land of Origins, she said.

She also called on private owners to visit the exhibition to find viable investment options in Ethiopia's tourism sector which is full of abundant potentials that needs to be exploited.

Tourism State Minister SileshiGirma on his part said that the tourism and hospitality exhibition is a vital platform which introduces investors with Ethiopia's positive images and its potentials for lucrative investment in the sector.

An investment forum mainly organized to promote tourism investment was also held with investors, private sectors and other stakeholders on the opening day of the exhibition, he said, adding an ambassadors' forum will also take place soon to support tourism development.

Ethiopia would promote its immense tourism potentials through participating in various international tourism and hospitality exhibitions that take place this year, Sileshi disclosed.

Absence of experiences in organizing local and international exhibitions is one of the limitations that restrict the tourism development in Ethiopia, the State Minister noted.

Therefore, this exhibition is crucial to draw lesson about how to organize international tourism exhibition, in addition to its significance to create linkage among service providers and visitors, he added.

Tourism and hospitality exhibition which is being held in Addis Ababa at Science Museum will stay opened until November 8, 2023.

## Ethio- China political...

Beijing visit.

PM Abiy and President Xi Jinping also exchanged views and agreed to sustain the robust Ethio-China cooperation through the political trust they built. "The two leaders agreed to continue strengthening cooperation, and firmly support each other on issues involving core interests and major concerns." The Ambassador further reiterated his country's commitment to work with Ethiopia to strengthen cooperation in various fields

under the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) framework.

Ethiopia and China signed 12 Memorandums of Understanding (MoU) and letters of intent on Belt and Road cooperation encompassing agriculture, health, digital economy, green development, urban development among others. The implementation of the Global Development Initiative is also part of the major diplomatic accords.

"The Chinese Embassy is looking forward

to working with all parties in Ethiopia to implement the important results of Abiy's visit."

Speaking about the recently concluded BRI forum, he indicated the forum participants agreed to unite and cooperate for win-win outcomes. Another most important consensus of the forum is to usher this cooperation into a new stage of high-quality development.

The BRI offers a cooperation platform for common development and helps many

developing countries to accelerate their pace toward modernization and the initiative will follow action-oriented approaches.

The Ambassador also mentioned his country's regard to Ethiopia's digital and green transitions and said it represents major trends in global economic and social transformation. "China will also continue its support to the Ethiopian government's efforts to post-war reconstruction and economic revitalization."



# Opinion

## Working on lawfulness of labor migration to the Middle East

BY GETACHEW MINAS

Labor migration from Ethiopia to the Middle East is not a new phenomenon. Demand for labor has been increasing in Middle East which has led to labor migration in these countries. According to Bina Fernandez (PhD), Associate Professor in Development Studies in the School of Social and Political Sciences, agencies that facilitate the movement of workers have contributed to the female dominated Ethiopian labor migration.

The narrative about this migration by the international media and literature is overwhelmingly negative. They wrote about young impressionable migrant women facing desperate economic situations. They underlined that they have been deceived by human traffickers into rude and abusive working conditions. As Anne Kubai et.al, associate professor of World Christianity and Interreligious studies put it; they had to return to Ethiopia with broken spirits, perhaps broken bodies, and little to show for it.

Observers added that labor migration is affecting a lot of young people who are forced out, cheated by the human traffickers. This has created an immense socio-economic problem to the country. Despite the information on the risks of labor migration to the Middle East, young Ethiopian women continue to move there. Particularly, the rural young women decide to migrate to the Middle East as domestic workers after being influenced by labor traffickers.

Studies reveal that the desire to migrate arises at a particular moment in the transition from adolescence into adulthood. This is particularly true when the local situations before them are not promising avenues to achieve their life time aspirations. These aspirations are, however, facilitated by the migration industry that lowers the costs and constraints of leaving the country of origin. The industry promises the young Ethiopians a significant capital and change in their socioeconomic status. This shows that migration to the Middle East is implanted within a wide segment of the youth across Ethiopia.

The good life for the rural women is no longer in the village. They move to the urban center that demands huge amount of resources. In rural Ethiopia, migration experts assert that the Middle East is often a “short-term, long-distance strategy” to finance their needs.

The migration of Ethiopian women to Middle Eastern countries is part of a global picture in the international labor migration of women for domestic work. Domestic workers receive significant attention by the agency of labor migration as women use it to pass through this corridor. In a research work on Ethiopian domestic workers in the Middle East, the idea of “trafficking” is widely and freely applied.

Some studies make distinctions between

regular migration, trafficking, and smuggling. Mostly, however, trafficking becomes synonymous with informal labor migration. It is used to describe the experience of domestic workers who face exploitation irrespective of their legal status. It makes a compelling case to describe this migration, particularly when it concerns adolescent girls, in terms of trafficking.

Even among minors, migration to the Middle East may be regarded as a means to improve their opportunities for school and work and to achieve a better and secure future. Many adolescents move willingly and freely for economic reasons. It is also argued that family pressure, poverty and limited local employment opportunities force migration of the youth. Also, reliance on illegal dealers who provide limited information causes the exploitation of girls at the country of destination. The persistent frame of migration consists of both “forced and voluntary” ones.

In the case of Ethiopian women migrating to the Middle East face limited choices, exploitation, and abuses that call for legal protection. Because human trafficking is obviously appalling, it deserves political action to assist the migrants. However, individual migrants have the capacity to develop their aspiration and capability to migrate anywhere. The aspiration to migrate refers to the conviction that migration is “preferable” to staying in the country of origin.

The objective of migration is more specific such as access to education, marriage, or work, all of which emerge out of visions for better life. More than the simple cost-benefit analyses, “aspirations” capture the subjective hopes and goals that guide decision-making processes. Aspirations to migrate are shaped by greater socio-cultural norms and improved standard of living. Because aspirations are “socially grounded,” they indicate the value-systems within which people make decisions to migrate. Aspirations and the social, economic, and cultural forces allow migrants to make decisions on their future path.

Researchers on migration capture the forces that influence the decisions of migrants. While there is nothing wrong with the cost-benefit analysis in the decision-making of migrants, problems arise when “costs” and “benefits” are defined. Identifying costs within a narrow economic frame is not realistic because it ignores the social context within which migration decision-making takes place. Aspirations in migration, for example, reveal the values and desires that determine an individual cost-benefit analysis.

The costs that force the individual to migrate are on balance with the benefits that accrue to the migrant. Moreover, “capability” of the individual migrant to have the resources and opportunities to overcome constraints determine the fulfillment of aspirations. In contrast to

maximizing income, consumption, and happiness, “capabilities” vary from person to person, shaped by gender, education, social class, wealth, networks, and social norms.

Aspirations depend on skills, ability, dexterity, talent, and gift that support an individual migrant. This is true for Ethiopians working in the Middle East in different occupations. If they lack the required skills it can lead them to adjust their aspirations accordingly. The high wages they aspired for may have to be adjusted based on the demand for their skills at the workplace. The broad aspirations of Ethiopian migrants and the capabilities required to achieve them determine their demand for higher wages and good working conditions. Also, the aspirations of the young Ethiopians and what they are capable to do and to be as migrants to the Middle East is the only viable way to realize a better life.

The migrant women find the way to the limited opportunities for their personal advancement. This is confirmed by studies on rural areas that experienced relatively rapid migration to the urban towns and new forms of international movement. Unlike many other areas of Ethiopia, international migration is not yet a strong aspiration of “young men” in the rural districts. However, for women, international migration is increasingly viable, particularly to the Middle East for domestic work.

Studies have been conducted to understand the internal and international migration patterns and what social changes drove their modalities. These studies helped to evaluate what demographic characteristics are associated with various forms of mobility. Those included in these studies have been Ethiopian returnees who had worked in the Middle East. They consisted of different groups in terms of age, sex, migration and experiences.

The studies reflected histories of migrants to determine what forms of mobility characterized their past, present, and future. This helped to understand how migration abroad as compared to local mobility affected family members, siblings, husbands, women who had not left but wanted to. Most women who have not left and never wanted to think of migration to the Middle East have also been covered by these studies. Thus, the studies have covered three types of workers: migrants, returnees and non-migrants to have a clear picture of causes and effects of migration. They have also covered community leaders, government workers, and women.

Studies on migration experiences generated a deeper understanding of the social forces that shaped migration. These are the aspirations of adolescents, the opportunities and constraints women encounter in the Middle East. As poorer countries experience the social change associated with development, economic growth and diversification, more people tend to leave the rural areas. Also, with the expansion of

formal education, improved infrastructure and communication, declining mortality rates and a rising young population, and greater gender equality, more people begin to move to urban centers.

Researchers confidently claim that as low-income countries move toward middle- and upper-income status, the share of the population living in urban areas grows. This stimulates an increase in international migration.

Though there are variations in the timing, nature, and degree of movement, mobility seems to be a common experience in “developing” countries. Studies show that Ethiopia is in the midst of a migration transition. Ethiopians have always been mobile, but their mobility was initially rural-rural. In recent years, however, rural-urban and urban-urban migration trends replaced rural-rural migration as the most common modes of movement within Ethiopia, observed Sonja Fransen, a research fellow at the Maastricht School of Governance.

Though Ethiopia has a long history of regional cross-border mobility due to trade, religious ties, and political conflict, more Ethiopians are now moving as labor migrants to an increasing number of international destinations. The number of female migrants leaving for the Middle East has been rising exponentially in recent decades. Irregular migration is estimated to be rising thereby raising the movement of female workers. Despite rising rates of rural-urban and international movement, most Ethiopians remain in rural areas.

The young Ethiopians in the rural areas aspire for an urban future, as a consequence of rising access to formal education. Also, with increase in family size the economic and social constraints on small-holder farmer become stronger leading to migration to towns. The expansion of market forces have push and pull effects on rural labor force. Shortage of viable economic opportunities pushes job-seekers to urban areas. It also leads to rising demand for laborers, pulling them to urban areas.

The development process that concentrates economic and educational opportunities in urban areas affects the rural-urban migration. However, studies reveal that for many rural youth in Ethiopia, aspirations have shifted toward urban centers faster than the opportunities to realize them. As a result, many young people remain in rural areas. They are “involuntarily immobile” aspiring to leave, but lacking the capability to do so.

The consolidation of a “migration system” between Ethiopia and Middle Eastern countries introduced the capability to migrate internationally for rural women. This system comprises of brokers, agencies, and networks that lowers the costs and constraints of the Ethiopian labor migration. However, the government has recently introduced a policy and program that protect the rights of Ethiopian migrant workers against illegal human traffickers.



# Editorial

## Outrivaling partnership

The ever-intensifying development of China over the years and its success story in due course of lifting numerous people out of poverty have been something to be emulated on the wake of multifaceted economic reforms in Ethiopia.

Needless to state, Ethiopia and China have had longstanding bilateral ties for common growth and the latter is ready to work with all countries to enhance the high-quality development of the Belt and Road cooperation, too, in pursuit of building a community with a shared future for humanity.

Ethiopia and China have these days been relishing excellent diplomatic relations more than anytime else. This is because of the convergence of interest between the two wings. Yes, the Ethiopian government places economic diplomacy at the helm of its foreign policy.

Besides, China has all along been willing and ready to share its development experiences with a number of African countries like Ethiopia. As a proponent of South-South cooperation, it has been a pivotal partner to Ethiopia in the fight against poverty via achieving economic development.

Being the 2<sup>nd</sup> largest populous in Africa, Ethiopia is seen as great potential market for China and other states willing to work with it following a win-win fashion. Hence, the current multipronged relations between Ethiopia and China regarding socio-economic, and socio-cultural as well as political cooperation needs to be further reinvigorated.

The two countries have put in place important instruments that promote their economic cooperation. To this end, a number of bilateral agreements have been signed on development cooperation, agriculture, trade, investment promotion and protection, education, cultural and tourism teamwork.

The China-Africa Cooperation Forum has created a renewed energy to the all-round partnership between the two sides. Ethiopia has been in a better position to get more development support, access to trade and investment from China.

Thus, China needs to be encouraged to consolidate its support for sustainable socio-economic development in the interest of Ethiopia and the Horn. It is also expected to play a key role in escalating encouragement of its business people to work in Ethiopia.

Since the two countries established diplomatic ties long back, their relationship has to be massively transformed with increasing and close collaboration in various fields. Boosted by the two countries' key roles under the framework of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) since its inception, the Ethiopia-China relations have grown in leaps and bounds and expanded in many fields like economy, politics, security, technology transfer, academia and capacity building.

As an active participant in the China-proposed Belt and Road Initiative, a global development plan that involves infrastructure development and trade and investment facilitation aimed at boosting connectivity on a trans-continental scale, the cooperation between Ethiopia and China needs to be consolidated so as to improve their common benefit.

No doubt, China is very much present in Ethiopia and enjoys a close and special relationship with its government; the Belt and Road may also have some geopolitical goals associated in the linking of Ethiopia economically more closely to China.

The Initiative aims at improving connectivity between China and many countries through infrastructure investment and regional cooperation. It has also the potential to significantly accelerate the rate of economic integration and development in the region. The Initiative could also contribute a lot to lifting a number of people from abject poverty.

In a nutshell, abundant opportunities are waiting for China and Ethiopia to explore and realize common development and prosperity. Since the prospect of the coordination between the two countries set up with a view to fostering transformation and real growth, it needs to be well capitalizing on.

# Opinion

## Horn of Africa: A short review on Past, Present, and Future Perspectives

BY DESALEGN MASRIE

The Horn of Africa, comprising countries such as Ethiopia, Eritrea, Djibouti, Somalia, and Sudan, is a region of strategic importance due to its unique geopolitical position and historical developments. This review aims to provide an overview of the past, present, and future perspectives of the Horn of Africa, highlighting key events, challenges, and potential opportunities.

**Past Perspective:** The Horn of Africa has a complex history marked by colonialism, Cold War rivalries, internal conflicts, and regional power struggles. Colonial powers, such as Britain, Italy, and France, partitioned the region, leading to the creation of artificial borders that have often been a source of tension. The legacy of colonialism, coupled with ethnic, tribal, and religious divides, has contributed to recurring conflicts in the region, including the Ethiopia-Eritrea war (1998-2000), the Somali civil war (1981-Present), and ongoing clashes in Sudan. Additionally, environmental degradation, famine, and mass displacements have further exacerbated the challenges faced by the region in the past.

**Present Perspective:** In recent years, the Horn of Africa has witnessed significant shifts and positive developments. Several notable events include the peace agreement between Ethiopia and Eritrea in 2018, which ended a two-decade-long conflict and opened up prospects for regional integration and economic cooperation. The political transition in Sudan in 2019 brought about new opportunities for stability and democratic governance. Additionally, the fight against terrorism and piracy in the region has seen some success, although challenges remain.

Ethiopia has emerged as a regional powerhouse, experiencing rapid economic growth and pursuing ambitious infrastructure projects, such as the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam. Efforts towards regional integration, such as the establishment of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and ongoing discussions for a Horn of Africa common market, contribute to increased cooperation and shared prosperity.

However, the region still faces persistent challenges. Ethnic tensions, political instability, corruption, poverty, and uneven distribution of resources continue to be major hindrances to progress. Ongoing conflicts, such as in Somalia, Sudan, and Ethiopia pose security threats and impede development efforts. Moreover, climate change, droughts, and food insecurity remain pressing concerns, exacerbating existing vulnerabilities.

**Future Perspective:** Looking ahead, the future of the Horn of Africa holds both opportunities and challenges. There are several key areas that need attention:

1. **Peace and Stability:** The consolidation of peace agreements and resolution of remaining conflicts, particularly in Somalia and Sudan, will be crucial for sustained regional stability. Efforts must also be made to address the root causes of conflicts, promote reconciliation, and strengthen institutions for effective governance.

2. **Economic Development:** Continued investment in infrastructure, human capital, and diversification of economies will be essential to drive economic growth and reduce poverty. Encouraging regional trade and connectivity through improved transportation networks, port development for mutual benefits and trade facilitation can stimulate economic integration and unlock the region's potential.

3. **Climate Resilience:** Given the vulnerability of the region to climate change, concerted efforts should be made to adapt to climate-related challenges, enhance water and resource management, and promote sustainable agricultural practices. Cooperation on environmental issues across borders will be crucial for the region's long-term resilience.

4. **Regional Cooperation:** Enhancing regional cooperation frameworks, such as IGAD, and fostering dialogue among member states will be instrumental in addressing shared challenges, building trust, and promoting peace and security. Collaboration on issues like counter-terrorism, maritime security, and resource management should be prioritized.

In general, the Horn of Africa has traversed a tumultuous past and faces a multitude of challenges in the present. Nonetheless, positive developments, such as recent peace agreements and growing regional cooperation, offer hope for a more stable and prosperous future. By addressing underlying causes of conflicts, investing in human capital, and prioritizing sustainable development, the Horn of Africa can chart a path towards inclusive progress, regional integration, and improved living standards for its people.

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**Editor's Note: The author of this article is Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia**



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The Ethiopian Herald



# Business & Economy

## Substituting imports: Towards structural change

BY ABEBE WOLDEGIORGIS

In the last two decades and a half, the incumbents have implemented various measures to stabilize the nation's macroeconomic imbalances. These measures include opening up the economy to the private sector, introducing laws to attract foreign investment, boosting exports, enhancing the nation's foreign currency reserves, and tackling inflation, among others.

Solomon Zegeye, a long-serving economist and consultant for various firms, recently stated in an interview with local media that Ethiopia is an agrarian country where agriculture serves as the main source of livelihood for 85% of the population. Agriculture also contributes 78% of foreign currency earnings and supplies inputs to agro-industries and food markets.

However, the agricultural sector is vulnerable to extreme climate conditions, making it unrealistic to achieve sustainable development without bringing about structural changes that shift agricultural labor to the manufacturing and service sectors.

According to Solomon, the government recognized these challenges long ago and has dedicated time and budget towards the expansion of manufacturing as a means of achieving structural change. Industrial parks have been constructed in various parts of the country, providing infrastructure such as electricity, internet services, clean water, and affordable rent. The government has also simplified doing business in these parks by providing banking services.

These efforts have attracted foreign investors from countries such as Türkiye, India, China, and others, who have engaged in textile and garment manufacturing, pharmaceuticals, beverage and food production, floriculture, and the cultivation of vegetables and fruits. This influx of investment has created job opportunities for hundreds of thousands of people.

The strategic location of most industrial parks and flower farms adjacent to the Ethio-Djibouti railway has reduced transaction costs for exporting products and importing industrial inputs from abroad.

According to Solomon, the flourishing of the manufacturing sector has brought multiple benefits to the country. It has attracted both foreign and local investment, expanded the role of the private sector in the economy, created job opportunities, linked with the agricultural sector by utilizing raw materials from agriculture, encouraged innovation and entrepreneurship, boosted exports, and substituted imports.

The economic development of countries like Korea, Taiwan, Singapore, and Hong Kong, known as the Asian Tigers, illustrates how manufacturing played a pivotal role in achieving structural change and economic development. Forty years ago, these countries had predominantly agrarian economies, but through economic reforms and structural changes, they transformed into net exporters, significantly increasing



Manufacturing Companies supporting economy by enhancing import substitution – photo Google

***The government's import substitution strategy is not only focused on achieving self-sufficiency in certain product categories but also on enhancing the overall competitiveness of domestic industries***

their hard currency reserves and becoming manufacturing hubs.

Prior to their structural changes, these countries primarily exported agricultural products in their raw form, without value addition. This put them at a disadvantageous position in the global market. In contrast, their manufacturing products were produced at lower costs and exported with value addition, enhancing their market competitiveness and profitability. The expansion of manufacturing allowed them to shift surplus agricultural labor to the manufacturing sector, which operates year-round and significantly increases productivity.

Import substitution has helped these countries utilize more local resources in industrial production, creating market opportunities for farmers and raising their

income. Currently, the four Asian Tigers are high-growth economies fueled by exports, rapid industrialization, and high levels of economic growth since the 1960s. They have become some of the world's wealthiest nations, sharing common characteristics such as a sharp focus on exports, an educated workforce, and increased saving rates.

Recently, the Ministry of Industry (MoI) announced that Ethiopia's import substitution strategy has started to bear fruit, with the nation substituting goods worth USD 2.26 billion in the last fiscal year alone. Although Ethiopia is endowed with abundant resources vital for the development of manufacturing industries, the country's production capacity currently meets only 38% of its needs, with the remaining 62% imported, requiring a significant amount of foreign currency.

According to the State Minister of MoI, Tarekegn Bululta, despite the abundant natural resources and productive labor force, Ethiopia has not yet achieved production sovereignty and remains a "consumer nation." However, the government has been working to reverse this reality by prioritizing the development of the industrial sector and enhancing import substitution.

As part of this strategy, Ethiopia has identified 96 product items, some of which have already been successfully accomplished. For example, the country has fully substituted imported military uniforms with domestic products. Additionally, 100% of the demand for beer barley seeds in Ethiopia is now covered by domestic production, with the surplus being exported.

Encouraged by these achievements, Ethiopia was able to substitute products worth USD 2.26 billion in the last fiscal year. The country has also been successful in domestic production of various foodstuffs, such as Plum, which is vital for the treatment of Moderate Acute Malnutrition. These efforts have enabled the nation to earn USD 1.36 billion through exports. Recently, the World Food Program purchased food products from Ethiopia, supporting the country in alleviating foreign currency shortages.

Tarekegn further highlighted that, Ethiopia has a huge demand for student uniforms and bags, with a total student population of

around 30 million. The import substitution strategy also promotes strong domestic consumption, which alleviates foreign currency shortages and encourages local industries to expand and create more job opportunities.

The government's import substitution strategy is not only focused on achieving self-sufficiency in certain product categories but also on enhancing the overall competitiveness of domestic industries. The goal is to create an enabling environment for local industries to flourish, attract investment, and increase their share in the domestic and international markets.

To support import substitution efforts, the government has implemented various measures such as providing access to finance and credit facilities for local manufacturers, improving infrastructure, reducing bureaucratic hurdles, promoting research and development, and providing training and capacity-building programs.

While import substitution is a crucial component of Ethiopia's industrialization strategy, it is important to note that it is not meant to completely eliminate imports. Rather, it aims to reduce dependence on imports for goods that can be produced domestically and promote a more balanced trade relationship.

Import substitution can have several benefits for the economy, including reducing the trade deficit; creating employment opportunities; boosting domestic industries and fostering economic self-reliance. However, it is also important to ensure that import substitution efforts are implemented in a sustainable and strategic manner, taking into consideration factors such as cost-effectiveness, quality, and market demand.

In conclusion, Ethiopia's import substitution strategy is part of a broader effort to achieve structural change and promote sustainable economic development. By focusing on the expansion of the manufacturing sector and reducing dependence on imports, the country aims to create a more self-reliant and competitive economy. While challenges remain, the progress made so far indicates the potential for import substitution to contribute significantly to Ethiopia's economic transformation.



# In the Sphere of Diplomacy

## Ethio-China relations reach unprecedented heights

BY FITSUM GETACHEW

The relations between Ethiopia and China date back decades even in imperial times when the Emperor had a protracted visit to China and met with the then leader Mao Tse-Tung. It was early days when China did not yet have the geopolitical and economic significance it had in the world. The world was largely dominated by the sort of duel between the USSR and the USA and China was not seen such a huge reality for a number of reasons. But it was clear that it was growing fast and with the resources it had the economic policies the ruling party had adopted, the inevitability of its growth was undeniable.

China has always had good relations especially with the liberation movements of Africa when they were trying to extricate their countries from colonial domination. As Ethiopia was an exception in the African reality having been always independent and adopting its own policies and nurturing its own relations with which ever country it wanted, it approached China as an ally and the relations began to build up along the years.

After the downfall of the monarchy the 'socialist' government of the military was even more interested in the bilateral ties with China and China's influence grew by the years that were to come. Chinese ideology was popular among the military and the Chinese model was being considered as one to be followed by Ethiopia and many other emerging African countries such as Tanzania for instance. China relied a lot on its agricultural potential and a great deal of human resource to expand its economy for successive years along with its industrial complex. Ethiopia wanted to share that experience from it and looked towards it trying to learn particularly in areas where its success was more remarkable and applicable to Ethiopia.

China's economy has been the fastest growing for years and began to be a huge reality in the world presenting a challenge to the taken for granted dominion of the West and Russia and other huge economic realities. Today China is the second largest economy in the world and is expected to be the first one in a few years.

The Chinese have proved themselves as very hardworking people and their economy grew exponentially with this quality of their people and the policies their government implemented consistently along the years. Among others the Chinese are reputed for saving at least fifty percent of their income and this has contributed a lot to the expansion of the economy as banks had a lot of money to lend to those who wanted to embark on a new business venture with massive investments. Such surplus was to result useful even for its foreign investment ventures particularly in Africa and other developing countries.

China's relations with Africa grew along the years and countries such as Ethiopia continued to be a close development partner in various fields. Today the figures show that Chinese involvement in the development ventures of African countries is visible wherever one goes to visit any African



country. Immense African infrastructure projects are financed and constructed by China. Chinese banks have granted billions of dollars in concessions or soft loans to African countries who suffer from lack of funds to finance their ambitious projects. What is more, important from an African perspective is that Chinese aid is never dependent on the policies that African countries would follow because China has the policy of zero interference in the internal affairs of these countries with which it has close and strong partnership ties.

Ethio-China relations have continued to grow to a new height even during the EPRDF government and China's involvement in the development ventures of the country has grown progressively reaching new heights. Today it is difficult not to see a Chinese involvement in practically every kind of Ethiopia's economic ventures with assistance of various kinds beginning from massive grants and loans and generous concessions to human resource development with transfer of technology and knowhow.

There are thousands of Chinese firms operating in Ethiopia in multiple fields and their contribution to the growth of the economy is palpable. Moreover, there are thousands of Chinese nationals engaged in constructions in the country and Ethiopia has been taking full advantage of this close relation with China to nurture its economic trajectory to new heights.

With the government of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD), the relations with China have grown even to greater heights because of mutual respect and cooperation in a number of fields. China has resulted to be a good friend of Ethiopia when the country was undergoing difficult times and its influence in the UN Security Council has resulted to be very decisive in averting certain measures against Ethiopia from being adopted and helped Ethiopia get out of crisis moments successfully. The unwavering support of China for the Ethiopian government in hard

times has contributed to develop even closer ties between the two countries.

According to the present Ethiopian Ambassador to China Tefera Deribew currently Ethiopia's relations with China are among the closest in the world and only four countries have such level of relations with it. In Africa, Ethiopia is the country with the strongest ties with China and the recent official state visit of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed to China is a demonstration of this situation. Chinese Ambassador to Ethiopia Zhao Zhiyuan said the establishment of 'the All Weather Strategic Partnership' between Ethiopia and China is a milestone for the two countries' friendship.

In any relations that China has with African countries, the first country Chinese officials visit is Ethiopia and for a good reason because Ethiopia is considered as a 'gateway for Africa', given its history, its geopolitical situation and its influence in African affairs as one of the founding members of the African Union and seat of the organization.

Chinese officials have visited Ethiopia in multiple occasions including their prime minister, the foreign minister and other high government officials as well as prominent Chinese firms' leaders and investors. China realizes and acknowledges the potential Ethiopia has with its large youth population and the approval of Ethiopia accessing the BRICS economic group with the active support of China is a clear symptom of this reality. China has resulted to be more than a simple strategic partner of Ethiopia.

During the latest visit of the high level delegation led by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed multiple agreements have been signed in consolidation of the already very close ties between Ethiopia and China. The agreements ranged from the implementation of the Belt and Road Initiative which was launched ten years ago with Ethiopia being one of the beneficiaries of this massive initiative. The long railroad Addis Ababa -Djibouti electric project is one of them. The implementation

of the Belt and Road Initiative in Ethiopia is among the agreements signed between the two countries. Agricultural development, green economy development, and urban development are also among the other agreements inked between the two countries on the same occasion.

It was during the visit of Prime Minister Abiy that the elevation of the partnership between the countries from Comprehensive and Enduring Strategic Cooperative Partnership to an All Weather Strategic Cooperation Partnership level has been announced by the Chinese President Xi. The talks the premier had with the maximum authorities of China including President Xi Jinping and the Prime Minister Li Qiang dealt with the enhancement of these relations to new heights and levels. It was reported that 12 agreements and 2 letters of intent in various fields were signed between the two countries to strengthen cooperation in various fields.

According to Ambassador Birtukan Ayano who was a member of the premier's delegation, agreement was signed between the two parties to support efforts in ensuring the quality of coffee production in Ethiopia throughout the whole process from cultivation to export. Other agreements were also sealed in the field of health, culture, tourism and technology.

During the visit Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed underlined on the importance of Chinese investment in Ethiopia's economy and encouraged more investment in to five key economic pillars for the Ethiopian growth aspirations namely agriculture, manufacturing, ICT, mining and tourism. The premier in his remarks has said that China continues to be a critical partner for Ethiopia and that is thanks to the leadership of President Xi Jinping and continued to say that Ethio-China relations have set a constructive model for China-Africa and South-South cooperation. Abiy said we can build on this model to effectively address our current and future development challenges in the new era.



# Law & Politics

## A coordinated approach to combat terrorism in the horn of Africa

BY ADDISALEM MULAT

The issue of terrorism is one that requires a collective and collaborative response. It is vital for all countries in the region to recognize that this is not an isolated problem on the grounds that terrorism can have far-reaching implications beyond individual borders. One of the most significant challenges of terrorism is that it is a constantly evolving threat.

By developing a multidimensional approach that addresses the multifaceted causes of terrorism, stakeholders can foster long-term solutions to the problem. Furthermore, all countries in the region must underscore the importance of cooperation to address the problem in meaningful ways. It is crucial to realize that terrorism is not linked to any particular region.

Effective counter-terrorism requires partnerships and information sharing among security agencies, political organizations and the public in general. Timely and accurate information gathering and sharing can be essential to prevent terrorist activities. This requires concerted efforts from all actors to gather and examine intelligence and act swiftly with respect for human rights.

In order to effectively combat terrorism, concerted effort is needed from all countries and societies around the world. An isolated approach is unlikely to be effective in eliminating terrorism as it poses a global threat that requires a global response. The Horn of Africa is considered a politically and economically vulnerable region with various underlying issues such as poverty, governance challenges, and a history of conflict. Against this backdrop, the presence of Al-Shabaab further exacerbates existing problems and threatens to destabilize the region even further.

Terrorist organizations are becoming more sophisticated and adaptive operating with greater diversity, complexity and flexibility. This creates a need for innovative approaches to counter-terrorism that must be adaptable to evolving trends. To mitigate terrorist activities, it is necessary to stay ahead of the threat curve by innovating and employing emerging technologies to improve intelligence and surveillance.

Countries situated in the Horn of Africa should work together in order to combat the terrorist organization Al-Shabaab. This group which operates primarily in Somalia has been identified as having the potential to pose a grave threat to peace and security not just in the region but also beyond. The alarming increase in the frequency and scale of Al-Shabaab's attacks in recent years highlights the criticality of addressing this threat.

Countries in the region must take a united approach to counter-terrorism efforts.



Such an approach would not only help to contain the Al-Shabaab threat but also address underlying social and economic challenges in the region. Failure to take such action would not only endanger the region's peace and stability but also global security.

Al-Shabaab has been notorious for its attacks on civilian targets including hotels and shopping centers as well as on government and military targets. The group has also engaged in kidnappings, piracy and the use of improvised explosive devices to inflict damage and instill fear.

Given the gravity of the situation, it is imperative that countries in the Horn of Africa take a united approach to addressing the Al-Shabaab threat. The fight against terrorism is not a single country's responsibility but requires a coordinated effort involving all countries in the region. Such an approach would not only help to contain the spread of the group's activities but also ensure that resources are effectively deployed in the fight against terrorism.

Apart from the security implications, counter-terrorism efforts also have social and economic dimensions. These measures can include improving border security, enhancing intelligence sharing, strengthening the security sector and engaging with local communities to counter extremist ideologies.

At a broader level, addressing the Al-Shabaab threat requires a concerted effort from the international community including the United Nations, African Union, and other relevant bodies. These organizations can play a significant role in supporting the fight against terrorism by providing technical assistance, training and other forms of support. Additionally, international partners can support counter-terrorism efforts in the Horn of Africa by offering financial assistance and promoting economic growth and development in the region.

The lack of durable peace and security in the Horn of Africa has created an environment that is attractive to terrorist groups. The prevalence of conflicts, governance issues and poverty in the region makes it an ideal breeding ground for extremist ideologies that fuel terrorism.

Additionally, regional and global organizations like the African Union, the United Nations and regional economic blocs can play an essential role in facilitating cooperation and coordinating efforts to combat terrorism. Stronger border control measures can also contribute to reducing the threat of terrorism in the region. International collaboration and partnerships are also crucial in the fight against terrorism.

The region as a whole must come together to confront these challenges and work towards solutions that are beneficial for all. The lack of durable peace and security in the Horn of Africa has led to increased terrorist activity. Combating this threat requires a coordinated and multidimensional effort that addresses the root causes of terrorism, strengthens border controls, promotes community engagement, fosters economic development and ensures respect for human rights.

Addressing the roots of extremism can also help to counter terrorist narratives with faith-based organizations and civil society groups playing a vital role in promoting interfaith dialogue and understanding. In addition, education and awareness-raising programs can help to build the resilience of individuals and communities against the forces of violent extremism. These programs can foster critical thinking, tolerance and resilience which are effective tools in combating the influence of extremist ideologies.

Addressing these underlying factors requires a coordinated effort that involves not just security personnel but also leaders from other sectors such as

politicians, religious leaders and civil society. To counter terrorism, a solid legal framework is required that employs a range of tools and mechanisms that cover the spectrum of prevention, prosecution, and rehabilitation of terrorists.

Countries of the Horn of Africa (HoF) should stand united in the fight against the terrorist Al Shabaab which poses an imminent peace and security threat to the region and beyond, Defense War College (DWC) Dean, Colonel Tilahun Demssie, said.

In an exclusive interview with ENA, Colonel Tilahun said that terrorism is a global peace and security threat that should be dealt with concerted effort.

The prevalence of cross border organized crimes like drug trafficking, illegal human trafficking, and contraband activities coupled with poverty and security challenges are among the fertile ground for terrorists in the Horn of Africa, he said.

Lack of durable peace and security in the region draws terrorists to organize, create cells, and operate, the colonel stated, and added "terrorism is a common threat for everyone and we have to understand each other as a region; especially in the Horn of Africa."

He underscored "the issue of terrorism requires cooperation and all the countries in the region have to understand that the threat is not only for a single country rather it is a threat for everybody."

Thus, the countries can develop common strategy against the terrorist threat, he pointed out.

"Al-Shabaab is not the threat only for Somalia; it is a threat for Ethiopia and for all the countries in the region. Ethiopia has contributing a lot since 2006 to fight against Al-Shabaab and we are still doing," he elaborated.

Speaking of the importance of support by the international community, the colonel said that they need to provide support in terms of finance and technology to combat the global threat posed by Al-Shabaab.

The Ethiopian Defense Force is highly experienced and has full capability to conduct operations against terrorism, he said.

"Al-Shabaab knows very well Ethiopia because since 2006 we are fighting against Al-Shabaab. They know what we can do, of course they have their own objective and dream but when they try to attack Ethiopia, they never succeed. We are always successful in the operations against Al-Shabaab. So they have to think three, four and five times before they try to attack Ethiopia," Colonel Tilahun stressed.

Today one country might be safe from terrorism but there is no guarantee for tomorrow, the Dean said, and noted "So we have to work together against the common threat."



# Society

## Reducing unemployment through capacitating youths with knowledge, skills

BY STAFF REPORTER

Unemployment is one of the pressing problems and a major concern for governments of almost all countries. Though the scope and the magnitude differ from country to country, it is possible to say that the issue of unemployment and creating decent job opportunities for the growing number of young people is challenging in all countries.

The case is not different in Ethiopia. Though there are several efforts to reduce the rate of unemployment, following the ever increasing number of young people, reducing the number remains challenging.

The Ministry of Labor and Skills (MoLS) is working diligently to create more jobs for the young generations and improve their lives by providing a series of training and the needed support that build their entrepreneur skills and increase their employment opportunities thereby reducing the rate of unemployment.

In particular, giving due attention for those young people who could not join higher education institutions and who have dropped out of school for various reasons, it is carrying out a number of activities to create employment opportunities and prepare them toward a brighter future.

As part of this effort, the Ministry, joining hands with the World Bank and devising a program known as “*Beqat* Youth On-the-job Training Project” (“Qualified Youth On-the-job Training Project”) is working to enable young people with low educational preparation and limited economic potential to capacitate them with the appropriate knowledge and skills; generate their own income and improve their living standard through providing on-the-job training, combining theoretical ideas with practical knowledge.

According to the Ministry, this On-the-job Training national project, which will be implemented across the country, will benefit more than 70,000 young people who have not been able to enter higher education institutions and withdraw their education.

Recently, the Ministry held discussion with sector’s officials drawn from Addis Ababa City Administration regarding the implementation and future direction of the program.

Speaking on the occasion, State Minister for Job, Employment and Market Sector with the Ministry of Labor and Skills, Nigussu Tilahun said that the youth on-the-job training project has a purpose of benefiting those people who have not received enough attention on the formal job creation.

According to him, the project that was first implemented as a pilot program in two selected districts in Kirkos Sub-City has been implemented in 36 districts in Addis Ababa and in 10 cities in the states in order to facilitate the opportunity for young people to engage them in internship programs in private organizations by developing their



attitudes towards work and enhancing their skills. And through the process, it has been enabled to acquire best practices.

Among the gained best experiences, the capacity technical and vocational institutions have in equipping the young people with the desired knowledge and skills, the role of communication structures at all levels, youth and women’s organizations can play in terms of creating sufficient awareness for the young people who benefit from the program, and the general society are the main ones, Nigussu added.

In this regard, to make the 2nd round program which will take in 45 more districts more effective, scaling up the best practices, identifying the challenges encountered in the first round of the program, and setting solutions and directives was also underlined at the forum.

Deputy Mayor of Addis Ababa City Administration and the Head of Labor, Enterprise and Industry Development Bureau Jantar Abay on his part said that, the program because it was new to the country, the implementation was very

challenging. And, to ensure the effectiveness of the second phase of the program, leaders at all levels should implement the activity with strict discipline, he urged.

At the forum, documents that show the general features of the program and the implementation report of the first round were presented and discussed.

Trainees after attending the internship program in various fields in 1,350 organizations for six consecutive months, it was learned.

Meanwhile the labor market information system that the Ministry of Labor and Skills has developed and employed is said to have created a national capacity to manage labor migration.

This was stated at a forum carried out in relation to the migration management system.

Speaking at the event, State Minister for Employment and Labor Sector, with the Ministry Aseged Getachew (PhD) said that migration carried out seeking jobs if managed properly, will have tremendous benefits in terms of benefitting both countries of the origin and destination of the migrants by improving labor migration governance and recording the necessary information.

However, the multi-faceted challenges that migrants face in countries of origin, transit and destination aside, challenging them extremely, put their lives in danger, added the State Minister.

To this end, collaborations, discussions, consultations, and partnerships that can solve the problems that migrants may encounter, should be implemented at the national and international level. In this regard, the Ministry of Labor and Skills has developed a new labor market information system which plays a significant role in facilitating favorable working conditions in the country and is implementing it accordingly, he said.

According to him, the effort made to develop and put in place the labor market information system has created special capacity in the sector. What is more, managing the labor market information activities supported by technology has eliminated the harassment of citizens who used to travel abroad for work, and because the work is carried out in coordination with the destination countries, has made it possible to register a significant change in the sector.

He also pointed out that a technical committee that comprises the Ministry of Labor and Skills, the International Labor Organization and other partners and can have decisive role in terms of modernizing the migration management system, identifying challenges faced by countries related to labor migration and setting solutions, facilitating job opportunities for the citizens of the Horn countries in the region and curbing illegal immigration, has been established. The plan prepared by the group will be approved by the forum and will be implemented, Aseged remarked.

**The Ministry of Labor and Skills has developed a new labor market information system which plays a significant role in facilitating favorable working conditions in the country and is implementing it accordingly**



# International

## Tanzania signs contested port deal with UAE firm

Tanzania has signed a 30-year port management agreement with the United Arab Emirates (UAE), despite opposition to the deal.

Under the agreement, Dubai Port (DP) World will run four berths or quays at Dar es Salaam, Tanzania's largest port.

The Emirati firm and the Tanzania Ports Authority will also collaborate in managing three other berths at the port.

The partnership includes an investment of \$250m (£205m) by DP World to upgrade infrastructure at the port over the next five years.

The deal has drawn criticism from several activists, citizens and opposition politicians, who say that it favours the Emirati company at Tanzania's expense.

The government has detained more than 22 people opposed to the deal, although some have been freed, according to the rights group Amnesty International.

Tanzanian authorities say the deal does not involve all port operations in the country and that they retain the right to withdraw from the contracts at any time if necessary.

The East African country hopes to boost national revenue and enhance efficiency under the new deal.



(Source: BBC)

## Women hold the Key to Success of Pastoralism in Africa

Women in pastoralist areas of East Africa are critical to the health of livestock in their communities, holding the key to effective animal vaccination campaigns meant to protect herds against deadly diseases.

They are, therefore, an important part of any vaccination strategies designed to guard the animals against killer outbreaks and need to be involved in such efforts for them to be successful. Achieving the goals of such campaigns has become increasingly important as the effects of climate change introduce new diseases that threaten the sector and, by extension, household incomes.

It has become critically important to integrate females in such health campaigns, and one barrier to their success is the failure of authorities and development agencies to involve them.

While women, due to cultural reasons, do not commonly own livestock, they act as caregivers when the animals are sick, and with incidents of disease outbreaks rising, involving them, in the end, ensures improved food and financial security for families.

Besides, an increasing number of households in the region where livestock keeping is the economic mainstay are being headed by women who also act as providers to their families.

Unsurprisingly, as many as 43 percent of livestock insurance policyholders in northern Kenya and southern Ethiopia, where the policies have been introduced in the recent past, are women, scientists at the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) say.

"Besides taking care of animals when they are sick, women influence the allocation of resources at the household level, determining things such as how money should go to buying vaccines, for example. Therefore, a strong gender strategy to allow women access to disease control is very important," said Dr Bernard Bett, ILRI Senior Scientist, Animal and Human Health Program.

In its disease surveillance and response strategy, ILRI engaged "community disease reporters," local leaders, and village women's champions, including women heads of households, to gather information on outbreaks and to create awareness about vaccination campaigns, says

Bett.

At times he noted, women got intimidated in queues by men during mass vaccination exercises, making them lose valuable time for other chores at home as they waited for their turn in the queue.

Authorities and organizations carrying out the missions have responded by enforcing a first-come-first-serve policy in the interest of fairness and increased animal health personnel staffing levels for orderly vaccinations, he explained.

Recognizing that conflict with household tasks was a permanent reality for women, ILRI practiced and advocated for early communication to enable better planning through community messaging while actively supporting females' role in caring for livestock, he added.

Climate change, evidenced by frequent droughts and flood incidents in arid and semi-arid areas of East Africa that are the home of pastoralism in the region, Bett observed, presented a major disease burden with incidents of outbreaks of diseases such as Rift Valley Fever being a major threat.

"Highly climate-sensitive diseases causing pathogens attracted by changes in weather conditions, including those caused by vectors such as ticks and tsetse flies, become common. Efficient delivery of disease control measures, including vaccinations, is therefore important," he told a recent media briefing in Nairobi.

Owing to the nomadic nature of pastoralists in search of pastures and water in times of shortage it is women who take care of households when the men are away with cattle and camels, while women are left behind caring for goats, calves, and vulnerable animals, making them also effectively in charge of their households.

Like their counterparts in the crop farming areas of the region, women pastoralists are faced with the challenge of providing food for their families, which is made worse by lack of income due to livestock deaths, noted Dr Rupsha Bernerjee, ILRI senior scientist attached to livestock and climate initiative.

"Whenever there are shocks such as droughts which in turn lead to food shortages, women

skip meals to ensure their families are fed. It is therefore important to promote social inclusion in livestock health programs to ensure no one is left behind," she said.

The impressive uptake of livestock insurance among women increases the resilience of herder communities, enabling them to cope with climate-induced risks, she added.

"Payments made to herders when droughts are very severe help in reducing distress sales of livestock guaranteeing that families are cushioned against possible malnutrition, thus the importance of women livestock health," she told the briefing at the global body's Nairobi headquarters.

In appreciating the important role in the health of livestock IDRC, Global Affairs Canada and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation established the Livestock Vaccine Innovation Fund (LVIF), which supports the development and production of innovative vaccines to improve livestock health and the livelihoods of farmers.

The agency notes that worldwide, more than 750 million people keep livestock as a source of income, 400 million being women, but animal diseases, such as Newcastle disease in chickens and peste des petits ruminants (PPR) in goats, create widespread devastation, with women disproportionately affected because "they are less likely than men to be able to access vaccines to prevent such losses."

"Millions of women livestock holders face financial and animal losses when diseases sweep through their farms. These infections are often highly preventable with a simple vaccination, so what is preventing women from taking measures to protect their assets?" the IDRC poses.

To answer find answers to the imbalance, the partners launched a regional livestock vaccine initiative called SheVax+ research project was launched in 2019, bringing together Cumming School of Veterinary Medicine at Tufts University-US, the Africa One Health University Network (AFROHUN) together and implementing partners, Makerere University, University of Nairobi, and University of Rwanda.

Helen Amuguni, the SheVax+ principal investigator, identifies three primary barriers

to livestock vaccine uptake among women smallholder livestock farmers in East Africa, including gender norms, which lead to women having less access to information on vaccinations, animal health, and livestock management practices.

Stereotypes, she says, affect the way women are viewed in relation to livestock ownership, leading to their exclusion during vaccination information campaigns. Power relations also mean some women require permission from the male household head to attend training or control livestock-related resources.

As a result, many women lack understanding of, among other things, the availability and importance of vaccines, while those who do have awareness may be prevented from acting upon it, she explains.

Besides carrying out disease control and management initiatives insuring livestock, as happens with the Index-Based Livestock Insurance pioneered by ILRI to 'de-risk' the sector, was a critical component of cushioning the sector's well-being and incomes for households, according to Bernard Kimoro, head of climate change and livestock sustainability in the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development, Kenya.

Operational in northern Kenya and southern Ethiopia, the insurance utilizes satellite data to determine and read the conditions of the vegetation, where herders get compensation when the vegetation turns brown/yellow to indicate drought or shortage of foliage.

Desperation in the pure livestock systems in the region due to frequent climate change-linked droughts in the region called for both new animal disease control and feeds and nutritional strategies, he said.

The droughts have led to keepers using unsustainable feeds with high methane gas levels owing as the owners tried to keep animals alive during the dry spells, the official regrets.

The Greater Horn of Africa region is predicted to experience El Nino weather conditions characterized by higher than usual rainfall beginning this October to early 2024.

(Source: IPS)



# Planet Earth

## Ethiopia streamlining coal mining with due caution for safety of ecosystem

BY FIKADU BELAY

Coal has recently joined the list of Ethiopia's diverse energy sources. Dawuro Zone in the South Western Ethiopia State has emerged as a focal point for a groundbreaking coal project that promises to revolutionize the local economy and bring about a wave of positive change.

Coal, a fossil fuel renowned for its potential to generate large amounts of energy, has long been a vital resource for industrialization and power generation around the globe. Ethiopia, recognizing the untapped potential of its coal reserves, has embarked on an ambitious initiative to harness this energy source for the benefit of its people.

Dawuro Zone is home to significant coal deposits that have attracted the attention of both local and international investors. These coal reserves, estimated to be of considerable magnitude, hold the promise of driving economic growth and infrastructure development in that area.

Due to the fact that domestic coal output is mostly utilized for cement factories and contributes significantly to the country's foreign exchange earnings, efforts are being made to enable potential investors to participate in the sector on a large scale.

Gebremariam Setegn, Director General of South West Ethiopia Region's Mining and Energy Development Agency, told to The Ethiopian Herald that permission has been granted for the use of coal, building minerals, and specific small gold producer association, and the industry is actively working on it.

He mentioned that in the Dawuro Zone, 74 organizations have requested coal exploration permits, with 33 of them located in the Dawuro zone and approximately starting their processes. Currently, 13 associations hold production licenses, but only seven of them have recently begun production.

In addition to Dawuro, coal exploration and development have also started in Konta, Kafa, Maji, and West Omo, with future surveys planned for the Shekana and Bench Sheko areas. These efforts are intended to use the potential resources in several sections of the region, not just in one area, he mentioned.

This project offers enormous potential for economic development and social progress. With responsible management and a commitment to sustainable practices, this venture has the power to uplift communities, create employment opportunities, and provide the energy infrastructure needed to drive long-term growth. As the project unfolds, it will be crucial to strike a delicate balance between harnessing the benefits of coal and preserving the natural beauty and biodiversity of the Dawuro Zone.

The mining and use of coal is expected to bring in a wide range of job opportunities, ranging from mining operations to support services and subsidiary industries. These are the socioeconomic significance of the



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Dawuro Zone coal project. It is essential for reducing unemployment rates and promoting economic empowerment, especially for youthful individuals in the area.

In spite of the fact that the region contains minerals other than coal, he stated that to address some issues, efforts are being made to invite individuals with the necessary capacity to engage in the sector based on the associations' needs.

He noted that despite the fact that there are 34 associations operating as gold miners in the area and 18 of them are set up as special small businesses, some of them have had their licenses suspended due to some issues with the miners. There are currently 21 associations operating in the gold industry, he added.

He mentioned that 4,500 employment opportunities in the industry were generated in the previous fiscal year, and more than 6,800 additional employment opportunities are expected to be added in this fiscal year. Moreover, 333 individuals have so far been successful in finding new employment in the mining sector in the region.

He said that more than 39 million birr was generated in the previous fiscal year from the whole mining in the region, and that 40 million birr is the goal for this year from the sector.

In addition to supplying the region's increasing energy needs, the construction of coal-related infrastructure, such as power plants and transportation networks, will boost the economy in other areas. Better access to economical and dependable energy is expected to fuel substantial growth in sectors like manufacturing, agriculture, and tourism.

However, it is essential to strike a balance between economic prosperity and environmental concerns. The Dawuro Zone Coal Project must be implemented with a strong focus on sustainable practices, ensuring that the exploitation of coal resources does not compromise the ecological integrity of the region.

Fossil fuels such as coal have long been linked to greenhouse gas emissions and environmental harm. The extraction and burning of coal can lead to contamination of the air and water, hinder the preservation of biodiversity, degrade soil, and generate hazardous pollutants such as carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases. Both the local ecosystem and global climate change may be significantly impacted by these environmental effects.

Furthermore, the Dawuro Zone is home to diverse and delicate ecosystems, including unique flora and fauna. The coal project must navigate the potential disruption and loss of biodiversity that could arise from mining activities and associated infrastructure development. Preserving the region's natural heritage and ensuring the long-term sustainability of its ecosystems must be a priority throughout the project's development.

Ethiopian governments are committed to environmental sustainability, and renewable energy is faced with the challenge of ensuring that the Dawuro Zone Coal Project stands by stringent environmental standards and biodiversity conservation practices. It is crucial to implement robust environmental impact assessments and mitigation strategies to minimize the ecological impact.

He remarked that ensuring the preservation

of the Dawuro Zone's natural heritage requires not only the regional government and other private companies to do thorough environmental impact assessments, but also the implementation of clean technology and strong mitigation techniques. The goal of the effort is to minimize its ecological impact while optimizing the revenue generated for the local community by utilizing advanced technologies and best practices, he added.

One of the main challenges, according to him, is striking a careful balance between fostering economic expansion and resolving environmental issues related to the extraction and use of coal. Additionally, the Dawuro Zone Coal Project can actually reach its potential while preserving the area's natural resources for future generations by using strict planning and intelligent decision-making, he said.

Handling the effects of the local economy and society on the local communities provides another challenge. Ensuring that the rights and welfare of local populations are preserved, as well as that the benefits are divided fairly, is crucial, even when the coal project presents prospects for employment and economic expansion. For these issues to be resolved, adequate pay, ethical work approaches, and significant community involvement are essential, he added.

Besides, Ethiopia has led the world in the use of renewable energy, especially with its solar, wind, and hydropower initiatives. As the country strives to achieve its renewable energy targets, there is a need to carefully assess the role of coal in the overall energy mix and consider the potential for clean energy alternatives.