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High time to Ethiopia to engage in Red Sea geopolitics

BY YESUF ENDRIS

ADDIS ABABA—Ethiopia’s growing aspiration to direct involvement in the Red Sea politics is a timely solution to ensure national security as the water politics poses a serious threat in the region, a senior policy researcher said.

Speaking to Ethiopian Press Agency, Senior Policy Researcher at Institute of Foreign Affairs (IFA), Dareskedar Taye (PhD) who mentioned Ethiopia’s enclosure by the Abbay (Nile) and Red Sea politics, stressed that the country’s engagement in the Red Sea is inevitable.

Not only does the Red Sea politics affect Ethiopia, but it also has a greater impact

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TVET
institutions ready to enroll 600,000 students

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Ambassador Stephen Auer

Germany keen to back Ethiopia’s economic, democratic reforms

BY EYUEL KIFLU

ADDIS ABABA –Germany is keen to share its expertise in economic reconstruction and establishment of democratic society with Ethiopia, German Ambassador to Ethiopia,

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Prof. Gebisa Ejeta wins National Medal of Science Award

BY TSEGAYE TILAHUN

ADDIS ABABA - Ethiopian-born Gebisa Ejeta, Distinguished Professor of Plant Breeding and Genetics, has been awarded the National Medal of Science, the highest recognition that the U.S. bestows upon scientists.

On Tuesday, the U.S. President Joe Biden awarded the National Medal of Science to Gebisa Ejeta, Distinguished Professor of Plant Breeding and Genetics and International Agriculture, executive director of the Purdue Center for Global Food Security and Purdue University Presidential Fellow for Food Security and Sustainable Global Development.

The Ethiopian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) has extended congratulatory message to the professor on his success.

In a message posted on social media,

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Antonin Sestak



Debebe Fekadu

Czech-based firm avid for supplying water treatment machines

BY YESUF ENDRIS

ADDIS ABABA- A Czech Republic-based water treatment manufacturing and supply company, APIMOSO, s.r.o. is in the business negotiation with the Ethiopian government to provide water treatment mobile machines, the managing director said.

APIMOSO, s.r.o General Manager Antonin Sestak told the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) that discussions were held with the Ethiopian Ministry of Health and water and sewerage authorities to supply the water purification machines.

Mentioning the progress of the negotiation, Sestak indicated that his company set up a partnership with local firm; WOS International Business Group P.L.C, to explore the Eastern and East-central Africa business potential.

APIMOSO has a reputation for manufacturing and supplying mobile water treatment machines that could help Ethiopia to grow its water distribution capacity to its citizens.

“Owing to the longstanding relations, Ethiopia’s hydrological map could not be new for us. We have capitalized on the two countries’ historical partnership on geological works. Also, we have knowledge about the quality of Ethiopian water,” the General Manager remarked.

Senior Sanitary Engineer at the Ministry of Health Aniley Tade also told EPA that fluoride water is still challenging Ethiopia’s drinking water developmental projects in areas like the Rift Valley region. “The Ministry identified the issue is one of serious water-born health concerns that needs technological prevention mechanisms. The Czech company also showed us its ambition to work with us.”

WOS International Business Group PLC General Director Debebe Fekadu mentioned his company’s involvement in facilitating discussions between the Czech company and pertinent stakeholders from the Ethiopian government.

The water resource across the Rift Valley region needs serious treatment using technological intervention as a large number of people are now suffering from impurity and fluoride water. Using treatment machines has become mandatory.

Ethiopia, dubbed the water tower of East Africa, still has huge limitations to provide safe- water to households and industries, Debebe emphasized.

Addis mayor receives Honorary Doctorate, Citizen from Georgia, USA

ADDIS ABABA (ENA) -Mayor of Addis Ababa City, Adanech Abiebie received an honorary doctorate degree from Trinity International Ambassadors University in Georgia, USA and an honorary citizen of the state of Georgia.

Chancellor of Trinity International Ambassadors University, Jacqueline Mohair (PhD) said that her mature and exemplary leadership is an example and an inspiration to leaders at the international level.

Founder of Trinity International University of Ambassadors, Jacqueline Mohair remarked that the University awarded her this Doctorate of Philosophy for her great contribution to the welfare of the people and peace.

Adanech Abiebie’s journey is an inspiration to aspiring leaders worldwide.

“Her unwavering commitment to the values of excellence and unity has had a profound impact on Ethiopia’s trajectory, and we are privileged to honor her today,” she said.

State Senator Gail Davenport said on the occasion that Adanech Abebe was given the Georgia State Honorary Citizen Award for her determination to change the lives of low-income residents and to ensure equitable access to residents and for her role as an



example to other countries’ leaders.

The Senator said “Her Excellency Adanech Abiebie’s remarkable achievements reflect her deep-seated dedication to the betterment of society. “Her relentless pursuit of excellence and inclusivity has made a lasting impact, inspiring positive change across Ethiopia.”

Mayor Adanech, who spoke at the occasion, thanked all those who contributed to this success, according to Mayor Office of Addis Ababa.

“I would like to offer my praise to the Almighty God, whose guiding light has shaped my life’s path, and to all those who have contributed to my journey along the way. My journey signifies more than a personal triumph; it stands as a testament to the transformative force of determination and the unwavering support of family,” she said.

This path has been a collective endeavor, made possible by the steadfast backing of my family, community, coworkers, and the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD), Adanech added.

ATI, Mastercard Foundation to support over 600,000 youth

BY YOHANES JEMANEH

ADDIS ABABA -The Ethiopian Agricultural Transformation Institute (ATI) and the Mastercard Foundation launched the Agriculture-focused Dignified Employment for Youth in Ethiopia (ADEY) Program to help over 600,000 youth in inclusive and dignified work opportunities.

In a press statement issued on October 24, 2023, ATI and the Mastercard Foundation disclosed that ADEY Program aims to enable over 600,000 young people of which 80% of them will be women, to get new and sustained jobs in agricultural inputs and outputs marketing, value addition and agro-processing, livestock, irrigation and mechanization services.

ADEY program aims to address youth unemployment through creating 611,343 jobs of which 427,940 in self-employment and 183,403 in wage employment by removing systemic barriers that hinder young people from accessing dignified and fulfilling work, the statement indicated.

The release pointed out that the program which will be implemented at a cost of 74.5 million USD, avails affordable access to finance, digital agriculture, and ensuring policy improvements.

Additionally, ADEY builds on the success of ATI’s flagship initiative, the Agricultural Commercialization Clusters (ACC) program, which seeks to promote commercialization where smallholder farmers are organized in geographically clustered high-potential areas through market-driven and integrated value chain development of selected commodities,



according to the statement.

It mentioned that ADEY is intended to strengthen access to improved agricultural technologies, markets, and finance.

The program is also designed to realize youth-owned micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) competitiveness through capacity-building, enhance the skills and mindsets of young women and men through the provision of training and business development services, the statement noted.

“ADEY will have an impact on young women’s lives beyond supporting employment opportunities. It will provide them with more agency to take charge of their lives. The young women targeted in this program will be engaged in various socioeconomic issues both within and outside of their community, and they will be prepared to act as influencers for women’s empowerment within their respective socioeconomic circles,” ATI CEO Mandefro Nigussie (PhD), said in the statement.

Mastercard Foundation Country Director Samuel Yalew for his part stated that ADEY is a flagship partnership with ATI and partners that aims to address youth unemployment through the removal of systemic barriers that hinder young people from accessing dignified work in agriculture.

“We believe ADEY will create a path for a new generation of young farmers and women-led agri-businesses across several value chains. Anchored at center of the Foundation’s Young Africa Works strategy in Ethiopia, ADEY will contribute to our vision of creating a country success story by enabling young people to access dignified and fulfilling work,” Samuel said.

ADEY will be led by ATI and implemented in partnership with a consortium of organizations, including the Organization for Rehabilitation and Development in Amhara (ORDA) Ethiopia, the Oromia Development Association (ODA), HUNDEE, South Ethiopia Peoples’ Development Association (SEPDA), Somali Development Association, and PurposeBlack Ethiopia.

TVET institutions ready to enroll 600,000 students

BY BETELHEM BEDLU

ADDIS ABABA- The Ministry of Labor and Skills (MoLS) said preparation has been finalized to enroll some 600,000 students in Technical, Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institutions under regular program this academic year.

MoLS State Minister Teshale Berecha (PhD) told *The Ethiopian Herald* that the TVET institutions have finalized preparation to receive 600,000 students who just completed 12th grade under regular program. "TVET is a huge system in the country which annually receives half a million students on regular program while another two million undertake short term trainings in the institutions."

Currently, there are 700 public and 900 private TVET institutions in the country.

For his take on the issue, Federal TVET Institute Director-General, Biruk Kedir (PhD) asserted the institute's readiness to receive trainees in the regular and short-term training programs in the current academic year.

The Institute is mandated to provide mentor



Teshale Berecha (PhD)

training for industry technicians as well as TVET trainers and leaders. Currently, it is undertaking the necessary preparation to offer training on various thematic areas starting from level 6.

Apart from the main center, the institute offers training in its satellite training facilities located in different parts of the country. Moreover, a new enrollment policy has been put in place to expand the number of trainees, Biruk remarked.

Prof. Gebisa Ejeta...

MoFA said, "Our congratulations go out to Ethiopian-born Gebisa Ejeta, Distinguished Professor of Plant Breeding and Genetics, who was awarded the National Medal of Science by President Joe Biden yesterday."

Meanwhile, Purdue University also congratulated Professor Gebisa on his recognition by the president describing him as one of the most impactful geneticists in the world, a remarkable leader at Purdue in food security research, and a role model of perseverance for all Boilermakers.

"Our university celebrates another prestigious and richly deserved honor, bestowed by the president of the United States, to Gebisa, and I am delighted to join him on behalf of our university at the White House ceremony today," Purdue University President Mung Chiang said in a statement published on 24, October 2023.

Ejeta studies sorghum, an ancient grain used widely as a food source for humans and livestock. He received the 2019 World Food Prize for his research in creating

sorghum hybrids that are resistant to both severe drought and the destructive parasitic Striga weed. The resulting dramatic increase in sorghum production has helped feed hundreds of millions of people in sub-Saharan Africa.

Biden awarded nine recipients with the National Medal of Science, established by Congress in 1959 and administered by the U.S. National Science Foundation to recognize outstanding contributions in biology, computer science engineering and more, it was learnt.

High time to...

on neighboring countries. Hence, cooperation must be run to devise possible solutions, the expert described.

"We need to take as an example how the Abbay Dam becomes the agenda of even non-riparian countries that are far from the region. Likewise, the Red Sea politics is an international and regional issue incorporating Ethiopia's interest. The Nile River and the Red Sea are the two water bodies posing both threat and opportunities to Ethiopia."

Dareskedar added, "These days, Ethiopia is becoming over dependent on Djibouti ports. If the population were growing at

fewer rates, it would not be problematic to depend on one route. But, we are growing in terms of population and the economy and the situation in turn needs secured and alternative routes."

According to him, in one way or another, owning a share of the water body is the ultimate solution to breakthrough with the swelling threat coming out of the water politics, which surrounded Ethiopia.

"Following Egypt's construction of the Suez Canal in the late 1860's, the Red Sea has become one of the major trade routes in the world. Then, Egypt was trying to dominate the politics across the Red Sea. During that

time, Ethiopia had alternative sea outlets to resist the pressure coming from outside. Yet, the country is now in a critical position more than ever before. Besides, disbaring Ethiopia from its own region will no longer be constant."

The government criticized Ethiopia's exclusion from the Red Sea Forum, which was held in February 2022, and mentioned the country's aspiration to join the forum as the former becomes the champion to integrate the East African region. Having more than 120 million people and geographical proximity to the Red Sea, Ethiopia should not be excluded from such platforms, the expert emphasized.

Germany keen to...

Stephen Auer said.

The Ambassador noted that the diplomatic relations between the two nations spanning multiple areas of cooperation have reached new heights.

He noted that Ethiopia has undergone a significant transformation, attributed to government's commitment to political and economic reforms as well as a credible transitional justice.

The two countries can strengthen their economic ties by fostering investments and improving the business environment, he indicated.

Political cooperation between the two countries is already robust, while both countries are yet showing commitment to furthering their economic collaboration with initiatives such as the Compact with Africa, he added.

On 24 October 2023, Embassy of Germany in Ethiopia celebrated the 33rd German National Day where the Ambassador remarked that his country has a lot to share to Ethiopia about economic reconstruction and building democracy.

One of the many difficulties in the Germany's reunification process was integrating two societies that had been ruled by opposing ideologies for 40 years. However, he said, Germany successfully managed to create a united, democratic, and peaceful society.

He also expressed that his country stands as a staunch supporter of the AU and regional integration as it firmly believes that political and economic integration in Africa will contribute to peace, stability, and prosperity.

In his congratulatory message regarding German National Day, Finance Minister Ahmed Shide acknowledged the profound impact of Germany's successful transformation into a united and prosperous nation, which has become a pillar of European unity and global prosperity.

Ethiopia recognizes the valuable partnership with Germany, which has supported its development efforts and reforms, he said, adding the visits of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed and the German Chancellor have further strengthened the cooperation between the two countries.

Ethiopia commends Germany's expertise in political institutions, economic development, and technology as it has much to gain from Germany's advancements in these areas, he stated.

The minister further stated that the trade partnerships between two countries are strong, and both nations eagerly anticipate extra collaboration in the future.

Opinion

Combating terrorism in the Horn: The governments' priority concern

BY ABEBE WOLDEGIORGIS

Ethiopia is located in a very politically volatile region of East Africa. The fact that its neighboring country, Somalia, had been stateless for more than three decades and being hot bed to terrorists aggravated the volatility of the region. Terrorism, especially related to Al-Shabaab, has continued being threat to the Horn to date.

Somalia's being bordered by Indian Ocean and the Gulf of Aden is both a blessing and a curse. It has sea access and various ports to facilitate import and export trade. At the same time, the sea shore might make the country vulnerable by harboring pirates, criminals and terrorists.

During The colonial era, its northern part was colonized by the British and the Southern by Italy. Following their independence, they were reunited and established the Somalia Republic in 1960.

Unfortunately, after the withdrawal of Ziad Bare from power in 1991, the Northern Somalia established a de-facto state without any recognition from the international entities such as the United Nations but relatively stayed stable. The Southern Somalia, on the contrary, submerged in to anarchy and in the first decade of the civil war, power struggle between warlords along tribal lines shattered the very social fabric which holds the society together.

Not only had these, the warlords who induced clannish self-centeredness have exacerbated hatred among various groups which posed human carnages. The war between the warlords did not bring solution nor enable them to establish strong central government.

It consumed the nation's precious time and wealth which can be allocated for productive purposes. They rather wasted their limited resources for purchasing weapon only utilized for mutual destruction. The internal division and conflict not only inflicted heavy toll on human life but opened the door to the external interest groups for intervention, manipulation and igniting proxy war.

As mentioned above, Somalia is flanked by Gulf of Aden nearer to the Middle East where the stateless Yemen is located in which Islamic extremism took root and fundamentalists such as ISIS got ground.

According to experts, the terrorist group ISIS has presence not only in the Horn but also in the Sahel region of North Africa.

The submerging of Somalia in to anarchy and statelessness gave way to the foreign extremists to exploit the situation and disseminate their destructive ideology and recruit the youth who could be regarded as their supporter but to become only cannon fodder. They found that money Laundering, smuggling weapon, and explosive equipments to the stateless Somalia by

crossing the ocean as an easy task.

Similar to other pauperized African countries, the high unemployment rate in Somalia, coupled with helplessness, created human crises and made many flee to neighboring countries and beyond.

As 70 percent of the population are youth, and uncertainty on their country's fate, created good opportunity to the foreign forces to exploit the situation and recruit this segment of the society to implement their distractive objectives.

Fundamentalism does not have a door for dialogue but it categorizes people with different ideas as its foe with no tolerance. It strives to impose its philosophy on others and such a situation complicated the matter and made the solution reach for the stars.

The Militant Al-Shabaab engaged in terrorism in the last two decades was brought up and financed by foreign sponsors stood against its country and ruthlessly killed its own fellow Somalis. It used suicide bombing brought from the Middle East to fulfill its mission through terrorizing the people and make them stay in fear forcefully.

The terrorist group did not confine its terrorist acts only in Somalia. It rather exported to the neighboring countries through recruiting its supporters there.

Though the Al-Shabaab plot pre emptied by Ethiopian security forces, Kenya and Uganda were critically victimized by the group and many of their citizens were killed.

Fighting terrorism is not a task that should be left only to Somalis and their government, but also needs cooperation among the surrounding countries.

Cognizant of the vitality of fighting terrorism in a cooperated manner, the neighboring countries agreed to work in unison. The African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) is a unique African Peace Support Operation deployed in 2007 led by the African Union (AU) and designed to provide support and protection to civilians of Somalia with the financial provision from the United Nations (UN).

The AMISOM which comprised the Ethiopian, Kenyan and Ugandan armies, in cooperation with the Somalia government, is combating the Al-Shabaab terrorist group and reduced its fighting capacity to the sporadic action.

As mentioned above, Al-Shabaab has a network with the terrorist groups based in the Middle East and obtains information, finance, and training how to manufacture homemade explosives.

Hence, planning together with the international forces how to deter terrorism acts through exchanging information is essential. In these regard, the support of USA through providing satellite based information to the AMISOM is commendable.

While making an interview with the local media recently, Somalia Ambassador to Ethiopia, Abdullahi Mohamed Warfa, lauded the dedication and commitment of the Government of Ethiopia in eliminating Al-Shabaab. Al-Shabaab is a terrorist group that has been trying to destabilize the Horn of African region, notably Somalia.

Ethiopia, in collaboration with other countries in the region, has been a key player in the fight against the group to maintain peace and security in Somalia and the region. Ambassador Warfa lauded Ethiopia for its contribution in the fight against the militant Al-Shabaab by paying huge sacrifices.

"The Ethiopian government has mobilized its forces to combat terrorism and stand alongside Somalia in the fight against the terrorists who have been trying to destabilize the region."

The Ambassador further explained that the existing cooperation between Ethiopia and Somalia in various fields, including economic and education cooperation has toughened the relationship.

According to him, bilateral relations between Ethiopia and Somalia are witnessing remarkable development and sustainable partnership.

"The economic relations are witnessing remarkable development and a sustainable partnership between the two countries, with the skillful leadership of the two countries aiming to strengthen ties and cooperation in the political, economic and security fields, which makes the two countries more cohesive and closer."

There are various areas of cooperation between the two countries, the most important of which is security, trade, cultural and economic cooperation, Ambassador Warfa noted.

The Ambassador pointed out that the memorandums of understanding in areas of economic and security cooperation which were signed in Mogadishu last September between the two countries by the high-level ministerial committees are clear indications of the desire to strengthen relations between Ethiopia and Somalia.

The trade volume between the countries has reached approximately 4 million USD last year. Ethiopian export includes dairy products and commodities such as vegetables and livestock, while Somalia sends fisheries to Ethiopia, it was learned.

Moreover, Ethiopia is providing educational support to Somalia in addition to the economic cooperation, the ambassador said.

Stressing the need for strong solidarity among the countries in the region to fight Al-Shabaab and other terrorist groups that have been exporting terroristic activities in all neighboring regions, Ambassador Warfa urged all the pertinent actors in the region to intensify efforts to combat and eliminate

the terrorist movement in the region.

"The terrorist Al-Shabaab is dangerous to national security of all countries in the Horn of Africa. We must join hands to fight this terrorist group and completely annihilate it from the Horn of Africa and East Africa," he said, adding that "The group does not have a specific geography, but rather extends its terrorist activities in all neighboring regions of Somalia, Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, etc."

According to the Ambassador, the Government of Somalia has also been carrying out large-scale operations to fight the group in collaboration with countries in the region. "Efforts are also underway to weaken this group by drying up its financial sources," he revealed.

Ambassador Warfa finally praised the role played by African governments in supporting the stability of Somalia in order to help the nation take up its place in the continental and international arenas.

The Ethiopian Defense Force has a long history in engaging in peace keeping missions and fighting terrorism for the last 70 years all over the world.

When the Korean War was ignited in 1950, the Ethiopian Defense force was among the 17 countries' troops dispatched to the Korean Peninsula to keep peace there. The Ethiopian troops accomplished their mission bravely.

No Ethiopian Soldier was found captive but some sacrificed their life. Ethiopian troops saved South Korea from the communist invasion of North Korea backed by the then Eastern group. Now the country is the 10th economically powerful in the world.

In 1960, after the assassination of Prime Minister Patrice Lumumba in Democratic Republic of Congo, the country had been submerged in civil war and to stabilize the country, the United Nations Preferred Ethiopia to send its troops there.

Responding to the call of the UN, Ethiopia dispatched its various battalions there engaged in peace keeping mission. When the Ethiopian troops stayed there for more than five years, they squashed the rebel groups who put the nation in to anarchy.

The Ethiopian defense forces are still continued their engagement in peace keeping missions in various parts of Africa including Somalia. They accomplished their peace keeping missions in Liberia and Ruanda in the 1990s and returned back to their country.

Currently, they are deployed in Darfur, and Abiye which is the disputed border town between South and North Sudan. Ethiopian troops who paid scarify their life in various parts of the world for peace keeping mission will be remembered forever.

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

Editorial

Commitment that goes beyond borders

Through the 116th army day, Ethiopians are bracing to commemorate unity, peace, which kept a vast nation strong and unified in the face of formidable threats. Guided by the country's foreign policy of building mutually benefitting and amicable relations as well as refraining from confrontation, the defense forces have secured the country's peace, sovereignty and development.

Bestowed with the responsibility of safeguarding the borders and sovereignty of the country, the army has discharged even bigger responsibility. ENDF has tided over the nation in the middle of the toughest times that tried the whole world and had direct and imminent threats against the country.

The last 116 years have seen world wars as well as fierce regional and civil wars that were of big challenges to the country's sovereignty and territorial integrity. The defense forces have paid life to route the threatening invaders out of the borders of the nation.

Indeed the army has gathered experiences gained from all the challenges in the past and accumulated them to enhance the institutional capacity that makes it ready to preempt any possible threat before it happens.

As the saying goes, "If you want peace, prepare for war." The army has skillfully built up its capacity to deter any possible threats by anti-peace forces. Especially at this moment of diverse regional and international challenges on security the army stands at a good position to secure both the nation as well as the region.

Such strong stance emanates from the long time experience of the country as well as the global community that in order for a country to be fully peaceful and stable, the region should also be peaceful. A fire that damages a house is likely to cross to the neighbor's house in not extinguished on time. This explains the need for a country to be responsible for a collective security.

Throughout its history Ethiopia is well known for engaging in war only on circumstances that threaten its sovereignty and territorial integrity. For centuries its foreign policy also has been a testimonial for its firm stance not to meddle in the internal affairs or sovereign rights of any country as well as not to pose any security threat for any reason.

This sound foreign policy of the government and reliable discipline of the army has made it one of the most preferred armies to serve in the peace keeping contingents of the United Nations and The African Union. So far the army has won great recognition and appreciation from all the countries where it served as a peacekeeping contingent as well as the UN and AU Missions for its discipline and commitment.

Now the army is striving to cement its working relations and commitment with armies of other countries. In the 116th Army day that would take place today, Ministry of Defense has welcomed leaders of the armies of the Republic of South Africa and Tanzania among others.

This is a monumental step both to Ethiopia as well as the collaborating countries to share experience and build up capacity in the face of global security threats like terrorism. Furthermore, it will enhance the army's role in bringing together the government and peoples of the countries of the continent which is already taking several steps to integrate itself through trade and transport. Hence, the leaders can take this chance to boost the mutual trust among the countries in to the next level.

The Ministry of Defense also deserves appreciation to its endeavor to beef up its stature as well as to expand its working relations beyond borders.



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Opinion

Ethiopia's Capital Markets critical for national economic reform

BY SOLOMON DIBABA

Although capital markets have flourished across the world for years, the concept and operational – legal framework in Ethiopia is of recent origin. Probably about three years. In a popular definition, capital markets are financial markets that connect buyers and sellers together to trade stocks, bonds, currencies, and other financial assets. Capital markets include the stock market and the bond market. They help people with ideas become entrepreneurs and help small businesses grow into big companies.

Capital markets are where savings and investments are channeled between suppliers and those in need. Suppliers are people or institutions with capital to lend or invest and typically include banks and investors. Those who seek capital in this market are businesses, governments, and individuals. Capital markets are composed of primary and secondary markets. The most common capital markets are the stock market and the bond market. They seek to improve transactional efficiencies by bringing suppliers together with those seeking capital and providing a place where they can exchange securities.

Capital markets take the forms of primary and secondary markets. Primary markets deal with new equity stocks while secondary markets trade with existing securities. New capital is raised via stocks and bonds that are issued and sold to investors in the primary capital market, while traders and investors subsequently buy and sell those securities among one another on the secondary capital market but where no new capital is received by the firm.

While there is a great overlap at times, there are some fundamental distinctions between financial markets and capital markets these two terms. Financial markets encompass a broad range of venues where people and organizations exchange assets, securities, and contracts with one another, and are often secondary markets. Capital markets, on the other hand, are used primarily to boost funding, usually for a firm, to be used in operations, or for growth.

The projected deficit of the 2022/23 budget of Ethiopia is 281 billion birr out of an approved 800 billion birr is one of the factors that prompted the government to embark on promoting capital markets. Underlining the constraints, in 2021, Ethiopia promulgated a Proclamation that provided for the Establishment of Capital Market (Proclamation 1248- 2021) which also provided for the establishment of Ethiopian Capital Market Authority (article 3).

It is in this environment that the government is seeking to establish a capital market for the government, businesses, and individuals to buy and sell securities, such as bonds, stocks, and derivatives.

The National Bank of Ethiopia's 2021 Capital Markets Proclamation proposed a ten-year implementation plan structured around four pillars: market development,

capacity development, infrastructure development, and policy reviews.

The law established the Ethiopian Capital Market Authority and led to the creation of the Ethiopian Securities Exchange in late 2022 under the supervision of the Ministry of Finance and guidance of FSD Africa.

The ESX launched fundraising efforts in May 2023 by selling 75 percent of its equity with 25 percent held by Ethiopian Investment Holdings, a new sovereign wealth fund.

While these policies are geared towards a desirable goal—as a fully functioning capital market would eventually boost investment—given Ethiopia's currently challenging socio-economic landscape, it is a risky move, and so needs to be carefully prepared for and sequenced with other economic policies.

Developing capital markets is part of the major economic reforms the country is currently conducting and has greater relevance in acceleration the country's Ten Years Perspective Plan that has completed three years of operation. Capital markets are very important for the national economy in terms of raising capital for development projects that the government or the private sector is undertaking. Capital markets provide important input for building the capital of public and private investments in the commanding heights of the Ethiopian economy. Such markets undoubtedly provide opportunities for public and private banks, companies and others that are advertising on media outlets to sell shares to have prospects of profit making status that makes investors buying decision easier with minimized risk.

When new companies or investments are advertised on the media, people will be interested to buy shares if they observe that the company has a promising profit margin. Purchasing shares when new banks are established is not a new phenomenon in Ethiopia. This is one aspect of the manifestation of capital markets. The same is true for insurance companies and other public and private financial institutions.

However, capital markets do not function in isolation from other important preconditions that should be considered to develop the entire economic system in the country. They have to be supplemented with other components, including ease of doing business, financial liberalization, transformation and intermediation that are very significant in the development of financial markets in the country.

As stated earlier, capital markets are of crucial importance for the development of the commanding heights of the economy including agriculture. Ethiopia is endowed with more than 74 million hectares of land suited for agriculture and more than 122 billion of water from her rivers in 12 basins and underground in the country. This sector requires a huge amount of finance which is already a challenge for the country. Capital markets from within and overseas would play a major role in narrowing the gap in financial shortfalls.

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

Business & Economy

The reviving development of marble mineral

BY BACHA ZEWDIE

Benishangul Gumuz is a blessed region with mineral resources. One of the widely known minerals is gold. The gold mine is being developed by associations in a traditional way, and the product is being supplied to the National Bank of Ethiopia (NBE) and is generating foreign currency for the country. More recently, efforts have been made to produce gold by company.

The mining developments, especially the gold production, are creating employment opportunities for many citizens. Although not as much as gold, the development of other minerals has also created job opportunities for citizens.

According to Kamil Hamed, Head of the Regional Mineral Development Office; in addition to precious metals such as gold, there are many other minerals widely available in the region that are used as raw materials for industry and construction. One of the construction raw materials is marble, which is used to finish construction, and another is coal, which is used as a source of energy for industries such as cement factories.

In addition, there are many other minerals in the region that not reached production level. Research is being conducted on the minerals that are said to exist in the region. There are so many types of minerals but their reserve volume is not fully confirmed, Kamil announced.

He recalled that in the past, marble mining was being done on a large scale, but recently, due to the security problem, it has not been produced as it should be. He also pointed out that this year's production process of marble is recording better results than other times.

Similarly, it has been suggested that the production of coal is better than last year, and this indicates that the region has investment options that make it preferable for investors engaged in the mining sector.

Contrary to the last year's performance, that was very low due to the security problems and instability in the region, marble production has been strengthened this year, the Head mentioned. He pointed out that it was planned to produce 20 thousand cubic meters in the fiscal year, but only 1,327 cubic meters of marble was produced as a result of large companies that received license and engaged in investment work in the sector were unable to operate.

The Head further said that an improved performance can be seen in the marble development this year because of favorable conditions created and better security issues. There are conditions where the production of marble can be doubled from the second quarter onwards.

There are two types of licensing for mining companies; high profile producers and small level producers. High profile producers are licensed by the Ministry of Mines whereas the small producers take a license from the

region and engage in production.

There are more than 200 investors who have obtained license to produce marble in the region. Work is being done to identify the conditions under which these investors can renovate their camps and start working. Most of the workplaces are in the hands of manufacturers, and when they want to enter production, they can renovate their camps and start working.

The official said that the marble mine is located in three zones in the region mostly located in the Metekel zone where the development is underway at large scale. Marble is also produced in Asosa and Kemash zones.

According to the official, a study is being done about the marble deposits in the region. Although nothing has been confirmed by research, data shows that there is a large amount of stock per hectare. According to the information so far, there is enough stock in the region for any investor who wants to engage in the sector.

Earlier, the Head pointed out that the region's marble production was only produced in blocks and taken to factories that change to different colors and shapes. But now, since the factory block production started in the region, it is possible to produce better products. The factory is producing marble by molding blocks in the required size and shape, but there are gaps in the recycling of the by-products.

The official mentioned that different things can be produced from marble waste, for example, there is a need for a factory where small-scale youths can make different shapes, colors and so on from the waste product. Many things can be produced from the byproduct but a lot of byproduct is being wasted.

As far as the data is concerned, it is possible to produce ink. Medicines can also be produced. Next, attention is paid to the residual product, he said.

Kamil further mentioned that a second factory capable of producing marble in the same region is under construction. "It is also possible to get a better product after completion of the construction," he said.

He recalled that market connections had already been established for marble production and announced that there is no market problem for the product. Mentioning the market situation of the marble factory in operation as an example, he pointed out that there has never been any market shortage. The factory even produces with some amount of payment in advance.

The factory produces marble at its own place; it does not waste time to find a market and only fulfills the responsibility of production. The main focus of the factory should be to be able to produce marble and that there is no market problem.

Other manufacturers have signed contracts with factories in the Addis Ababa area, while some manufacturers have factories elsewhere and will take their products and



Marble mining is widely available in Benishangul Gumuz region. This should help the efforts to solve the construction finishing inputs problem by creating favorable conditions for large-scale mineral development

do the next job.

Most of the producers engaged in the sector are making the necessary preparations to start production by renovating their camp and this indicates that the product will be produced better this year. Other producers who had not renewed their camps due to the previous security situation in the region are also renovating their camps this year and starting work. With all this, the ore is better mined so that the plan set will be achieved.

As to him, the current situation in the region has shown improvements in the production of marble and better products will be obtained when all the producers are involved in the production. He assured that the work will be strengthened to continue

this.

While explaining about the performance in creating job opportunities in the region, he stated that it is planned to create job opportunities for 1,453 citizens in the mining sector in 2023/24 fiscal year and succeeded by creating 1,159 jobs the quarter alone.

Best job opportunities are created from the perspective of performance, and the job opportunities are mostly created in the gold mining sector. It is known that the country's construction sector is in need of construction finishing products such as marble. Information also indicates that most of the construction completions are currently imported. A large amount of foreign currency is being released for this. Construction finishing inputs that can be produced in the country are also being imported. It is suggested that one of the reasons for this is the wrong perception for the country's construction finishing products.

It can be understood from the information given by Kamil that there is no market problem for the region's marble production, although it is known that some of the construction finishing products produced in the country have quality problems. By mass producing this product, it is possible to partially fill the gap in construction finishing materials. This fact is very beneficial for the country's efforts to reduce the import of similar products by producing and using construction finishing products in the country.

Marble mining is widely available in Benishangul Gumuz region. This should help the efforts to solve the construction finishing inputs problem by creating favorable conditions for large-scale mineral development. For this, in addition to strengthening the activities that are being carried out by ensuring peace, it is also necessary to pay attention to the investment in the sector.

Art & Culture

The divine powers in the path of successful destination

BY BITANIYA TADLE

No one comes into this world without a purpose. Man has landed on this planet to make history while rotating around in the orbit of his life. Life begins at conception, and just as there is no birth without a fetus, similarly there is no achievement of destination without the three divine powers: Hope, Hard work, and Faith.

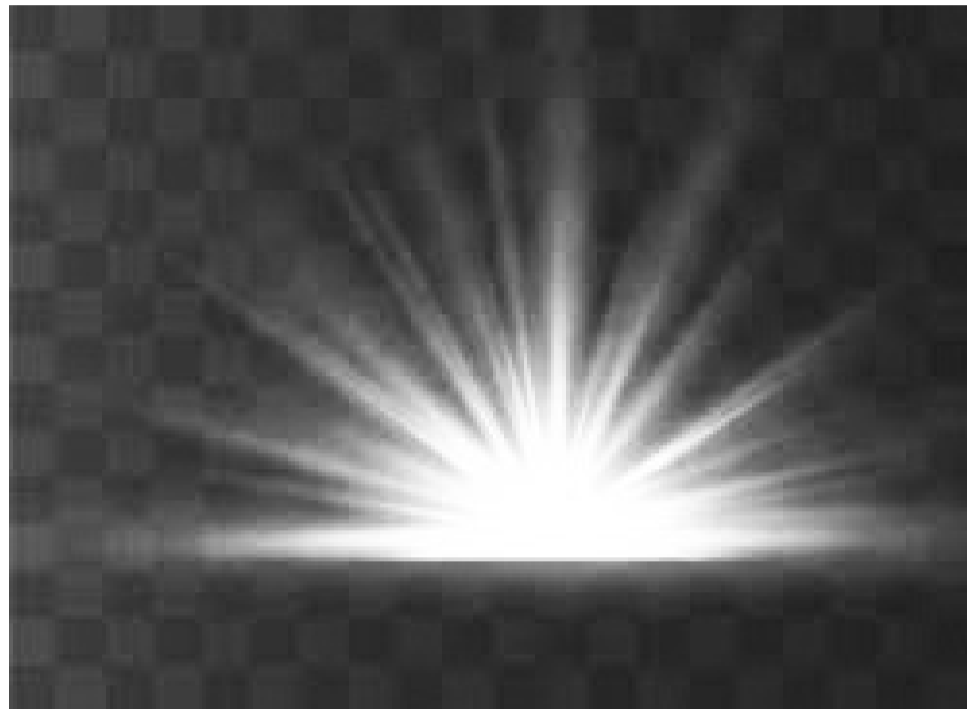
Part one: Hope

Hope, as a verb, means “to expect with confidence” and “to look forward to a desire.”

As Google defines Hope, it is optimistic thinking based on the expectation of positive outcomes in relation to events and situations in one’s life or in the world in general. But how do psychologists, philosophers and religious people define hope? Well, followers of Jesus Christ have preached many verses about hope based on the Bible: Jeremiah 29:11 preaches “For I know the thoughts that I have in mind for you,” says the Lord, “to give you a future and hope, but not for evil.”

Similar attribution was given to hope by the religion of Islam in the holy Quran “and never give up hope of Allah’s mercy.”[Quran 12:87].

And what does mainstream Hinduism preach about hope? In the historical literature of Hinduism, hope is referred



to with Pratidhi (Sanskrit pratidhi) or Apksh (Sanskrit: अपेक्ष). It is explained along with the concepts of desire and desire. In Vedic philosophy, karma was associated with ritual sacrifices (yajna). Hope and success are linked to the correct performance of these rituals.

Not only has religious attribution covered the essentiality of hope, but also Influential people have said a lot about it. “We must accept limited disappointments, but never lose hope for the infinite,” said Martin Luther King, a Blacks’ rights activist and political figure. “Let your choices reflect your hopes, not your fears.” -Preached

Nobel Peace Prize winner Nelson Mandela. Scientists like Stephen Hawking also addressed hope, “While there is life there is hope”.

Thus, hope is defined by influential figures as an essential element in our lives. It serves as a driving force that propels us forward, providing motivation and resilience when faced with obstacles. Without hope, we would lack direction and purpose, hindering personal growth and progress. It fuels our determination, enabling us to persevere through adversity and find solutions where others see only obstacles. Without hope, we would be left stagnant, lacking the drive

necessary for personal growth and progress.

And I say “Because hope is our magnifying glass that shows us the edge of the destination. We must let the great yellow light of hope that we hold in our hands shine unceasingly in our hearts.” Great painters of the world also have expressed their appreciation of the divine power of hope by using the last corners of their brushes such as British painter George Frederick Watts in his painting of “hope”, and Leonid Afremov through his masterpiece, “Street of Hope Night.”

Hope is undeniably one of the most important aspects of our lives. It instills within us a sense of purpose and meaning, allowing us to envision a better future for ourselves and those around us. Hope provides solace during difficult times, offering comfort and reassurance that things will eventually improve. It fosters a positive mindset that enables us to approach challenges with optimism rather than despair, leading to greater success and fulfillment in all aspects of life. Hope plays a crucial role in maintaining our mental well-being by offering comfort during challenging times. Ultimately, it is through hope that we are able to envision a brighter future for ourselves and others, fostering optimism and perseverance along the way.

Thus, from psychology, religion, medicine, philosophy, and culture, to art, hope in all these relationships of life is a divine power that is praised and blessed.

To be continued...

Limerick: There was a Young Lady of Niger

BY LEAR/MONKHOUSE

There was a young lady of Niger
Who smiled as she rode on a tiger;
They returned from the ride
With the lady inside,
And a smile on the face of the tiger.

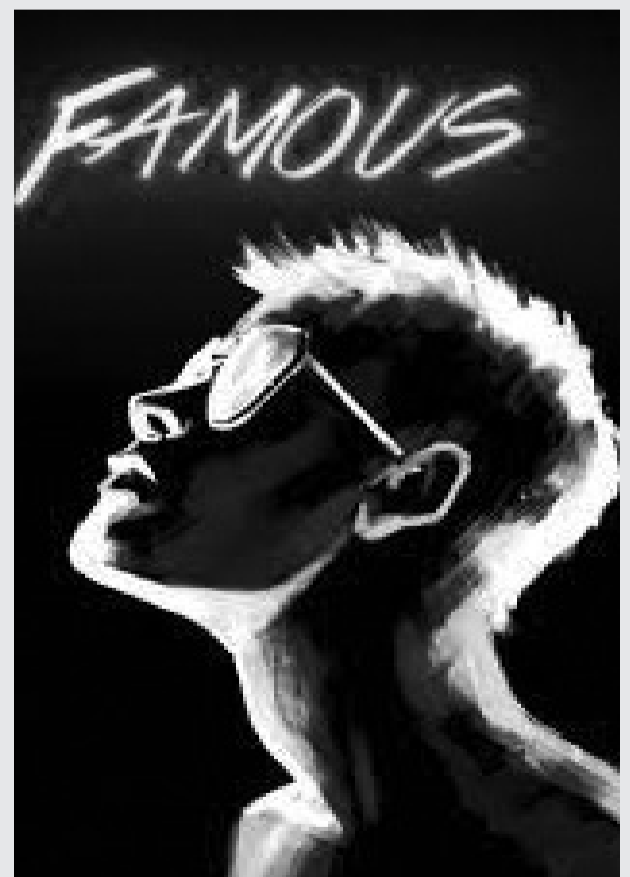


“You may not always have a comfortable life and you will not always be able to solve all of the world’s problems at once but don’t ever underestimate the importance you can have, because history has shown us that courage can be contagious, and hope can take on a life of its own.” — Michelle Obama

Famous

BY SENAIT G/HIWOT

I don’t want to be famous
Although it seems presumptuous
I see it as a tall ladder
Where one might fall under
One can’t know who’s in one’s circle
Anybody can comment about who one is
It might get tricky sometimes
Because their judgments will be owns
I will never live my life with ease
If I were to be famous
But isn’t it ridiculous
That I crave for it at times
Even with the violation of one’s privacy
Prestige can make it look worthy!



Indepth

BRI-Fueling Ethiopia's Propulsion to Prosperity

BY SOLOMON WASSIHUN

China's groundbreaking project, The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), designed to spur global economic growth, has become a beacon of optimism for developing countries seeking accelerated economic development. Among these countries, Ethiopia, one of Africa's fastest-growing economies, has emerged as a prominent participant embracing the BRI and its transformative potential.

Unveiled by Chinese President Xi Jinping in 2013, the BRI embodies China's global vision of shared prosperity through interconnected development. This initiative aims to establish a vast network of trade and infrastructure connecting Asia, Europe, and Africa, marking a new era of global cooperation and economic innovation.

Ethiopia, strategically positioned in the Horn of Africa and demonstrating remarkable economic development, has been a key participant in the BRI. The convergence of the BRI's objectives with Ethiopia's development goals has made the country an ideal destination for Chinese investments, particularly in infrastructure development. These investments have catalyzed a transformation in Ethiopia's economic landscape, paving the way for a prosperous future.

The BRI's most discernible impact in Ethiopia is undoubtedly in the realm of infrastructure development. Chinese-funded and constructed projects have significantly bolstered Ethiopia's infrastructural capacity, stimulating economic growth and facilitating both regional and global integration.

One of the flagship projects under the BRI is the Ethio-Djibouti Railway, Africa's longest electric transnational railway, running across the vast eastern region and connecting the landlocked Ethiopia to the Djibouti port. The railway system, which transports both freight and passengers was constructed and financed by the Chinese, at a cost of approximately \$4.5 billion. It has significantly enhanced Ethiopia's transport efficiency and logistics capability, thereby boosting its international trade.

Another monumental project is the Addis Ababa Light Railway system, the first electrified railway line in Africa, which cost approximately \$475 million. Completed in 2017, the project was funded and built by the Chinese. The city rail network has significantly improved public transportation services in Ethiopia's capital.

China's involvement extends to the aviation sector as well. For instance, Addis Ababa Bole International Airport, Ethiopia's largest airport, was expanded with the assistance of China. The project has significantly increased the airport's capacity, improving Ethiopia's connectivity with the rest of the world, and making the title –“the gateway to Africa” all the more befitting Ethiopia.

The BRI has also created opportunities for Ethiopian exporters. Improved logistics infrastructure has facilitated access to Chinese markets for Ethiopian products,



particularly agricultural goods. This connection has the potential to significantly boost Ethiopia's export growth.

The impact of the BRI on Ethiopia extends beyond physical infrastructure. By attracting foreign direct investments and joint ventures, Ethiopia has been able to drive its industrialization process, create jobs, enhance skills, and stimulate economic diversification.

The influx of Chinese manufacturing firms, especially in the industrial parks, has spurred Ethiopia's transition from an agrarian economy to a manufacturing-led one. Thousands of Ethiopians are now employed in these enterprises, acquiring new skills and improving their livelihoods.

China's involvement in Ethiopia's industrial sector has been transformative. The vast industrial park, the Eastern Industrial Zone, located 32 kilometers south of the capital, between Dukem and Bishoftu towns, and along the Addis Ababa-Djibouti railway, was developed by a Chinese corporation. It houses numerous Chinese manufacturing companies and has created thousands of jobs for locals, fostering skills as well as technology transfer.

China's contribution also extends to the energy sector as well. The Gibe III Dam, Ethiopia's largest hydroelectric plant was constructed with Chinese funding and expertise. This project has dramatically increased Ethiopia's electricity generation capacity, supporting its industrialization efforts.

Similarly, Ethiopia's Tekeze hydroelectric plant which comprises the erection of Africa's tallest dam, became operational in 2009 with the support of the Chinese expertise, long before the BRI initiative was introduced.

In a groundbreaking venture, China assisted Ethiopia in launching its two satellites, the ETRSS-1, and ET Smart RSS2 into space in 2019 and 2020 respectively. These satellites are providing invaluable support to the agricultural, mining, conservation, natural disaster prevention and mitigation, land governance, and other important activities

in the nation.

Besides providing launch facilities for both satellites, Chinese experts were integral members of the detailed and technical aspects during the design of both satellites.

As the economic ties between the two nations get deeper and wider, the people-to-people relations are continuously getting more intensified. China is the nation where the national carrier, Ethiopian Airlines has the largest number of overseas destinations. The Chinese provide free academic and short-term training scholarships each year to several thousands of Ethiopians in various fields of study.

“Education cooperation is one of the most important cooperation fields. It is not only an important fundamental cooperation, but also an important part of strategic cooperation between our two countries, playing an important role in bilateral cooperation.” says the Chinese ambassador to Ethiopia. Ethiopia is one of the nations that benefit from the implementation of the Global Development Initiative and Global Civilization Initiative proposed by the Chinese President, Xi Jinping.

The success of the BRI in Ethiopia has not only been an economic triumph but has also served to deepen the diplomatic ties between Ethiopia and China. Both nations have expressed their commitment to the initiative and the mutual benefits it offers.

Chinese President Xi Jinping, during the 2018 Beijing Summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation, emphasized China's commitment to the BRI's principles of “consultation, contribution, and shared benefits.” he noted, “China follows the principle of giving more and taking less, giving before taking, and giving without asking for return.” His words reflect China's intention to leverage the BRI as a platform for promoting shared prosperity.

On the Ethiopian side, recently addressing the Third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation which was held a few days ago in China, Premier Abiy Ahmed said: “The Belt and Road Initiative provides us with a unique opportunity to

further strengthen our role as a regional hub for trade, investment and cooperation. Through BRI, many jobs have been created and livelihoods improved. New roads and railways are linking previously unconnected places. People-to-people relations are being enhanced both within and across countries.”

Looking ahead, BRI holds immense potential for Ethiopia's economic transformation. During the past decade of its implementation, BRI has proven to be an additional fuel for Ethiopia's propulsion to prosperity. As the initiative progresses through the next two decades, Ethiopia stands to gain even more.

Future projects under the BRI, including further infrastructure development, digital economy cooperation, and green energy development [hydro, solar, wind, and geo-thermal] hold immense potential for Ethiopia's economic transformation and present promising prospects for continued rapid and sustainable economic growth.

Moreover, the BRI offers Ethiopia a chance to enhance its role on the global stage. As a key participant in the initiative, Ethiopia can influence the BRI's implementation ensuring that it continues to align with its national development goals and priorities.

10 years on, BRI has been transformed from a mere plan on paper to a reality no one can ignore that created wealth and positively impacted the lives of millions around the world. In particular, no one can deny that the BRI, embodying a vision of shared prosperity and interconnected development, has had a transformative impact on Ethiopia.

The BRI has proven to be more than just an infrastructure development project. The projects under the BRI have not only reshaped Ethiopia's physical landscape but also brought about tangible economic benefits. It has emerged as a symbol of the robust partnership between Ethiopia and China, a testament to their shared vision for a prosperous and interconnected future. As Ethiopia continues on its growth trajectory, the Belt and Road Initiative will undoubtedly remain a key driver of its economic transformation.

Law & Politics

Nurturing cyber security innovators to safeguard national security

BY ADDISALEM MULAT

Achieving cyber security cannot be accomplished without active engagement and involvement from society at large. Therefore, it is essential to undertake various initiatives that aim to enhance public awareness and education regarding cyber literacy. This responsibility should be shared across different sectors including media houses, educational institutions, cyber security organizations, as well as private and government entities.

Institutions must recognize the importance of talent and youth innovation in cyber security and actively encourage young entrepreneurs in this field. By providing mentorship, financial support, networking opportunities, public recognition, research collaborations, community engagement, and policy advocacy, they can nurture a new generation of cyber security innovators who will drive advancements and contribute to the security of our digital landscape.

By providing them with the necessary resources, mentorship, and funding, we can unleash their potential and drive advancements in cyber security. This can be achieved through establishing programs, grants, and partnerships with universities, research institutions, and private enterprises.

Fostering collaboration between the public and private sectors is crucial in strengthening a nation's cyber security system. By creating an environment that encourages collaboration such as through public-private partnerships and knowledge-sharing platforms both sectors can work together to develop comprehensive and effective solutions.

Additionally, continuous research and development are vital in staying ahead of evolving cyber threats. It is important to allocate resources towards exploring emerging technologies that can enhance the effectiveness of cyber security measures. By actively investing in research and development, a nation can adapt to new challenges and take advantage of cutting-edge solutions.

By educating the public about the importance of cyber security and providing guidance on how to protect themselves online, a nation can create a more resilient and responsible society. This can be achieved through partnerships with media organizations, community outreach programs and the integration of cyber security education in school curriculum.

International cooperation and information sharing play a vital role in combating cyber threats. Cyber-attacks are not confined by borders, and collaboration with other nations can enhance a nation's ability to detect, prevent, and respond to cyber incidents. By participating in international forums, sharing best practices, and engaging in joint initiatives, a nation can benefit from the collective knowledge and experiences of the global community.



To safeguard a nation's sovereignty and national interest, it is crucial to prioritize the enhancement of cyber literacy, the security of information infrastructure developments, and the support of technology innovators. By investing in these areas, fostering collaboration, promoting research and development, raising public awareness and engaging in international cooperation, a nation can build a strong and resilient cyber security system that effectively addresses the challenges of the digital era.

To ensure cyber security, media houses can play a crucial role by disseminating accurate and up-to-date information about cyber threats, best practices for online safety, and the importance of adopting secure digital habits. By dedicating segments or programs to cover cyber security topics, media outlets can effectively reach a wide audience and promote cyber literacy.

The education sector on the other hand holds the responsibility of equipping individuals with the necessary knowledge and skills to navigate the digital landscape safely. Incorporating cyber security education into school curriculums, implementing awareness campaigns, and organizing workshops and training for students, teachers, and parents can significantly contribute to enhancing cyber literacy within the society.

The field of cyber security demands not only the development of capacity and resources but also the nurturing of talented individuals who possess the skills and innovative mindset necessary to tackle emerging threats.

By recognizing and promoting the importance of youth entrepreneurship and innovation in cyber security, institutions can tap into a vast pool of untapped potential. Young minds often bring fresh perspectives, creativity and a willingness to think outside the box which is vital qualities in addressing complex cyber security challenges. Encouraging their involvement can lead to groundbreaking solutions and advancements in the field.

One way to encourage youth innovators is through the establishment of specialized programs and initiatives that provide mentorship, guidance, and resources for aspiring cyber security entrepreneurs. By creating an ecosystem that supports their ideas and ventures, institutions can

enable young innovators to transform their concepts into viable products or services that contribute to cyber security.

By incorporating practical hands-on experience and real-world case studies, students can develop the necessary skills and knowledge to become successful cyber security entrepreneurs. This collaboration can also foster research and development in the field and ensure that graduates are equipped to address the evolving challenges of the digital landscape.

Equally important is the provision of financial support and incentives for youth entrepreneurs in cyber security. Institutions can establish grants, funding programs, and competitions specifically targeted at supporting innovative cyber security projects. By offering these resources, they can alleviate some of the financial burdens and risks associated with starting a business thus encouraging more young individuals to pursue entrepreneurial endeavors in cyber security.

Another approach to encourage youth innovators in cyber security is through public recognition and visibility. Institutions can organize events, conferences, or award ceremonies that showcase and celebrate the achievements of young cyber security entrepreneurs. This recognition not only provides encouragement for their work but also inspires others to pursue similar paths in the field.

By organizing workshops, seminars, and outreach programs, stakeholders can educate the public about the significance of this field, the opportunities it presents, and the impact it can have on national security. This increased awareness can foster a culture that values and supports youth innovators in cyber security. By providing access to specialized facilities, equipment, and research grants, institutions can help young entrepreneurs bring their ideas to fruition.

They can also establish partnerships with the private sector to create internship and apprenticeship programs that provide valuable hands-on experience for young individuals interested in cyber security entrepreneurship. By immersing them in real-world projects and exposing them to industry practices, these programs can equip

young entrepreneurs with practical skills and knowledge needed to succeed in the field.

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.

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.

Women in Focus

'IWCA conference in homeland of coffee Arabica'

BY BETELHEM BEDLU

"It has been proven over the years what women could accomplish when their rights are respected; challenges are overcome as well as given equal opportunity. When they are given recognition for their contribution, they use their fullest potential to support not only their families but also their society and country as a whole."

Addressing the Conference and Exhibition of the 20th Anniversary of the International Women Alliance of Coffee (IWCA), Convention in Ethiopia, held under the theme '20 Years of IWCA: Power of the Past & Force of The Future,' Ergogie Tesfaye (PhD), Minister of Women and Social Affairs uttered the above remark.

Ethiopia is widely known to be the birthplace of coffee Arabica. The coffee is organic, which is demonstrated by its variety and quality of beans. Its coffee is grown in both highland and lowland conditions, nurtured with care by the farmers, garnering the beans a range of unique flavors and textures.

Coffee is an important cash crop and plays a crucial role both for the national GDP and in the livelihoods of millions of people. Over five million farmers make their living on this perennial crop. Approximately 20 million people deal, directly or indirectly, with the sector in transporting, trading, processing, roasting and exporting.

Despite the best accomplishment that the nation registered in creating a conducive environment for women economic beneficiaries, the Minister highlighted provision of loan, sustainable market linkage, working and display areas, technology, among others, remained a challenge for women manufacturers, entrepreneurs, as well as traders.

In this regard, the conference would be instrumental in showcasing the challenges opportunities and their efforts, strengthening their relationship, and sharing experiences. More importantly, it would allow promoting nation's historical and traditional values in the coffee sector.

During the Conference and Exhibition which hosted representatives from 33 countries and held from October 16 to 22/2023, President of Women in Coffee Ethiopia (WiCE), Sara Yirga, mentioned on her part that the fact that the event is being held in the land of the origin of coffee Arabica has much more meaning to Ethiopians as well as to coffee producer and consumer countries.

In the view of its economic benefits, she said coffee does not only have an economic benefit to the country, but also has its own social values. It creates a very strong relationship among people. During the coffee ceremony, people share ideas, discuss how they resolve conflicts, how they made and better their business, talk about politics, charity activities etc.

"So I personally believe that it is appropriate to make this Conference in the homeland of coffee Arabica."



Photo: Ethiopian Coffee & Tea Authority

Participants of the 20th anniversary of the International Women Alliance of Coffee (IWCA), Convention Conference and Exhibition

Yet, the most significant reason is Ethiopia's vast and suitable land for coffee plantation with excellent climate conducive for coffee. Its special varieties are least promoted and not marketed well.

As to her, close to 90 percent of the varieties of Arabica are found in Ethiopia and more varieties are expected to come to light as ongoing research undertakings indicate. Ethiopia expects to benefit more from coffee by increasing production and productivity and also by focusing more on agro-processing.

In this regard, the growing role of the private sector in the national economy at large and that of coffee sector in particular is very crucial. Moreover, the demand for coffee is likely to continue growing. This growth in coffee consumption presents a tremendous opportunity for coffee producing countries. On the other hand, the global coffee price has been declining since 2022, she added.

But surprisingly, Ethiopia earned more than

1.4 billion USD in 2022 and 1.33 billion USD in 2023. The reason behind this is due to the establishment of new reforms and the amended rules and regulations which in turn benefited our farmers and generated foreign currency for the country.

In addition to this, Sara reiterated they have given great attention to coffee quality and market penetration strategy in expanding destiny places also played a vital role.

Looking at the whole coffee value chain, she said the association sees women involved in every step, from tending to the plants to harvesting, processing, value addition, trading, exporting and so on. Without the participation of these women, the coffee that everyone relies on each morning would never reach us.

According to International Coffee Organization, between 20 percent and 30 percent of coffee farms are female-operated and up to 70 percent of labor in coffee production is provided by women, depending

on the region.

Despite the vital role of female farmers, it is obvious that they continue to face inequality and obstacles to earning a decent living. Globally, women have less access to land, farming tools, seedlings, loans, and training. They are less likely to be able to join a cooperative or to rise through its ranks to a leadership position. As a result of these inequities, the average production on women-led farms can be up to 25% lower than on those led by men. That is why closing this gap is so important to all of us. That is why closing this gap is so important to all of us, Sara stressed.

"Empowering women in the economy and closing gender gaps in the world of work are key to achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly Goal 5, to achieve gender equality."

In the context of the coffee industry, gender equality means good business focused on women economic empowerment and supporting activities to strengthen women. Therefore, everyone needs to do more to enable women to benefit from the coffee sector in a sustainable manner, as to her.

From the sustainable use point of view, it is necessary to understand the actual and practical situation of buyers. Global demand for coffee is growing as more people in traditionally tea-drinking countries, such as China and India, increase coffee consumption. Growing sophistication in consumer taste and the rise of specialty and independent cafes have led to greater demand for premium coffee, which includes single-origin and Arabica coffee.

Coffee chains now focus on sourcing better-quality coffee to meet this shift in consumer demand and taste. So, recognizing and leveraging this competitive advantage becomes of critical importance and best strategy for coffee producers, processors, sellers and exporters.

In this regard, International Women Alliance of Coffee (IWCA) and Women in coffee should take its initiative to build a strong platform for women's empowerment and inclusion to achieve sustainability across the coffee industry and communities.

Moreover, she highlighted the strategy that has been prepared to enable women benefit from both development and marketing areas in which their association has been implementing in collaboration with regional states, zones, districts, regional coffee and tea offices and other stakeholders.

Not only this, various projects are being designed and implemented to ensure women's empowerment. In addition to this, a system has been put in place for women farmers and growers to connect with women exporters and benefit from the marketing process.

"As a result, many are reaping the rewards of their efforts. These efforts will continue and be strengthened. I believe this can be a role model for other countries", she underscored.

Society



Enhancing men's engagement to curb gender norms

BY MENGISTEAB TESHOME

Socially constructed norms have a significant impact on shaping our values and beliefs, behaviors and expectations, influencing our thoughts and understanding about our surroundings and the external world as well as the various aspects of life, including gender roles, cultural practices, and social hierarchies.

Unfortunately, most of these socially constructed norms favor men while putting more pressure and hurdles on the lives of girls and women and influence their lives negatively. These unwritten laws deprive their rights; limit their roles and participation in the social, political and economic aspects; and compelled them to fulfill merely household roles and act merely as mothers, wives and caretakers confined at home.

In fact, a number of efforts have been practiced to normalize the social norms, especially gender-based social norms, and minimize the negative impacts of the laws that cause unnecessary burdens on communities. However, most of the endeavors carried out targeting only women; but do not consider or recognize the roles men can play in closing gender based biases and improving the lives of women. As a result, bringing attitudinal change at the desired level among men is still challenging the efforts.

In actual fact, as part of this effort, a combination of legislative reforms, community engagement, education, and advocacy works have been carried out to raise the awareness of the community towards gender-based social norms and their undesirable impacts on young girls and women. Government agencies, civil society organizations and various agencies are working at the grassroots level to sensitize about social norms.

Off late, the Addis Ababa City Administration in collaboration with Care Ethiopia and Advancing Women Enterprise (AWE) organized events that manifest how social

AWE has brought a meaningful and a practically proven skill set to reach young girls and women and is vital in improving their living standards, quality of life through promoting inclusivity, diversity, and equal opportunities

norm programs are useful in addressing the root causes of gender inequality, as well as the critical importance of men's engagement in changing gender based norms.

The events were organized in five sub-cities and at the program held at the premises of Yeka Sub-City, 100 men members of the AWE and willingly partake in normalizing men engagement training held practical activities that showcases gender equality

Speaking on the occasion, Yeka Sub-City Women, Children and Social Affairs Office Head Mihret Argago said that gender inequality has been a big challenge in Ethiopia for several years. Particularly following the labels attached to women and restricting them to stay at home; women have been deprived from their rights. However, these days for the reason several women are educating and empowering themselves, it is possible to reduce the level of the problem though it is not completely eliminated. Men should help women by curbing the social

and cultural impacts imposed on women, she added.

Sub-City's Women, Children and Social Affairs Team Leader Mekdes Gashaw for her part said that it is high time to critically examine the challenges associated with socially constructed norms that have negative impacts on individuals and communities.

AWE has brought a meaningful and a practically proven skill set to reach young girls and women and is vital in improving their living standards, quality of life through promoting inclusivity, diversity, and equal opportunities. Societies can work towards creating more positive and empowering norms that benefit everyone.

At the same time, they have helped to normalize men's engagements because the role of men is fundamental in households to make decisions on resources.

"So long as the problem is quite immense, we should work hard to reach out to those who are leading miserable lives," she remarked.

According to her, individuals can play an important role in challenging and changing socially constructed norms that have negative impacts.

Care Ethiopia Women's Economic Justice Strategic Program Head Misrach Mekonnen also said that Care Ethiopia has a number of projects on the ground that focus on women.

One of the projects is the Advancing Women Enterprise (AWE) project which focuses on increasing women's access to financial and entrepreneurial tools and opportunities. It also has a gender transformative aspect aiming to change negative social norms.

According to her, as per the assessment made, empowering women will not make the project productive unless men are involved because men take the lion's share in making decisions.

"We had trained one hundred men out of the three thousand AWE beneficiary members and organized a conference in a bid to create an awareness platform at the end

of training towards norms based practical demonstrations."

Ayisha Aregawi from Kolfe Sub City is one of AWE beneficiaries. She told to The Ethiopian Herald that she was considering all social norms as beneficial, because she used to grow through those practices, in her preconceived understanding men are not entitled to home chores; but women.

"My husband was not helpful and we were confronting day in and day out because we did not treat each other in the spirit of respect and dignity."

Thanks to the project, after the training, he has brought attitudinal change and he is willing to participate in any kind of home chores; he is not ashamed of whatever anyone said at the back."

According to her, he is engaged in producing locally-made shoes; and they are leading peaceful lives; discharge their responsibilities accordingly for the common purpose. They are grateful for Care Ethiopia and the offices working along with the project.

Muhdin Assefa, the other beneficiary for his part said that he abided by socially constructed norms and he was ashamed of violating the principles.

The Personal Advancement and Career Enhancement training were instrumental in making clear how the ingrained social norms are affecting our relations and communal life system. "Now, I am a man of solution not a complainer. I will keep on urging my fellow friends to break harmful, socially constructed gender norms and gender inequality," he remarked.

The men, who received Personal Advancement and Career Enhancement training, have also shown practical demos by performing home chores like brewing coffee, changing diapers as well as other household tasks that were once said "women's tasks." in a more specialized and productive way. The core point of the demos was to let other fellow brothers and sisters better understand that socially constructed norms are not true.

International News

IMF warns Africa of economic vulnerabilities as China's economy slows

The International Monetary Fund is cautioning African nations about the possibility of a regional economic downturn and the ripple effects that China's slowing economy could bring.

Africa and China have forged economic ties over the past 20 years, making the Asian giant the continent's largest trading partner. Africa exports metals, minerals and fuel to China, while importing manufactured goods and machinery from that country.

The IMF says the partnership is threatened by China's economic slowdown and aging population, trade tensions, geopolitics and the ongoing impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Kenya-based businessman Adan Ibrahim, who imports vehicle parts from China, said it was difficult for a long time to access Chinese companies due to COVID-19 regulations, including visa restrictions that allowed relatively few people into the country per month.

"Up to now they have not reopened well," Ibrahim said. "In terms of movement of people within the country, they even restricted when you travel to China. You [had to] undertake serious checks on health issues. There were ... challenges, both economic and health wise."

In December 2022, China lifted coronavirus restrictions that had prevented easy movement of goods and people.

Gerrishon Ikiara, an international economics lecturer, said the economic problems faced by China and African countries affect their trade relations.

"When African economies are affected either



by drought or other problems that may affect various sectors, the negative effect is felt in China," Iriara said. "If it's ... happening in China, the negative effect is felt in Africa.

"So, it's important that both the Chinese and African economies are doing well to create a healthier trading relationship," he said.

Ibrahim said that as China shifts away from COVID-19 controls, the price of goods has increased and they go unsold.

"The goods that we used to buy with the relatively cheap prices before COVID are

now triple the price that we currently buy with," he said.

China's economic recovery from the pandemic slowed in recent months due to a sluggish property market and weak consumer spending. China's trade data showed that exports and imports continued to decline as demand for Chinese goods waned.

Ikiara said Africa needs to find new trading partners to develop its economies

"If the Chinese economy is slowing down, Africa needs to diversify its trading partners

and to diversify either imports or exports to Asia, other parts of Africa, Latin America and the U.S.," he said. "If there is a problem with our exports to China, we need to look for new markets."

The IMF is urging African governments to diversify their economies, increase regional trade integration and create a favorable business environment so that local and international corporations can thrive.

Source: The standard

Kenya Airways foresees Sh32b losses from weakening shilling

Kenya Airways (KQ) expects to get a major beating from the continued slide of the Kenya Shilling.

The carrier on Tuesday told MPs that it expects the losses directly attributed to the weakening of the shilling against the US to hit Sh32 billion by December this year. This could double by the end of next year to Sh64 billion.

The airline has already been hit hard by the weak shilling over the first half of this year, where despite being profitable at the operational level, the losses for the six months to June doubled.

While appearing before the parliamentary committee on transport, Kenya Airways management led by Group Chief Executive Allan Kilavuka sought to make a case for the airline's need for a government bailout.

The airline said the existing debts continue to make it hard for the management to turn it around, owing to debt pressures occasioned by forex volatility with the shilling continuously losing against the greenback.

While KQ gets most of its revenues in local

currency, most of its expenditure including fuel purchases and payment for aircraft leases is in foreign currency.

"The depreciation of the Kenya Shilling against the US dollar has negatively impacted the airline's financial standing," Mr Kilavuka said.

"For instance, the negative foreign exchange impact on KQ operations already booked in KQ books between January and September 30, 2023 is Sh26.6 billion.

"Assuming that the US dollar to Kenya Shilling exchange rate is one dollar for 151.86, by December 2023 KQ will have booked an additional negative forex impact estimated to be 5.5 billion.

"In total, the negative forex impact on KQ operations in 2023 financial year will be an estimated to Sh32.1 billion."

The CEO added that the negative forex impact is further illustrated in the movement of KQ's -dollar denominated loan balances from inception of the Tsavo facility in 2014 to September 2023, noting that in 2014 the

shilling was trading at 90.59 to the dollar compared to 148.21 on September 30, 2023.

"Consequently, the negative forex impact booked from loan inception to September 30, 2023 was Sh40.7 billion. Assuming the US dollar to Kenya Shilling exchange will be one dollar to 151.86 by December 2023, the negative forex impact on loans only will be an additional Sh2.1 billion," he said.

"Further, assuming the dollar to Kenya Shilling exchange will be one dollar to 178.88 by December 2024, this will lead to an additional negative forex impact of Sh21.6 billion shillings."

By the end of the year 2024, the negative forex impact on KQ loan balances is estimated at Sh64.5 billion.

"Therefore, a weakening shilling significantly increases the airline's financing and operating costs," Kilavuka told the committee.

This raised more questions from the MPs who wanted to know what the worst-case scenario for Kenya would be if the airline were to fold and spare the taxpayer from shouldering the

Sh196 billion debt.

"Do you think KQ needs to be disbanded?" asked Charibari Chache MP Zaheer Jhanda.

Kilavuka responded that there is a choice to disband, but it has its pros and cons...

"There are very many ramifications of starting afresh. If we were to, we would lose all the bilateral air service agreements and we would have to renegotiate afresh.

"We also have the loans, they would mature immediately."

KQ says it is in the process of implementing Project Kifaru, a three-year plan that among other things seeks to monopolise its fleet to reduce the training and maintenance cost.

It is also seeking a strategic equity partner to inject funds to turn around the airline, with Kilavuka saying in the absence of an equity investor the airline will continue to struggle in its operation.

"Can we survive in the short term? Yes, we can survive but it will be a difficult survival."

Source: The standard