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Ethiopia, China enjoying all-whether strategic cooperation partnership

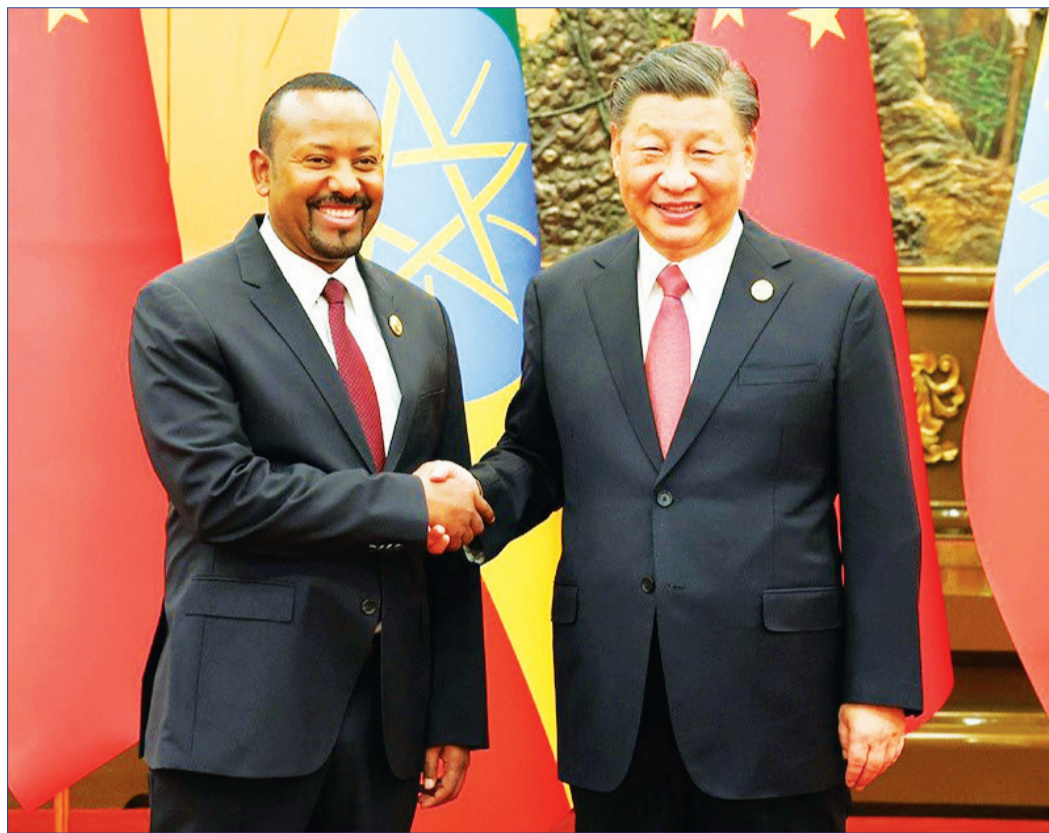
BY STAFF REPORTER

ADDISABABA –Ethiopia is consolidating its diplomatic relations with various countries and the recent agreement with China to establish all-whether strategic cooperation partnership is an exemplary success, according to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA).

On Monday, MoFA Spokesperson Ambassador Meles Alem told journalists the national efforts that the country has been exerting since September 2023, to reach diplomatic relations to a new heights with African, Asian, European and American countries, are bearing fruits.

In relation to this, Ethiopia put efforts to increase its partners and acceptance and strengthen relations with countries to protect its national interests, it was learnt.

It was on October 17, 2023 that Ethiopia



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Horn leaders urged to consider Ethiopia's quest for access to Red Sea

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Aklilu Tadesse

Ethiopia secures over two bln Birr via free trade zone

BY MISGANAW ASNAKE

DIRE DAWA - Industrial Parks Development Corporation (IPDC) announced that Ethiopia has generated 2.2 billion Birr income trading export and

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Institute working to become Africa's leading metrology service hub

BY ASHENAFI ANIMUT

ADDIS ABABA –Ethiopia is constructing the leading metrology service center; the Ethiopian Metrology Institute (EMI) said adding that it is also aiming at becoming chosen Africa's metrology hub.

In an exclusive interview with the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA), Institute's Director-General Fetene Teshome said that the country is undertaking the construction of three G+9 multifaceted metrology center worth over 1.3 billion Birr.

He further remarked that these state-of-the-art buildings are equipped with modern facilities, training rooms and other equipment developed utilizing Artificial Intelligence (AI), satellite information from each corner of the country.

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Special economic zones that multiply investment inflow

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A visit that elevates Ethio-China ties

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Strengthening educational partnership

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EPHI investigating most Nat'l burden of diseases

BY YESUF ENDRIS

ADDIS ABABA- Ethiopian Public Health Institute (EPHI) announced that it is conducting a policy-determining health research to identify most diseases that triggers the most burden in the country.

The research is being conducted in collaboration with international organizations working on global burden of diseases, according to EPHI.

In his opening remark on the National and Subnational Burden of Diseases Collaborators' Symposium, EPHI Director General, Mesay Hailu (MD) said yesterday that the institution is collaborating with national and international organizations to obtain the desired information.

The outcome of researches would determine the national health policy, so that the institution is assiduously following the data collection process, he expressed.

Moreover, a data management system has been organized at national and subnational level, he added.

He also acknowledged the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation for supporting the national data management center of EPHI.

Institute of Health Metrics and Evaluation-IHME and National Data Management Center Clinical Assistant Professor. Awoke Misganaw (MD) said that researches considering most known diseases are being conducted to identify their level of impact.

Ethiopia has the biggest Global Burden of Diseases collaborators' networks that help to obtain all the needed information, he stated.

"We also gather information using health institutions' structure and the finding on the burden of diseases will be publicized this year," he said.

He also added that the partnership with all national and international institutions should be strengthened.

Representatives of Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and Institute of Health Metrics and Evaluation also stressed the need to reinforce partnership on researches being conducted in the area mentioning that the global burden of diseases is becoming more complex.

The representatives also vowed to continue their partnership with EPHI.

Albeit to challenges, DBE making strides: President

BY MENGESHA AMARE

ADDIS ABABA— Following the sweeping reform in 2018, Development Bank of Ethiopia (DBE) has been trekking on the right track coming out of the state of bankruptcy, so remarked DBE President.

Speaking to FBC, DBE President Yohannes Ayalew (PhD) stated that the bank has revived and taken the right position for growth owing to the reform applied over the last three years.

"Since successively pumped overdue loans, DBE was even at risk of devoid of existence as it had been prone to consistent bankruptcy and forced to ruin all due to lack of capacity to run activities. These problems emanated from lack of transparency, shortage of technology-backed undertakings and releasing loans with no sufficient collateral, unfair and unidirectional loan pumping, maladministration, among others."

He, however, said that the newly established board of the bank has formulated the five year



development strategic plan as per the reform and the plan targeting at raising the capital thereby making activities technology oriented, ensuring transparency and fairness as well as proper way of carrying out activities. In so doing, the bank has been converted into a successful one from a state of being ruined.

He said: "We have been undertaking activities based on transparency, fairness and impartiality. By taking rewarding measures, it has been possible for the bank to push itself to the journey leading to a successful accomplishment of tasks."

According to the president, the overdue loan of over 40% has been made dwindled to 7.1% following the fairness and transparent measures taken as per the recent reform. As far as fairness is concerned, he stated every state is now enjoying the service of DBE, predominantly loan access. Now the bank does have 38 billion Birr capitals next to Commercial Bank of Ethiopia.

The lucrative means which have been principally employed to correct overdue loans include encouraging the debtors to pay back, the existing one of course; helping them bring other partners to collectively deal with the debts haring and/or covering the whole debt for them to be owners of the organization/s at the end of the day, he opined.

Horn leaders urged to consider Ethiopia's quest for access to Red Sea

ADDIS ABABA (ENA) - Leaders of the Horn of Africa nations have to consider discussing Ethiopia's quest for having access to sea as it would increase the physical economic growth of the East African region, the American political-economic analyst Lawrence Freeman told ENA.

It is to be recalled that Prime Minister Abiy has recently given geographical, historical, economic backgrounds to initiate discussion on Ethiopia's right to access sea through peaceful means.

The American analyst stated that access to sea not only reinforces the steadily growing import-export trade of the second Africa's populous nation, but will also ensure development in the region.

For him, Ethiopia's quest for coastal access to sea outlets "is essentially correct" as it would enable to increase physical economic growth of the people in the Horn of Africa.

"If people understand more about physical economic growth, they would understand

that this is not only very reasonable, but it's correct. If you want to raise the standard of living for 200 million people living in countries in the Horn, then you would benefit from the trade that could be increased in Ethiopia by having a port on the Red Sea."

In this regard, the analyst urged leaders of the Horn of Africa nations to have discussion to consider Ethiopia's quest for having access to sea.

Prime Minister Abiy has suggested potential areas like the Ethiopian Airlines, the Abbay Dam and other offers for concession, Freeman stated.

This is perfectly reasonable for the growing Ethiopian economy, he noted.

"The Prime Minister is putting these issues on the table now. (He says) let's discuss how we are going to bring this about. And I think that's the approach of a statesman and I would agree with it."

Access to port is critical to accelerate

the growth trajectory of the country and contribute to regional physical economic growth.

"If we look at how we increase the physical economic growth of the people in the Horn of Africa, it is going to depend on Ethiopia. Ethiopia is going to be the dominant economic growth center. And this will benefit all the other countries.

It's (therefore) natural to work this out. And I believe this is now an important discussion that has been raised by Prime Minister Abiy. This will be worked out over the years ahead," Freeman noted.

He also stressed the need for discussion about a regional economic approach since there are several ports in the Horn.

Mentioning about distorted media reports that Ethiopia is claiming access to sea using force if necessary, Freeman noted that this is a very divisive policy that has been used in Africa for hundreds of years.

See Horn leaders urged ... Page 3

Ministry plans to produce 9.8 bln liters of milk this year

BY ESSEYE MENGISTE

ADDIS ABABA—Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) disclosed that it has planned to produce 9.8 billion liters of milk in 2023/24 fiscal year out of cattle, camel and goat milk.

MoA's Livestock and Fishery Resource Team Leader Lema Gameda told the Ethiopia Press Agency said that the Ministry has set to attain 9.8 billion liters of milk in this fiscal year.

"In order to achieve the plan we are working on problem solving strategies such as improving breed cattle, ensuring safe fodder and improving marketing linkage, awareness creation would also be applied in rela-

tion to how to feed cattle, what kind of Fodder should be used and other related tasks. Although the volume of milk production has increased as per annual consumption, it is hard to quench the demand coming from the society, and the nation could hardly meet the need," Lema added.

Supporting the above idea, MoA's Livestock and Fishery Resource Expert Segni Chemedda stated that the volume of milk production is annually increasing, a wide gap has been witnessed in due course of addressing milk demand of the community.

According to Segni, lack of hybrid species of cattle, absence of quality and safe fodder as well as lack of market linkage are at-

tributable to the minimal intensity of dairy production in Ethiopia.

In order to solve problems regarding milk production quality, the government has been investing in the improvement of breeding improved cattle species, provision of quality and safe cattle fodder through awareness creation among the farming community, he stated.

According to WHO report, a person needs to drink 200 liters a year to stay healthy. In Ethiopia on average a person drinks 66 liters of milk per year, which means some 140 liters deficit from WHO recommendation. The milk production accounted for 8.6 billion liters over the last fiscal year, Segni said.

Associations affirm commitment towards value quality leather

BY MESERET BEHAILU

ADDIS ABABA—Ethiopian raw hides and pickle and leather producer associations has commended that due attention, commitment, and integration of stakeholders would play a vital role in improving leather quality thereby ensuring international competitiveness.

Ethiopian Raw hides and pickles Provider Association President Birhanu Abate told *The Ethiopian Herald* that leather is one of the highest required commodities in the international market.

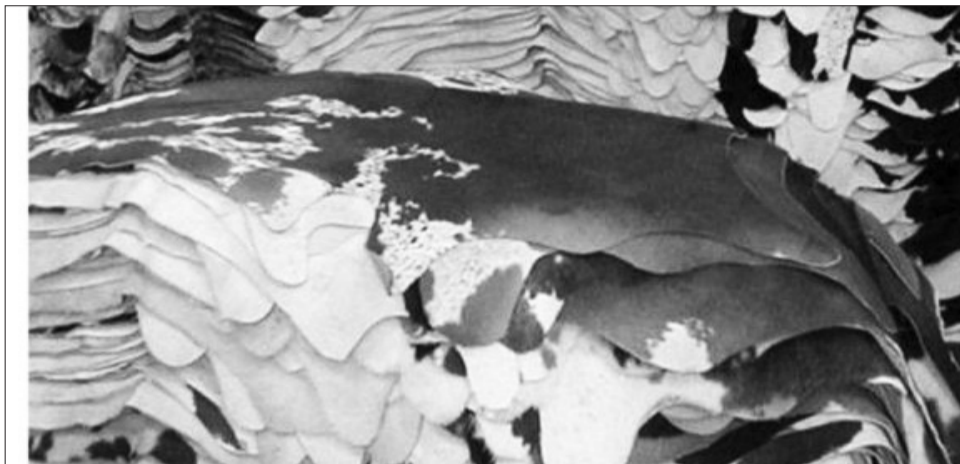
However, Ethiopia has not yet gained adequate benefit out of the sector although the country has possessed huge resource in that regard.

Earlier, Ethiopian leather and pickle were demanded by Europe, UK, Italy, and the likes due to its originality and quality. As a result, leather and pickle was the second largest source of revenue next to coffee in 1970s.

This demand has been decreasing from time to time and even the country is losing the significant benefit from the sector due to lack of attention, absences of incentives, financial limitation, lack of stakeholders' integration, among others.

As to him, a lot of researches have been conducted at different times to improve the leather quality in Ethiopia.

However, there is huge gap in due course of implementing the research findings on the ground. Therefore, Ethiopia needs to improve



the leather quality via applying proper animal foliage, carrying out a standardized slaughtering, transporting animals, taking care of skinning animals, using adequate chemicals and salt, and the likes.

“Yes, having enough experts to treat animals coupled with abundant animal resources in the nation would play a big role in job creation and national economy growth. For instance, a big leather factory can accommodate from 4000 to 7000 jobs seekers. My leather store association has provided for instance over 200 jobs both a permanent and contractual bases. Besides, commitment among the stakeholders has to come to the frontline so as to help factories and industries boost production,” he added.

Sharing the above idea, Ethiopian Leather Producers Association Board Chairperson

Redwan Bedada on his part said, “The leather industry is exposed to multilayered challenges at present, and many of the operators have left the sector as a result.”

Sharing the experience of other countries such as from South East Asia, he stated that leather and leather products are among the main manufacturing development schemes thereof. India is, as an exemplary nation, benefiting from the sector by creating millions of jobs and generating billions of USD a year. Similarly, China, Vietnam, and Indonesia have been gaining adequate benefit out of the industry.

He said: “In Ethiopia, there is 45 million optic rate (slaughtering 45 million livestock per year.) It has showcased that Ethiopia has huge livestock resource though does not gain significant advantage still.”

Ethiopia secures over...

substitute products within the Dire Dawa Free Trade Zone since the inception.

So far, over 2,300 citizens have obtained jobs working within the free trade zone, the corporation stated.

IPDC Chief Executive Officer Aklilu Tadesse said that investors with a capital of over six billion Birr have inked a memorandum of understanding with the corporation and are waiting for the approval of proclamation of special economic zone to start their work shortly.

The Dire Dawa Free Trade Zone facilitates regional and international integration in the area and it is part of African intercontinental free trade area that connects each country, he noted.

He elaborated that the free trade zone has suitable working environment to provide quality services for the investors and nearby community as it has the required infrastructures including electricity, water supply, shades, buildings, stores and warehouses.

According to Aklilu, additional 4,000 hectare of land will be included into the free trade zone.

He noted that Ethiopia has drawn lesson from successful countries to make the free trade zone competitive and effective.

He added, when the free trade zone operates with full capacity, it contributes a lot to the development of the nation by reducing inflation rate, increasing agricultural products and industrial inputs, and improving trade

Institute working...

Since the country's economic and social sectors are dependent on climate-action, Fetene elucidated that the government has given much emphasis to the aviation, agriculture and health sectors among others.

Hence, the institute is undertaking a project exceeding 1.3 billion Birr to provide reliable and efficient metrology service.

“The head quarter is said to be the first in Africa and the third globally and its construction is progressing well and projected to be completed in the coming two years,” he noted.

Moreover, he remarked that automatic weather stations, observation systems are already installed. Along with the universities, the institute is working on skilled manpower development to help accelerate and improve the metrology service provision.

As to Fetene, the center has been streamlining education and training centers to make it the leading excellence hub and center for technological knowledge transfer. Besides, it would not only serve the country but also for Africans to be one of the most influential hubs in the globe.

“We are also enhancing the capacities of

and logistics.

The free trade zone has been built on 150 hectares of land to make it convenient to exporters, importers, manufacturers and logistics and service providers, according to the CEO.

He expressed that the government is working on facilitating trade, industry, investment, employment opportunities.

Dire Dawa City Mayor, Kedir Juhar on his part said that the geographic position that located at the Ethio-Djibouti corridor makes the city a preferable trade zone.

The city has many transport alternatives such as railways, air transport and roads, he said adding that “We are ready to support the effectiveness of the free trade zone.”

regional metrology service centers which are situated in different regions,” he added.

The buildings cover 18,800 Sq.m at Bole Sub-City with the components of three halls with the capacity of hosting over 1,200 people at a time.

It is to be recalled that the institute along with various federal and regional stakeholders has recently endorsed to cascade the climate service framework to regional level.

The project, which is started in the past two year, is being carried out by Ethiopian contractors, it was learnt.

Ethiopia, China...

and China have cemented the historic relationship to the level of an “All-whether strategic cooperation partnership.”

The Ethiopian Herald has approached its diplomatic sources to get elaboration about the concept and merits of this partnership.

Ethiopia and China enjoy a long history of diplomatic relations in which recent official state visit by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) to China, his participation in the 3rd Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) Forum for International Cooperation is an excellent testimony to the strong diplomatic relations between the two sisterly countries, according to the sources.

The sources stated that all whether strategic cooperation partnership is a remarkable diplomatic relationship between China and all weather friendly country, characterized by high mutual trust and cooperation support.

The partnership is the second highest level of partnership in China's foreign policy framework carrying to significant implications, the sources said.

The partnership signifies an extra ordinary bond, the sources indicated noting that the two sustainably cooperate in a good and challenging times, ensuring a solid strategic partnership based on mutual benefit free from any conditionality.

According to our diplomatic sources, such partnership also implies the friendship that would not be disturbed by emerging situations of the two countries.

Documents indicated that Ethiopia is the only African country to enjoy such relations.

A joint statement published on the establishment of the Ethio-China all-weather strategic partnership indicated that the two nations reiterated firm support for each other in defending the core interests of national sovereignty and territorial integrity.

The two sides also decide to deepen cooperation on high-quality development of the Belt and Road Initiative as Ethiopia is willing to step up the synergy between its Ten Years Perspective Development Plan (2021-2030) and Homegrown Economic Reform, and the China-proposed BRI, it said.

Horn leaders...

“We need political leaders and statesmen who rise above this and understand that these are political operations. Some are carried out externally or internally. And the purpose is to prevent the development and sovereignty of African nations. I think the leaders of the nations in the region can sit down and discuss how the region will grow economically.”

“If we concentrate on putting forth the long-term economic growth program that benefits all the nations of the region, the leaders would come to agreement.”

We should also be able to counter those media and other internal and external enemies trying to create tensions between the neighboring countries.

There is no objective reason for countries in the Horn of Africa not to work together for common aims.

Discussions should, therefore, be considered among leaders, experts in the area, including economic experts, water experts and transportation specialists on access to the Red Sea, the analyst stated.

Freeman hopes that this can be done through discussion among sovereign leaders of nation states, including presidents and prime ministers, to deal with the problem.

Opinion

Exploiting the tourism potential to boost the nation's revenue

ABEBE WOLDEGIORGIS

Tourism has numerous characteristics that make it valuable as an agent for development. It is a driver for socio-economic progress and has considerable impact on local development trends. The sector generates multiple effects across many other economic activities in the tourism supply chain.

Culturally, Ethiopians show good attitude towards local and foreign guests. When they come across guests, they receive with embrace hand and let their home to the visitors to stay even leave their bed to the guests and sleep on floor and such cultural practice has continued for centuries.

Country's long tradition proved that Ethiopians show compassion to guests without expecting any return be it materially or emotionally. Even if they don't have financial capacity to host the guest, they resort to get loan from the neighbors to accommodate them. Sometimes, they spend what they save for time of hardship and assume entertaining visitors as a good chance in their life time.

During the last five years, the government has exerted remarkable effort to build and develop new tourist destinations in various parts of the country.

One can observe some of the tourism destinations in several parts of the capital. For instance, a new park is constructed on mount Entoto in the northern part of the city and numerous local and foreign guests visit the place particularly on the weekends. There are hotel accommodations, horse and bicycle riding places. There are also playing fields for children.

Besides, a visitor can see the entire city and impressed with its beauty by looking down wards from Entoto Park. The surrounding forest also captures vision of the visitor and adds happiness.

On top of serving as a tourist attraction, construction of the park there helps forest conservation works, and creates job opportunity to citizens. According to sources, the government allocated millions of Birr for the construction of the park and asphalt roads that heads to the park.

Unity Park constructed inside the compound of Menelik II palace is also boosting tourism. In the compound the historical site which served as residential place for Emperor Menelik II can be seen. The palace also served as a residential house for the consecutive leaders of the country: Emperor Hailesilassie I, President Mengistu Hailemariam, Prime Ministers Meles Zenawi, Hailemariam Desalegn and Abiy Ahmed (PhD).

The hall where the Kings were served meals is renewed and the place where they sat also renovated. In the park, a new habitat of plants and animals is also established and visitors can see different

wild animals including lions inside the zoo. Thus, The Park is generating income.

The other park located nearby the Unity Park known as "Friendship Park" also plays pivotal role in accommodating visitors, providing various outdoor services like wedding ceremonies and conferences so that it generates its own income. Particularly in the weekends, thousands of visitors enjoy the park. The park's captivating features such as its topography, artificial lake and the fountains add beauty to the park and pleasure to the visitors.

The government's initiation to construct such tourist attractions by allocating millions of Birr indicates how it is committed to boost the tourism sector.

More tourist attractions have also been constructed in different parts of the country during the last five years. The breathtaking landscapes of Koysha, Gorgora and Wonchi can be cited as good examples in this regard. Halala Kella, being a part of Koysha, has its own resort located in the superb of Gibe River artificial lake.

It has its own tangible heritage, the wall constructed by king Halala which covers 1225 square kilo meter and has 7 gets and residential palaces inside. The construction process of the wall took 200 years and constructed by seven generations' rally.

The Chebera Churchura Natural Park located in the east of Halala Kella in Konta zone is also one of the best tourist attractions. There are three lakes inside the park and wild animals such as African Elephant, hippopotamus, the endemic white fish found only in Ethiopia, crocodile and endemic birds. The Koysha Hydroelectric power generation dam is also under construction near the park. The number of tourists visiting the places is increasing from time to time.

In Konta and Dawro zones, there are various ethnic groups with their own cultures, languages, traditional dishes, and ways of dressing, haircut, singing and dancing, grief and funeral ceremonies. And these all are parts of the heritages which can be taken as asset for the tourism industry.

Wonchi Park located in the western Oromia zone which is under construction is expected to create job opportunity for many and boost the sector after its completion. The Gorgora Park located near Gondar town being constructed on the shore of Lake Tana eyeing its completion soon is also expected to boost the tourism industry.

Tourist attraction heritages should be protected and to this end, various measures should be taken and among others, educating the public to raise awareness is the primary task. Public awareness should be created sustainably

and might be vary depending on the nature of the sites. Awareness creating training toward preserving the heritages should be provided to the elders and local community leaders because they have their own understanding regarding the heritages including knowledge inherited through oral literature. In addition, the training should be given to the kebele officials, principals of the nearby schools and other influential figures.

In such a way, it is easy to approach the whole community members and enables raise their awareness. Organizing heritage clubs in the surrounding villages may also contribute to the conservation.

Creating enabling environment to the community members to participate in the tourism development through informing the plan and making them beneficial from the sector is vital because it creates belongingness and helps to build positive attitude towards tourism and the tourists. Recently, Ambassador Nasise Chali, Minister of Tourism announced that tourist destinations built by the government and the private sector is improving the flow of tourists to Ethiopia.

The Minister stated that the nation has now been able to return the tourism sector to the position it had before the outbreak of COVID-19. The mid-term implementation of the first phase of the 10-year perspective development plan and the second phase of the mid-term plan to be implemented from 2016-2018 were reviewed and their weakness and strength were discussed with stake holders.

During the occasion, Nasise pointed out that activities carried out over the past 10 years in the tourism sector have not been as desired mainly due to COVID-19 and security issues. However, better achievements have also been registered in the development of the sector in the concluded Ethiopian budget year as the nation was able to return the flow of tourists to what it was before the outbreak of COVID-19.

In this regard, the contribution of tourist destinations built by the government and the private sector in various parts of the country is huge. The Minister also disclosed the plan of constructing 10 new tourist destinations over the coming ten years, in addition to renovating the existing ones by engaging the private sector. She further stated that promoting tourist destinations under construction will be intensified.

The Minister pointed out that over the coming years, a great deal of attention will be given to intensify tourism conference by using Ethiopia's comparative advantage as a seat of African Union and many international offices and diplomatic residences.

However, expanding tourism sites should go in line with the stretching of infrastructure such as roads, hotels,

electric power, piped water, travel agents, vehicles, internet services, telephone services and the exchange centers of local currency with foreign currency.

As it is known in Ethiopia, in addition to natural tourist destination, there are cultural and religious sites which have been visited for many years. These include the Axum obelisk, the Lalibela rock hewn churches, the Gondar Palace, the Sof oumar cave, the Jugol wall in Harar and ancient mosques to mention but a few.

But there is a gap in infrastructure provision. Power interruption is also a common problem in various parts of the country which again negatively affects internet connection. The absence of standardized lodges, sufficient water and sanitation services have their own drawbacks on tourism business. It is true that currently the government is working energetically to enhance the nation's electric power generation capacity.

In the last two decades' for example, the government has been constructing hydropower dams in various parts of the country and some of them are completed and others are under construction and when the construction is completed, the power supply to the main grid will be increased by many fold. Some of the problems related to the power interruption are expected to be resolved soon. It was learned that five turbines of the Abbay Dam will be operational this year and expected to ease the chronic problem related to energy supply.

The old roads which lack maintenance largely contribute for the damages of vehicles and this again discourages travel agents and refrains to continue their business in the sector.

Side by side with these, the deteriorating security situation in various parts of the country is harming the sector. Travel agents refrained to drive car towards the tourist sites threatened by unexpected violence eruption. The reduction of the number of tourists who would be hosted in four star hotels in the capital due to the security reasons left the hotel owners to uncertainty.

Be it is, the sector's performance is encouraging. According to the recent World Tourism Organization report, domestic and international visitors spend remarkable amount of money which is injected in the Ethiopian economy has reached USD 2.4 billion. It greatly supports to accelerate the Ethiopian GDP. The Ethiopian travel and tourism industry represented 7% of total GDP in 2019. This economic activity supported the nation by creating 2 million jobs, it was learned.

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

Editorial

Excelling in diplomatic endeavors

Through aligning its interests with many countries and playing laudable roles at regional and international levels, Ethiopia has maintained its diplomatic relations with many nations across the globe. For instance, from early days, it played a leading role through contributing to United Nations peacekeeping efforts; most of its troops served in Darfur, South Sudan, Congo and the like following the decision of the Security Council to allow the UN military presence in these areas to restore order and peace.

Indeed, Ethiopia has consistently been cultivating its relations with the East, West and Global South nations, recognizing the mutual benefits can be gained through international cooperation. The current circumstances of the globe demand nations to strengthen their relations to the extent they ought to collaborate to manage the growing global challenges.

Ethiopia prudently appreciates the necessity of working with any nation across the globe for the benefits of its peoples and that of others. Recently, the leaders of Ethiopia and Venezuela have agreed to improve their diplomatic relations in various areas of common interests. Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) and Yvan Gil Pinto, the Foreign Minister of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, met to discuss ways to advance the bilateral relations between the two countries. Interestingly, the discussions of the two leaders established ways for the two countries to reach common understandings that enable them to improve and diversify diplomatic cooperation in many areas.

Moreover, during their discussion the Foreign Minister of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Demeke Mekonnen agreed to excel in the bilateral relations. Demeke said, "It is high time to deepen the historic traditional relations with Venezuela," commending Venezuela's principled and consistent support to Ethiopia in various multilateral forums while Foreign Minister Yvan Gil Pinto said that his country is keen to work closely with Ethiopia in agriculture, education, tourism, energy and health.

Furthermore, its recent move to sign eight million Euros financing agreements with the Republic of Ireland has marked a new diplomatic era of Ethiopia. At the signing ceremony, Finance Minister Ahmed Shide commended the long standing diplomatic relations between the two nations. Certainly, the ceremony plays a praiseworthy role in revitalizing and advancing the relations considerably. In the last couple of decades, previous leaders of Ethiopia met the leaders of the Republic of Ireland to discuss ways to cultivate relations in trade, tourism, education and investment; and various achievements that boosted the benefits of the people of both sides were registered.

In sum, Ethiopia has been working to improve and reach its diplomatic relations to a new height with neighboring and other African, Asian, Western countries. Ethiopia's principled diplomatic efforts are bearing fruits since it focuses on four main pillars including ascertaining sovereignty and territorial integrity of the country, promoting national interest, economic diplomacy and citizen centered diplomacy. Regardless of the incessant changes in global circumstances, Ethiopia has always maintained its historic and long standing relationships through applying the age-old international principles of peaceful coexistence and non-interference into the internal affairs of other countries. Most importantly, Prime Minister Abiy's leadership has been carrying out very crucial diplomatic moves that have improved partnership with the neighboring countries and beyond. All these and other moves have excelled nation's various diplomatic relations.



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The Ethiopian Herald

Opinion

From human race to humanoid...

BY MENGESHA AMARE

If wealth is combined, collective thoughts are injected into sacred deeds and firm stance is attached to helping human beings regardless of race, color, religion, place of origin, social status, among others, so the saying goes, 'A mere being of a human race is sufficient to support humanoid,' creating a universe devoid of hunger, sufferings and misery would be at everyone's palm.

This time around a number of people across the globe have forcibly swallowed morsels of sufferings and jeopardies as a result of myriads of factors such as conflict, drought, emanate from lack of food supply, which in turn has been resulted from shortage of rain and other related push or pull factors.

People reside in such perilous galaxies have to be well backed and humanitarian assistance should be well intensified with a view to coming up with the realm without poverty, hunger and human miseries.

True, poverty and human rights such as the right to food and social security are interrelated and must be cherished. Sadly, though the right to adequate food is a universally accorded essential human right, hundreds of thousands of millions of persons remain food insecure these days across globe though the degree varies. Ethiopia is not exceptional in this regard as some parts of it have been entangled with a range of problems.

Yes, poverty and growing inequality is one of the underlying causes of food insecurity, and the former erodes the rights to adequate food, housing, health, safe water, education and other basic necessities.

Since social protection is attested to play a key role in the progressive realization of the right to adequate food for all, humanitarian aid and other charity supplies in areas which lack rain should be expanded to preclude the existence of hunger and poverty. These humanitarian aids, though not sufficient, can contribute a lot to the effort geared towards hunger and poverty eradication.

Hence, all humanitarian aid suppliers, development partners, charity organizations and all concerned have to move in unison with a view to addressing poverty and associated challenges to the right to food and social security for specific groups targeting women, indigenous peoples and farmers.

Sustained high levels of food assistances are preventing more extreme outcomes in northern and pastoral Ethiopia, for instance, although humanitarian assistance needs remain outpaced by the scale and severity of need.

Taking the significance of support to help citizens in drought affected areas, the sustained provision of significant levels of humanitarian assistance remains critical in a bid to mitigate the severity of food

consumption gaps, acute malnutrition, and mortality in Ethiopia and beyond.

Undeniably, moderate economic recovery has been witnessed in northern Ethiopia since the signing of the Cessation of Hostilities agreement as income-earning opportunities are made widely available. The very point that needs to be well comprehended in this regard is in the absence of humanitarian food assistance, poor households are likely to face widening consumption deficits or engage in severe coping strategies such as begging and developing void hope waiting for others helping hands. Such societal challenges must be addressed by the combined effort of all, indeed!

Lack of rainfall, successive years of severe flooding, protracted and episodic conflicts and other related factors have deeply eroded household resilience in Ethiopia and the Horn Region. All these and the not yet cited factors must be abated using the amalgamated effort of all concerned as Ethiopia and the Horn have accommodated a paradoxical scenario: endowed with multifaceted resources and severely prone to somber impacts of hunger and drought.

Besides, as some parts of the Horn of Africa have been is in the grip of the worst drought since recently, heightening food insecurity and causing increasingly widespread displacement, an imperative and resourceful humanitarian response is crucial so as to avoid large-scale deterioration throughout the region.

Unequivocally, the unparalleled impacts of multiple failed rainy seasons are threatening the safe life leading aspects of the affected areas due to cumulative shocks born to conflict and insecurity, extreme weather conditions, climate change, among others.

Although the Horn of Africa has experienced climate-induced crises for decades, the impact of the current drought on the arid and semi-arid lands in the region has been grim. Hence, there is a high risk of famine and malnutrition as the food security situation is rapidly deteriorating.

In addition to this, displacement into major cities will overwhelm critical services such as health care, increasing exposure to infection, and leading to disease outbreaks and other major concerns related to lack of health services.

Large-scale emergency humanitarian assistance, as immediate needs, food, water, sanitation and hygiene, health, non-food items, livelihood and conflict management interventions must be focused on.

All in all, in the longer term, the need to increase disaster preparedness and climate change adaptation collectively has to come to the forefront as prioritizing inclusive and neutral access to humanitarian assistance is the call of the day to globally save lives!

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

Business & Economy

Special economic zones that multiply investment inflow

BY BACHA ZEWDIE

Establishing Special Economic Zones (SEZs) is one of the procedures that countries implement to make their national development sustainable by increasing their investment sector. For their contribution in creating job opportunities; the expansion of domestic logistics industry; inflow of foreign direct investment; transfer of technology, and the important role they play in increasing the skills of professionals and workers and reducing inflation; as well as the significant benefits they contribute to the smoothing of export and import trade and the improvement of the national economy in general, countries establish and expand special economic zones.

The development of free economic zones is necessary for the success of “Agenda 2063”, which aims to bring about economic integration, as well as agricultural development, food security, industrial development and economic structural change, which is crucial to bring about a continental market with free movement of people, capital, goods and services as mentioned in the founding document of African Free Trade Zone agreement.

In addition, it was pointed out in the document that free economic zones play an important role in creating and expanding a guaranteed market for goods and services in the member countries of the agreement, in order to establish sufficient infrastructure for trade and investment, as well as by reducing or removing taxes step by step and removing non-tax barriers that hinder trade and investment.

Ethiopia, which has a large population and other potential resources including land, has been repeatedly said to have lost the economic benefits that should be gained from the development of these regions due to its delay in establishing special economic zones. It has been said that some of the obstacles that have tied the feet of the country’s economic activities can be solved by the benefits of special economic zones.

Therefore, since establishing special economic zones is necessary to increase the benefits of the country, works to develop the zones have been started. The Dire Dawa Free Trade Zone, which was inaugurated on 14 August, 2022, is part of this effort.

Besides, the “Addis Tomorrow” special economic zone to be built in Addis Ababa city and the “Geda” special economic zone to be built in the Oromia region are part of the construction of special economic zones at the national level. The “Addis Tomorrow” Special Economic Zone, which will be built on 35 hectares, is a huge project to be constructed by Addis Ababa City Administration and the Chinese “First Highway Engineering Group”. It includes science and technology Park, business and commercial, residential and entertainment centers.

In its 11th regular meeting held on 2nd September, 2022, the FDRE Council of Ministers discussed the draft policy document of the National Special Economic Zone and unanimously decided to put the policy into effect. The decision was made because it is important to create enabling conditions for Ethiopia to be an active participant and



beneficiary of the international and regional trade network which is rapidly expanding and developing from time to time, and has a significant contribution to national economic growth.

It is also stated that the policy will improve the country’s export trade system; increase the attractiveness of foreign direct investment; enhance export trade capacity; create wide job opportunities and realize systems that will help to expand dry ports in the country’s main trade corridors and streamline logistics services.

According to Assistant Professor Habtamu Girma, a lecturer in Economics at Jigjiga University and a PhD student at Ibadan University, Special Economic Zones contribute significantly to job creation, production supply and foreign exchange earnings by increasing investment. The main objectives of these regions are to create employment opportunities and increase production and productivity, expand export trade and increase foreign exchange earnings, and attract capital and technology.

Special economic zones have their own production location/scope, administrative system, and tax laws and customs system. The regions will increase the number of entities engaged in transportation and logistics, raw material supply, and product supply and marketing activities. This is an indication that the development of special economic zones is directly related to the growth of investment.

As to him, special economic zones encourage private and public investments and allow the investment sector to grow. On the other hand, special economic zones are in need of extensive infrastructure development, so the government can engage in infrastructural investment and create an opportunity to stimulate government investment. In general, special economic zones create favorable opportunities for investors, so investors will be motivated to engage in investment sectors.

Mola Alemayehu (PhD), a professor of economics at Haramaya University and a senior researcher at “Frontier” research and consulting firm, explained that Special Economic Zones are established through specific procedures

in selected areas that have potential for the development of the sectors. These regions will be established with the aim of attracting investment capital and will have their own commercial, tax and other laws.

They have a significant role in attracting investment capital and foreign direct investment. They allow for a meaningful increase in investment flow by increasing production and productivity, creating job opportunities and making technology transfer a reality. As the regions are working according to the procedures that are favorable for investment growth, they are economic growth areas that create a favorable opportunity to grow the investment sector.

“Special economic zones are designed and put into operation to attract foreign direct investment. Their overall objective is to boost the national economy by attracting investment. They are places that are organized to attract investors in a better way,” he said. Recalling that China is the leader in the field of special economic development, he mentioned that other Asian and South American countries are also showing great progress in this field.

Because of the legal procedures applied in special economic zones are simplified and reduced bureaucratic complications, they make it relatively easy for investors to engage in investment activities. Investors, importers and exporters and organizations working in the free trade zone will benefit from various incentives. This will play a significant role in increasing domestic and foreign direct investment.

Stating that the trade (tax and customs) rules in special economic zones are different from other business practices and rules, Assistant Professor Habtamu explained that investors who work in the zones will benefit from tax reduction and a simple and convenient customs system.

For his part, Dr. Mola said, “One of the benefits of special opportunities for investors in different economic zones is the benefit of tax relief and discounts.” They also enjoy tariff reduction and benefit from better infrastructural provisions. In general, as the regions contain attractive benefits for investors, they encourage

the participation of investors.

He further said that Ethiopia has favorable conditions and opportunities to realize the development of a special economic zone as it has a favorable climate, a lot of manpower, and potential natural resources. He recommended that advanced preparations should be made.

“When foreign investors come to Ethiopia, they come from better developed countries with better service delivery, law and bureaucracy, so the service delivery should be made efficient and modern.” The monitoring and control system should be strengthened. When laws are amended, it is necessary to ensure that there are no loopholes and that they are convenient to work. In general, there is a need to make an effort to establish a quality system,” he said, noting that the effectiveness of the development of special economic zones requires a great deal of effort.

Assistant Professor Habtamu, for his part, stressed that the experiences Ethiopia has taken from other countries in the implementation of the development of special economic zones should be looked at in depth. When special economic zones are established, land invasions and unjustified land price increases may occur, so there is a need to develop strict legal frameworks and establish a strong control and monitoring system.

He also recommend that enhancing peace and security should not be forgotten and that the Ministry of Trade and Regional Cooperation, the Ethiopian Investment Commission, other trade and investment sector institutions and the administrative bodies of the areas where the Special Economic Zones will be established should work together on the overall operation of the zones.

The fact that Ethiopia is far away from the system of special economic zone that provides many benefits has deprived it of many benefits. It cannot be denied that lack of these benefits and opportunities had a negative impact on her overall development. Therefore, it is necessary to strengthen the efforts that have been started to establish special economic zones so that the national economic development can register a meaningful change.

Art & Culture

From Ubuntu to Gacaca-The Culture of African Peacemaking, Reconciliation

BY MULUGETA GUDETA

It may take little imagination to visualize how traditional African societies were more peaceful and more stable than the so-called modern ones. Of course there are tons of researches to support our contention that traditional Africans lived in peace and tranquility in the respective villages and that the level of conflict was at its lowest and inter-tribal wars were rarities. There was relatively little to worry about or fight for in terms of the acquisition of property or the conquest of territories near or far. "The major sources of conflicts in traditional African societies were land, chieftaincy, family property, honor, murder or matrimonial fall outs."

That does not however mean traditional African societies were similar to the peace and happiness that we imagine can only be found in a heavenly environment. However, the little misunderstandings that emerged here and there were about a small plot of grazing land or water wells that belong to this or that tribe while the majority of the people were not even aware of such trivialities. Foreign invasions were fiercely resisted while local conflicts, which grew with the growth of society, were dealt with traditional methods that were set up in case of emergency. "The methods of performing conflict resolution in the traditional African societies are as follows: mediation, adjudication, reconciliation, arbitration and negotiation."

Meanwhile, there were also events of historic proportions that disrupted peace and stability in traditional African communities in a big way and had to be dealt with self-defense and force. African people have never in their history gone out to conquer Europe or America while Europeans were consistently infringing upon the freedom and territorial integrity of African tribes that were then considered backward and even barbaric. The purpose of sending missionaries to Africa back in the 18th and 19th century was nothing else but to perform a "civilizing mission" by imposing European values on the traditional tribes that were living quietly before the arrival of conquerors with the Bible and then with guns.

There was no international law at that time with which conquests could be regulated and managed legally. Military superiority was the only weapons Europeans used to evict traditional communities from their tribal homelands and build settlements exactly the way European conquered the lands of Red Indians after the discovery of America by Christopher Columbus, as both were affected through brutal methods and with iron and fire. The basis for the Western idea of "might is right" which was widely practiced in subsequent centuries can be found in the moment of the white man's decision to conquer the whole world and the peripheral lands in particular under various pretexts. Colonialism

Both Ubuntu and the Gaccaca court system have demonstrated that Africans are capable of evolving their own systems for overcoming conflicts and achieving peace building

was thus born from this process and radically changed the physiognomy traditional African societies as well as the relationships between the conquering white settlers and the conquered tribal communities.

Although the colonial experience in Africa is solidly documented by the Europeans themselves, its disrupting effects were also portrayed in many works by African writers in the 20th century, that is to say, following the independence of African countries that lived under the yoke of colonialism for many centuries. "Things Fall Apart", the classic novel by Nigerian writer Chinua Achebe is considered the best work of fiction that portrayed the colonial incursion in Nigeria and its effects on traditional tribal African communities in ways that no other writer had done it before him.

Although European colonialism left the continent relatively late, its consequences lingered long after its departure and down to this day, changing forms and evolving into different expressions. One of the political impacts of colonialism on African communities was the distribution of power and privileges along tribal lines and the emergence of African political elites that fought over irreconcilable territorial claims and counter-claims and the often controversial nature of the division of power among the local elites.

Thus, in the post-colonial period and after assuming independence, many African countries, were plagued by conflicts that erupted as a result of the colonial arrangements by European powers. The process of allocating power and privileges to the local elites and tribal leaders that was often deeply unfair created the basis for subsequent conflicts and even civil wars. Again, Nigeria during 1967-1970 is the best example of civil war that erupted after the country's independence from British colonialism and the contradictory tribal claims for power that led to the civil war. Again a young Nigerian writer by the name Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie took up her pen to chronicle the Nigerian civil war and publishing her book entitled "Half of a

Yellow Sun" more than half a century after the Biafra war.

Rwanda is another, more contemporary, case of a tragedy resulting from Belgian colonial rule that favored one tribe against another and created the conflict that claimed more than a million lives in just one hundred days. Attributing all the evils of African tribalism to colonialism would not only be unfair but would also be tantamount to underestimating or denying the role played African local elites in the development of bloody political disputes that led to genocides. It is also a pity that the role of elites in fomenting and nurturing tribal conflicts was acknowledged long after the damage was done in Rwanda, Burundi and other post-colonial African societies.

The failure of African elites to use their learning in order to find rational solutions to tribal conflicts was and is the single most serious mistake or shortcoming that led to genocides although there was enough local knowledge and wisdom that could be used to stem the tide of civil conflicts through dialogue. Again, this too was acknowledged lately. Africans have plenty of traditional conflict resolution alternatives to choose from in order to overcome past and current challenges. "Negotiation, mediation and arbitration often called ADR, Alternative Dispute Resolution, are the most well-known. Whether you are involved in a family or neighborhood disputes...these processes should be considered."

Among the traditional conflict resolution tools, religion in Africa occupies a rather prominent place as the people are deeply religious or deeply spiritual. "African religion's behavior is centered mainly on the human person or his or her life in this world." With the consequence that religion is clearly functional or means to serve people to acquire earthly goods (life, health, fecundity, wealth, power and the like) and to maintain social cohesion and order."

Traditional African societies are thus rich in traditional religions or belief systems that could be leveraged for peace building and preventing devastating conflicts. Once again, the task of creating a genuinely African peace and conflict resolution architecture squarely falls on the shoulder of the educated elites that could use their learning to address one of Africa's nagging problems. African political elites largely shunned African traditional systems of conflict prevention and conflict resolution in the past. They tried and failed to implement the so-called modern systems of conflict management that were invented in academic circles outside Africa and this has led to an inward-looking process of seeking solutions within Africa at the last resort. One example of this is Ubuntu, "which is a south African philosophy which teaches that all humans are deeply interconnected." According to available

information, "The five core values of Ubuntu are, "survival, spirit of solidarity, compassion, respect and dignity" these are African values that were already present in traditional communities where the struggle for common survival required the prevalence of mutual assistance and support while the communities had hierarchical relationships and put human dignity at the center of their thinking. Ubuntu may be seen as an attempt to modernize the philosophy of African communal principles and extend its fields of application.

Ubuntu has also elements of religious morality and humanism because, "The spirit of Ubuntu is essentially to be humane and ensure that human dignity is always at the core of your actions, thoughts, and deeds when interacting with others. Having Ubuntu is showing care and concern for your neighbor."

The other recently popular thinking concerns what is known as the Gaccaca court system that emerged in the wake of Rwanda's 1994 genocide in order to handle the cases of alleged genocide perpetrators. "In the Gaccaca system, communities at the local level elected judges to hear the trials of genocide suspects accused of all crimes except planning of genocide. The courts gave lower sentences if the person is repentant and sought reconciliation with the community."

The Gaccaca system was effective in preventing post-genocide retributions or revenges in Rwanda in the last 30 years. It has allowed the country to leave behind its bloody past and embark on a new course of reconciliation that has allowed it to catch up with its economic development priorities by unifying all citizens in a collective pact to forgive all those involved in the genocide except the leaders and planners. In this way Gaccaca has allowed Rwanda to set a good example of reconciliation and collective catharsis comparable to the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission that help overcome racial hatred and the need for retribution.

Both Ubuntu and the Gaccaca court system have demonstrated that Africans are capable of evolving their own systems for overcoming conflicts and achieving peace building. There are also many such resources available in many African countries that are dealing with reconciliation and reconstruction of communities upset by high or low level conflicts. It is up to African intellectuals to try to unearth these instruments of peace building that are forgotten and bring them to life in such a way as to make them useful in the ongoing challenges. Africa will have to rediscover the old traditions of peace and humanity that had been undermined by colonialism and so far ignored by the educated elites that have been busy searching for solutions from outside Africa.

Indepth

Big changes coming to the World Bank-but it's not enough

It is official: The World Bank officially has a mission to combat climate change. At least on paper. This week, the World Bank governing body approved a new vision statement that clarifies that the Bank can tackle climate change as part of its mission to alleviate global poverty on “a livable planet.” Also this week, the new World Bank President Ajay Banga suggested that he’ll be considering redirecting subsidies away from fossil fuels and towards climate action.

This is not nearly enough. The World Bank is still funneling billions of dollars to the fossil fuel industry each year, through direct and indirect finance mechanisms. Urgewald estimates that they funded \$3.7 billion towards oil and gas last year. This is despite the fact that they’ve made a commitment to align with the Paris Climate Agreement and do what it takes to keep global warming under 1.5 degrees Celsius. In order to do so, experts with the International Energy Agency warned that there is ‘no room’ for new fossil fuel development if we’re going to reach this goal.

The IEA also said that fossil fuel subsidies are an inefficient way to help consumers. Yet despite this, Banga admitted he didn’t plan to “get rid of all” fossil fuel subsidies. Just that the topic “needs discussion.”

Still – it’s hard to imagine this new vision statement coming out one year ago, under the helm of former climate change-denying president David Malpass. After his climate change denial caused public outrage—and protests around the world—he stepped down, and US President Joe Biden appointed a new president. Banga started with a clear societal mandate to accelerate climate action at the World Bank. He was given a 100-day plan to end fossil fuel finance, fund a just and green transition, and promote transparency.

Last week, Banga’s opportunity arrived during the World Bank Group and International Monetary Fund Annual Meetings in Marrakech. The first meetings run by Banga after months of him talking up his climate change credentials.

Organizations from around the world teamed up with local Moroccan activists to put on the pressure. It started before the meetings began, with billboards blanketing the city. They had two key demands: End Fossil Finance and Drop the Debt.

Why end fossil finance?

Because the World Bank, despite its commitments to the Paris Climate Agreement, has continued funneling billions of dollars to fossil fuel projects through direct and indirect mechanisms.

And why drop the debt?

Because global debt is at a decades-long high, with people in 54 countries currently living in debt crisis, and unless these colonial



It's true that the world needs vastly more funding into clean energy industries if we are to transition to a sustainable economy. We need funding that helps those in need, not harms

debt deals can be fixed, many developing countries can’t afford to invest in the climate solutions they so desperately need.

The action continued all week long. On the first day of the meetings, we stood outside the meeting venue to greet every World Bank delegate on their way inside. Many groups joined the meetings and delivered a petition to Banga himself, with 40,000 people calling on him to end fossil finance.

Last Thursday, hundreds marched through the streets of Marrakech. And on the final day of the conference, activists returned to the conference venue for one last rousing rally and day of action. Meanwhile, the Bank must consider the intertwined relationship between debt relief for developing nations and environmental sustainability. Offering debt relief can free up resources, enabling these nations to explore and invest in green technologies.

This would not only aid in their fight against climate change but also propel them toward a sustainable economic trajectory. Banga has outlined a few steps to greatly increase funding that can flow through the World Bank.

But we must make sure such increased

funding doesn’t continue to force developing countries into deals they can never get out of. It’s true that the world needs vastly more funding into clean energy industries if we are to transition to a sustainable economy. We need funding that helps those in need, not harms.

The World Bank acknowledging that it must do its job on a “livable planet” is the absolute bare minimum. It’s like an employee setting his printer on fire but telling his manager, “At least I didn’t burn the whole office down.”

Decades after the world’s top scientists have agreed that climate change is an existential threat; the Bank has a place for climate change in its vision statement. But what is a vision without a plan? And what is a plan on a dead planet?

The protestors have done their part, articulating a vision for a greener, fairer world economy. The ball now lies firmly in the court of institutions like the World Bank. As the drums of activism fade and the placards are put away, the world awaits their next move. What will it be?

(SOURCE: INTER PRESS SERVICE)

Law & Politics

A visit that elevates Ethio-China ties

BY EYUEL KIFLU

Diplomatic works in the last year have already placed Ethiopia back to world stage with the country joined BRICS alliance in what could be described as the pinnacle of success. The membership marked a boost in the nation's diplomatic clout after a difficult two years.

The country's relation with other countries has seen significant changes lately, a stark difference than it was years ago when the country had to enter in a diplomatic row with some countries that sought to unleash unwarranted pressure on the former. Addis has still maintained mammoth position in regional and global arenas and continues to position itself as major power player with nations increasingly becoming enthusiast to forge strong ties with the Africa's capital.

Strong diplomatic relations with the international communities means increased economic integration, trade exchange and financial support. The Ethiopian government in this regard has been trying to strike a balance in its relation with all its partners. Since recently, the country has been consolidating its cooperation with BRICS members, and its ties with Beijing have been gaining momentum.

Over the years, the all rounded cooperation between Ethiopia and China has been cemented with officials of the two countries making visits on frequent basis. Lately, Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) travelled to China showcasing the long-standing relationship between both countries. The delegation led by the premier had a fruitful stay in China on the side-line of the Third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation (BRF). The delegation signed many cooperative agreements with the Chinese government.

Ethiopia and China have strong relations in different sectors. Many Chinese companies are working in Ethiopia, especially in the construction sector. Different Ethiopia's megaprojects are run and built by Chinese companies and loans.

Reports show that the countries relation is not only economical, but the countries also signed a military cooperation agreement that covers training, technology exchange, and joint peacekeeping missions.

Also, according to China's Ministry of Commerce, Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) during the last 26 years, the exports of China to Ethiopia have increased at an annual rate of 17.9%, from \$38.5 million in 1995 to \$2.8 billion in 2021. In 2021, Ethiopia exported \$148 million to China.

The other thing is that Ethiopia is also benefiting from BRI's in infrastructure financing and building and its many manufacturing enterprises. It is reported that the Belt and Road cooperation has extended from the Eurasian continent to Africa and Latin America. More than 150 countries and over 30 international organizations have signed Belt and Road cooperation documents.

At a recent press briefing held in connection with the Third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation (BRF, Chinese Ambassador to Ethiopia Zhao Zhinyuan emphasized the success of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed's and his delegation's visit. The visit, which took place after a four-year gap since 2019, saw the Ethiopian delegation visit Beijing, Shanghai, and Chengdu. During the visit, Abiy expressed his admiration for the development he witnessed in Shanghai and Chengdu and pledged to send teams for further cooperation.

The Ambassador outlined three key achievements of the visit, such as President Xi Jinping and Prime Minister Abiy's joint statement between the two countries on the establishment of an all-weather strategic partnership, underscoring the commitment of both nations to strengthen their bilateral ties.

Also, the visit served to enhance high-level exchanges and political mutual trust between the countries. President Xi expressed China's support for Ethiopia in safeguarding its sovereignty, security, and other interests. Both sides pledged to continue strengthening solidarity and cooperation, providing unwavering support on issues involving each other's core interests and major concerns.

Additionally, the visit aimed to deepen practical cooperation between the countries across various fields. The two countries expressed their determination to collaborate under frameworks such as the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC). They emphasized their commitment to supporting Ethiopia's post-war reconstruction and economic revitalization, with a focus on green development and the implementation of the Global Development Initiative. During the visit, Premier Li Qiang and Prime Minister Abiy witnessed the signing of 12 Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) and 2 letters of intent covering areas such as Belt and Road cooperation, agriculture, culture, health, the digital economy, green development, and urban and infrastructure construction.

The Chinese ambassador also expressed the embassy's eagerness to collaborate with all stakeholders in Ethiopia to implement the important outcomes of the visit. He also discussed the recent BRF, which was organized by the Chinese government to mark the tenth anniversary of President Xi Jinping's proposal for the Belt and Road Initiative.

The BRF featured three high-level forums focusing on the digital economy, connectivity, and green development. With the attendance of over 10,000 representatives from 151 countries and 41 international organizations, the event showcased the global appeal and influence of Belt and Road cooperation. During the BRF, Prime Minister Abiy addressed both the forum and the high-level forum on connectivity, sharing the successes of the Belt and Road Initiative in Ethiopia and

quality development.

The forum envisioned realizing global modernization through joint efforts. The Belt and Road Initiative was recognized as a platform for common development, enabling developing countries to accelerate their path to modernization.

President Xi proposed the pursuit of global modernization through the joint efforts of all countries, promoting peaceful development and mutually beneficial cooperation for shared prosperity.

He added that the forum was characterized by its action-oriented, efficient, and pragmatic approach. Concrete actions were emphasized as essential to advancing Belt and Road cooperation. President Xi announced eight major steps that China will take to support high-quality Belt and Road cooperation, including the establishment of a multidimensional Belt and Road connectivity network, support for an open world economy, practical cooperation, green development, scientific and technological innovation, people-to-people exchanges, integrity-based cooperation, and institutional building for international Belt and Road cooperation.

Prime Minister Abiy welcomed these eight steps and expressed his country's commitment to working with China to carry forward the Silk Road spirit and foster a new era of Belt and Road cooperation, the ambassador added.

The press briefing also acknowledged Ethiopia's active participation in the Initiative on International Trade and Economic Cooperation Framework for Digital Economy and Green Development during the Belt and Road Forum.

The Chinese side highly appreciated Ethiopia's engagement, recognizing the significance of digital and green transitions in global economic and social transformation. China expressed its willingness to strengthen cooperation with Ethiopia in these areas, based on mutual respect and in accordance with Ethiopia's needs, capacity, and willingness.

Furthermore, the briefing highlighted President Xi Jinping's announcement of the Global AI Governance Initiative during the Belt and Road Forum. The Initiative, recognized as a blueprint for the development of artificial intelligence (AI) governance, aims to promote the healthy and sustainable development of AI technology. Ethiopia expressed its support for the initiative and its readiness to actively participate in discussions and cooperation related to AI governance.

It also highlighted the successful visit of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed to China and the strengthened cooperation between the two nations. The establishment of an All-Weather Strategic Partnership, the signing of multiple agreements, and the active participation of Ethiopia in the Belt and Road Forum showcased the commitment of both countries to deepening their bilateral ties and promoting mutually beneficial cooperation in various fields.

The forum envisioned realizing global modernization through joint efforts. The Belt and Road Initiative was recognized as a platform for common development, enabling developing countries to accelerate their path to modernization

further promoting practical cooperation between the two nations.

Ambassador Zhao said the BRF held successfully in unity, cooperation, openness, and win-win outcomes, which were highlighted as the clearest message from the forum. President Xi stressed the significance of win-win cooperation and the Silk Road spirit of peace, cooperation, openness, inclusiveness, mutual learning, and mutual benefit as the driving force behind Belt and Road cooperation.

Also, the forum aimed to usher in a new stage of high-quality Belt and Road cooperation. China pledged to collaborate with all participating parties to deepen partnerships and elevate cooperation to a higher level of

Women in Focus

Harmonizing motherhood with art needs extra energy

BY LEULSEGED WORKU

Fetlework Tadesse, a mother of three, was born and grew here in Addis Ababa. Her passion to art was started at her early age when she used to perform dance at her school to her classmates.

In course of time, her desire to art grew and in her latter days, it started manifesting itself both in the form of acting and visual art, which is now becoming part and parcel of her daily life.

Fetlework is a well talented artist who reflects her philosophy through her artistically made creative works. Lately, *The Ethiopian Herald* had moments of togetherness to discuss about her creative works, the challenges and opportunities of being an artist and a mother.

According to Fetlework, being an artist and a mother at the same time needs extra energy and passion. If not, it would not be easy to keep on walking on the same paces.

“I never see motherhood differently from art. For me, both of them have their own place in my life; and I think I am executing my responsibility accordingly and effectively. As a mother, I am a passionate woman who gives all of her time and energies to her children and as a woman artist, I also give my time and energy to my art works” she said.

According to her, it was at the time that she was a student at art school she got married. And even while she was pregnant, she did not give up on painting. In the same way, when she regained her strength after giving birth, she kept on engaging in her art works. But this does not mean that her daily house chores did not consume her time that should be used for art or, it does not mean that balancing motherhood with art is as such a simple task. “I sometimes found myself busying in the kitchen, buying goods in the market or handling other tasks. These were times that I quitted art for some time and gave my full time to my family. There were also times that I spent most of my time engaging in art and discuss with individuals in the art business.

Whenever I feel stacked and could not handle the art and my children simultaneously, I put my burdens on my families, particularly my mother is more supportive and the one I rely on heavily in this regard. This is also one of the virtues that we, Ethiopian women, are blessed with. The culture of helping each other in need of support is still fresh. This is particularly true in times where a woman feels busy and overstrained.”

When she replied who her role model is for the success she has achieved now and the strength and wisdom of mothers in Ethiopia, Fetlework said: “I believe my mother is my role model. As a single mother who has given her full time and energy for her children, my mother is an inspiration for me in every step of



Artist Fetlework Tadesse



my life. She is the one who shaped my character.”

According to Fetlework, every mother is born with extra energy to handle challenges within her families. This energy will not be diminished in her late ages. She even became wiser in dealing with family issues. “Our mothers are good examples to this. As a pure gold tested by fire, Ethiopian mothers, the

more they got older, the more they will be strong and wise. That is why in most cases they are considered as the pillars of their families. They have the strength to pass through a storm that may have a power to destroy their family. They also know the secret of managing their families even though they did not go to schools or taking courses.”

Patience is one secret behind every

tolerant mother. It is the hidden energy that keeps every woman to lead her family properly. It is a God given potential to most women. “I think that is why we are resilient enough in passing through hard times.

Fetlework also said that unconditional love is another reason behind every happy family or every successful child. Mother’s love to her children is unconditional. This keeps the family strong and alive.

When asked what her strength or weakness is, Fetlework said: “the love I got from my families, particularly, from my mother and my husband is my greatest strength to reach where I am now. With all my challenges, ups and downs, their support and encouragement have kept me alive. This is what I want to reflect on my children.”

During their discussion this reporter also asked Fetlework what kind style she follows on her painting. “I use semi-realistic art style which helps me to reflect my philosophy, my outlook towards the outside world, as well as religious and social issues. For instance, I am fascinated about the fashion industry and brands that has a power to influence moral and social values of a given society. Thus, whenever I found such issues I prefer to apply semi-realistic style to reflect my view about that particular issue.”

Most of Fetlework’s paintings reflect her own self portrait and umbrellas. Asked why she preferred those particular themes, Fetlework said, first of all, for me there is no better model than the self. I prefer to see things from my own perspective instead of others. That is why I mostly use my own appearance as a model.

Concerning the umbrella, it is part of my personal philosophy and the way I see human personality. We, human kinds are living in a world full of fear and insecurities. As a means to hide ourselves or feelings from those uncertainties and feelings of insecurities, we have developed visible or invisible protection mechanisms. External or internal fears nudge us to lead our daily life carrying umbrellas (protection). No matter at which age group we are found or what our sex is, we all have doubts and insecurities. As a means to overcome those fears we apply “umbrellas” to defend ourselves.

The other reason behind using umbrella in most of my paintings is its circular shape which reflects the life we are leading. That is one reason why most of my paintings incorporate umbrellas, she remarked.

Mentioning that there are not a lot of women in the visual art area, [painting, sculpture, mural or similar wall paintings and the like], Fetlework urged women to work persistently and live their own passion. She also called on families and concerned bodies to give the required support for women and encourage them to pursue their passion and rich their full potential and achieve their dream.

Society

Strengthening educational partnership

BY MENGISTEAB TESHOME

In the 21st century, several developing countries are increasingly relying on Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) as a means to capacitate their young population with the required knowledge and skills, enhance their competitiveness in the labor market, play a considerable role in countries' overall development and realize sustainable development.

Because, TVET plays enormous important roles in terms of providing training opportunities and career advancement for the increased number of school leavers; and producing skilled manpower needed at different levels of the economy, it is one opportunity for change.

As a nation, Ethiopia is striving to produce competent and self-reliant citizens who contribute significantly to the economic and social growth of the country. As part of this aspiration and to expedite its set goal in the area, the country has established a range of collaboration and partnership with countries.

In recognition of the social and economic returns of TVETs, the 2023 China-Africa Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Cooperation Seminar was held last week here, in the capital.

According to the organizers, the Seminar was organized in collaboration with the China-Africa Vocational Education Alliance and Ethiopia's Ministry of Labor and skills.

On the occasion, pertinent institutions and professionals drawn from both parties have taken part and discussed issues that are vital to advancing TVET, explore opportunities, address challenges, and draw lessons from successful Chinese practices.

Aligned with the principles of Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), the event contributes to the high-quality development of cooperative efforts between Ethiopia and China.

According to China-Africa Vocational Education Alliance, the collaboration between China and Ethiopia has evolved into a robust diplomatic and economic alliance. This fruitful partnership extends to the heart of the TVET sector. In January, the China -Africa Vocational Education Alliance and the Ministry of Labor and Skills of Ethiopia formalized their commitment through a Memorandum of Understanding.

Speaking on the occasion, Labor and Skills State Minister Teshale Beracha said that, the partnership will significantly contribute to strengthening the longstanding relations between Ethiopia and China.

According to him, the collaboration in TVET is not merely an academic endeavor, but it is also a bridge that connects the two nations, fosters mutual understanding and reinforces the bonds that tie them together.

Ethiopia is keen to deepen TVET collaboration with China to attain the much-needed human resource capabilities and eventually generating a skilled workforce adaptable to the ever-evolving demands of the global job market.

As to him, it is a high time to give more attention to further strengthening collaboration



because the sector has crucial role in the implementation of infrastructure and other socio-economic development projects under the China-proposed BRI.

“Human resource development is the critical impetus to ensuring the quality of infrastructure to be built as part of the BRI,” Teshale added.

The government of Ethiopia is strongly emphasize the role of the TVET sector in generating the desired trained workforce to support current and future investments across all development sectors in the country, including agriculture, infrastructure development, manufacturing, service and other development sectors aside from further bolstering cooperation between the two countries in the area.

TVET collaboration with China over the past decades has produced well-trained human resources, contributing to the sector's development.

“We are really grateful for the cooperation between the two countries in the TVET sector, and we are now upgrading our cooperation to a very high level so as to deepen the previous cooperation to a more increased bilateral

connection between the two countries.”

The government is currently reforming the education and training sector to improve its quality and relevance to the labor market.

He also lauded China's significant achievements in improving the training and education system, and underscored Ethiopia's aspiration to further harness the already thriving China-Ethiopia cooperation in the TVET sector.

“We need to learn a lot from the experiences of Chinese on how they achieved this high-level growth within a short period of time. We need to explore the ‘newcomers’ advantage’ where we can easily learn from our partners, like China, to cope with the dynamic environment of technology and labor market needs.”

In its BRI cooperation with China, a host of crucial infrastructure development projects in Ethiopia, ranging from roads, railways, industrial parks, energy development projects to export-oriented industries, have yielded tangible results.

Director General of the China-Africa Vocational Education Alliance, Mark Gong on his part highlighted the Alliance's

comprehensive collaboration with the Ministry of Labor and Skills in Ethiopia.

The efforts span various areas, including industry development, economic infrastructure, mining and extraction, health, agriculture, trade and business, sport culture, and Tourism, he pointed out.

The China-Africa Vocational Education Alliance was established in 2021 with the objective of promoting TVET collaboration between China and countries in Africa.

The Alliance has already launched number of projects in countries in Africa, including Ethiopia.

The government of Ethiopia has been working to strengthen the development of vocational and technical education considering the crucial importance of the sector to expediting economic development.

In this regard, China-Africa Vocational Education Alliance is expected to play key role in realizing this national agenda.

The alliance works to connect various vocational colleges, enterprises, trade associations, experts and scholars of China and Ethiopia, and strive to build a new platform for in-depth and comprehensive vocational education in the world.

The collaboration encompasses diverse activities, ranging from the review and enhancement of Ethiopia's occupational standards to development of national curriculum, quality assurance measures, and accreditation processes.

On the occasion, pertinent institutions and professionals drawn from both parties have taken part and discussed issues that are vital to advancing TVET, explore opportunities, address challenges, and draw lessons from successful Chinese practices.

The event was also hailed as a hallmark in bilateral relations, specifically within the realm of technical and vocational education and training between the two countries, it was learned.