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## Manufacturing remains priority in Ethiopia's journey to prosperity

BY STAFF REPORTER

**ADDIS ABABA** –Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) said Ethiopia's pathway to prosperity follows a multi-sector growth approach to enable equitable development while manufacturing remains a priority for its close linkage with other sectors.

Addressing the 20<sup>th</sup> General Conference of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), Prime Minister Abiy

pointed out that the manufacturing sector emerged as the driver of prosperity providing employment and fostering innovation in both developed and developing countries.

He expressed that Ethiopia has been making deliberate policy shifts aimed at boosting productivity in all sectors and creating a conducive investment and business environments.

“We have strengthened our adaptive industrial policymaking by establishing a free economic

zone in order to be more agile in the face of a changing world. Second, we have been investing extensively in multi-sector growth sources under our homegrown economic reform pillars of agriculture, industry, tourism, ICT and mining,” Abiy said.

Ethiopia's laser and laser products industry is also sizable, while chemical and construction input processing, in addition to manufacturing technology and engineering, offer great

*See Manufacturing... page 3*

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Yonas Adaye (PhD)

## ENDC close to finalizing groundwork

BY MESERET BEHAILU

**ADDIS ABABA** - Ethiopian National Dialogue Commission (ENDC) stated that it is employing efforts to finalize preliminary activities shortly and begin the National Dialogue officially in the

*See ENDC close ... page 3*

## Ethiopia's sovereign port access spurs regional transformation: Expert

BY TSEGAYE TILAHUN

**ADDIS ABABA** –Ethiopia's sovereign access to seaport would facilitate shared regional economic development in the Horn of Africa (HoA), an economic expert said, calling coastal neighbors to embrace mutual growth principle.

Approached by the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) Haramaya University Economics Lecturer Frezer Tilahun stated that Ethiopia's direct access to the sea would create a fertile ground for the HoA's mutual progress. “This requires our neighbors to consider Ethiopia's economic growth and development as their own.”

“Keeping Ethiopia landlocked would

*See Ethiopia's sovereign... page 3*



## Association eyeing incentives for private businesses in mining

BY YESUF ENDRIS

**ADDIS ABABA**- The newly-established Mining Association said it has been closely working with the government to incentivize private businesses in the mining sector, mentioning the incumbent's support for its operationalization.

*See Association eyeing ... page 3*

# News

## Lemi Nat'l Cement finalizes installation of essential machineries

BY DANIEL ALEMAYEHU

**LEMI** - Ethiopian Lemi National Cement has finalized the installation of essential machineries that would help produce 150,000 quintals of cement per day, the company disclosed.

Expected to be the biggest cement production plant in Africa, the joint venture formed by local and Chinese companies has inaugurated the capping of Pre-heater Frame and the Rotary Kiln machineries.

Speaking at the event, Secretary of the Party Committee and Executive Director of SINOMA Suzhou, Lin Zhong, stated that the Ethiopia Lemi cement project is the first in Africa to produce 10,000 tons of clinker cement per day, a benchmark project known as "Star of Africa".

"Since the construction of the project began in December 2022," the Executive Director mentioned, "the company has made every effort to allocate resources and carefully organize and plan the construction through enterprise's spirit of hardworking, fighting, and dedication."

Chairman of East Africa Holding Group and



National Cement Holding Company, Dr. Bizuayehu Tadele on his part commended the government and higher officials for their support in order to realize the project.

He also appreciated the Prime Minister's commitment to form a ministerial committee that provides the necessary support to the project.

"Today's accomplishment is a showcase that

the project will be completed on the set time frame, March 30, 2024" said the Chairman.

Lemi National Cement project Deputy Manager, Abebaw Bekele stated that the general progress of the whole project has reached to 70 percent thereby will be completed within 15 months according to the direction passed by the Prime Minister.

"Finalizing projects within short period is a new trend for the country," said Abebaw.

The project is expected to cover 50 percent of the nation's cement demand, the Deputy Manager said, adding that some 600 million USD is allocated for the Lemi and Dire-Dawa projects.

Around five million and three million metric tons of cement will be produced and injected to the local market by Lemi and Dire-Dawa cement projects respectively, he added.

Lemi National Cement Project is the largest in Lemi Industrial Park. More projects like gypsum, aluminum, and glass will come in the future, he mentioned.

"More than 3000 Ethiopian and 1200 Chinese workers have been participating in the project. In the future, the project will create over 10,000 jobs for citizens," Abebaw noted.

The project is a joint-venture owned by China-based West International Holding and East African Holding companies. The project will be able to produce 130,000 to 150,000 quintals of cement per day when it start production.



## Ministries ink MoA to resource utilization

BY MESERET BEHAILU

**ADDIS ABABA** – The Ministry of Water and Energy (MoWE) and the Ministry of Labor and Skills (MoLS) signed a Memorandum of Action (MoA) for effective utilization of resources.

Speaking at the signing ceremony which was held under the theme "Dam on My Yard" MoWE Minister Habtamu Itefa (PhD Eng.) said that the agreement would play a significant role for proper utilization of water resources. "We have an abundant labor force, land, and water; but we could not bring significant change due to lack of cooperation and technological modernization."

The MoWE attempted rooftop rain water harvesting in Borena and Central Gondar zones of Oromia and Amhara states respectively. Currently, some 87 shallow groundwater are preparing in various parts of the country aiming at maximizing water supply and addressing water shortage. "To achieve this, we are closely working with the MoLS in bringing the skilled labor force in water development."

MoLS Minister Muferihat Kamil on her

part said the agreement has huge meaning to knowledge and skill transfer and adopt technology with a combined effort. The agreement is also useful to enhance citizens and institutions in various ways.

Noting the two ministries' significance to ensure national development, she vowed to consolidate the partnership to bring more concrete results.

UNICEF Representative in Ethiopia Aboubacar Kampo (PhD) said "Working closely with the two ministries is bringing socio economic development in Ethiopia. It also helps to create jobs especially for the young population. UNICEF and MoWE have a long standing partnership and are striving to serve the community so far."

Habtamu further noted that his ministry has built shallow groundwater in various areas including academic institutions, women associations, and the likes to address water insecurity and power shortage. "Some areas received only 100 milliliters of rainfall annually whilst other areas received 2000 milliliters in the same period. Therefore, exploiting water resources required concerted effort."

## City to commence Haromaya Lake shore dev't project

BY ESSEYE MENGISTE

**ADDIS ABABA**- Mayor of Maya City disclosed that the Haromaya lake shore development project construction will start next week; various development projects are being built in the city with an outlay of 400 million Birr.

Maya city Mayor Ifra Wozir (PhD) told the Ethiopia Press Agency (EPA) that the lake shoreline development project will help develop the local tourism resource, capacity and infrastructure.

He stated that there are 22 new and two existing projects planned to be undertaken in the Maya city this year. The project will reply to residents' long stayed questions upon completion. Among these projects, the Haromaya lake shore development project study has been completed and will go operational soon.

The construction of the first phase of Haromaya lake shore development will be completed by the end of the year as per the design, and investors will be allowed to develop the area.

For the first phase of the project an initial budget of 80 million birr has been set. The project will create a job opportunity for the local youth thereby making them economically benefited, the mayor said.

Haromaya Lake has dried for 17 years



and it is getting recovered now and the project includes actions to protect the lake. Adequate arrangements have been made to make the surroundings more interesting by developing lake environs.

The construction of roads, parks, beautification of the area, fish farming and other related tourism development works will be carried out hand in hand with the project.

He explained that the development project is compatible with the nature of the area and helps preserve energy. It will also help increase the flow of visitors to the city and increase the income it can secure out of the sector.

Ifra said that the projects will provide the city with charming look and a better service to residents through road, walkway lights, tourism development and various infrastructure.

Maya City Administration is the arrangement incorporating Haromaya, Adele and Aweday having established by the Oromia State Council.

# News

## Ethiopia working to unlock mines' economic potential

BY BETELHEM BEDLU

**ADDIS ABABA-** The government has made consolidated efforts to make the mining sector the engine for national economic growth and a dependable source of foreign currency and employment, the Mines Minister said.

In his opening remarks at the second Mining and Technology Expo, Mines Minister Habtamu Tegegn (Eng.) stated that the sector has the potential to attract huge amounts of foreign currency to propel economic growth.

"Sustaining nation building as well as registering economic growth would be impossible without tapping mine potential," he noted, adding that producing agricultural minerals and soil fertilizer would help Ethiopia to ensure food self-sufficiency.

For exhibitors, such expos are vital tools to showcase the sector's immense economic potential. According to them, establishing market linkage for manufacturers and supporting the sector with professional

research would help Ethiopia to get more benefits from its mining potential.

Despite its opportunities, Ethiopia's mining sector is still underdeveloped and has faced several challenges. The exhibitors mentioned in this regard limited raw material supply and shortage of foreign currency as the sector's pressing hurdles.

More than 90 mine manufacturers and producers are taking part at the expo which will be for five days in Addis Ababa. The exhibitors displayed gold, minerals, industry, construction and other types of minerals in the event.

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, who officially launched the Expo, shared in his social media account that Ethiopia is blessed with abundant mineral resources. "We must make productive use of this wealth and hand it over to the next generation for a better country."

The Premier also mentioned that the Expo will showcase Ethiopia's mining potential and stimulate investment in the sector.



photo: Eyob Teferi

## Association eyeing incentives for...

Association Deputy President Abera Mamo told mining investors at the second MINTEX Expo that they are anticipating investor's active engagement that would make the sector more profitable and competitive. "Compared with the potential, the amount of profit which mining investors have been obtaining is low and the association would coordinate efforts to produce value-added products that could maximize profit."

"Now, we are operational and the government has also extended due support in this regard. Any company that works in the mining sector can join the association and can access incentives."

Abera further noted that financial loans, investment land, and technical support would be provided for association members. He also invited nonmembers to join the association so as to benefit from incentives which are induced by the government.

Setbacks which miners have been facing in the operation phase could not be resolved by exclusive efforts of gold and

some specialized associations. Instead, the Mining Association will act as an umbrella of all associations to deal with the sector's pressing challenges notably technological and financial shortages.

"The establishment of the Association comes after deep analysis of challenges," the deputy director noted, adding that the association would be engaged in promoting the mining sector, value addition, consultancy, and supporting its members.

Ethiopian Gem and Jewelry Traders Association President Tewodros Sintayehu also said that the Ethiopian economy is receiving least income from the mining which is unmatched to the potential. "So, all stakeholders should cooperate to make the desirable profit."

"Exporting raw materials will no longer be a feasible option and we should focus on importing or producing mining machines. Owing to our inability to produce value added products, we are losing huge market opportunities, he emphasized.

## Manufacturing remains...

potential as import substitution industries, he stated.

The Prime Minister further reiterated that Ethiopia firmly believe that by pursuing inclusive and sustainable industrialization and diversifying its economy, can ensure prosperity, reduce inequality and contribute to a better future for its people and the world.

Mentioning the advantage of late-comer countries like Ethiopia to realize the right industrial development, he said, Ethiopia's net-zero and climate resilient development strategy enables it to make economic development priority compatible with climate commitments.

"We firmly recognize that sustainable industrial development must not come at the cost of environment or the well-being of our people. Harnessing the potential of renewable energy sources to power our industries is our

priority," he noted.

He also expressed his government's commitment to building a climate resilient green economy by expanding electricity generation from clean energy sources.

"Ethiopia already generates 98% of its energy from clean sources. [The grand Abbay Dam] is Africa's largest hydropower plant and Koyssha is the third largest. We are expanding our wind, solar and geothermal sources and currently harnessing green hydrogen to support industrial growth," Abiy noted.

The Premier further stated that the country has been diligently planting trees to address its dual goal of food security and climate change mitigation. Accordingly, he said 32.5 billion seedlings have been planted in five years through the mobilization of more than 25 million citizens throughout the country.

## Ethiopia's sovereign...

aggravate the volatility of the HoA and further intensify the current rampant migration, poverty, inflation and, terrorism and conflict in the region. It is important to grow together having mutual agreement and understanding under the give and take principle."

According to him, Apart from helping the peace and stability of the region, Ethiopia's access to the sea is of paramount significance to create a substantial number of jobs, deter illegal human trafficking and reduce poverty,

Furthermore, since poverty is a cause for various conflicts, access to the sea has a capacity to bring sustainable solutions. Tourism and fishery would play a crucial role for Ethiopia's economic growth by offering new jobs.

Most of Ethiopia's basic commodities come from abroad and their price is soaring due to the cost of port rent. Also, the rules and regulations

of port-owned countries have been resulting in delays of commodities, quality problems and price increment. In the long run, it would cause inflation on product beneficiaries, the expert elaborated.

"When we ensure access to the sea, we would facilitate timely transit of commodities by overcoming unnecessary bureaucracies."

From an internal perspective, Ethiopia's sovereign access to the sea would enable a robust transit of import and export goods and greatly improve the country's economic growth by minimizing port charges that are further exacerbated by congestion and checkpoint bureaucracies.

It would also contribute to the national GDP and help to import critical commodities including fertilizer and construction materials and create a favorable environment to attract FDI, Frezer remarked.

## ENDC close to finalizing...

mid of this fiscal year.

ENDC Commissioner Yonas Adaye (PhD) told The Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) that input gathering activities including agenda and participant selection have been done in 11 states and two city administrations.

Yonas mentioned that his commission is striving to conclude the remained tasks in the shortest time possible and officially begin the National Dialogue that the country pinned hope to solve its multifarious problems through public consultation.

As to him, efforts are being exerted to gather public opinions on the agendas that need to be part of the dialogue and create enabling environment to carry out the National Dialogue in the mid of this fiscal year.

The commission provided training for coordinators in Oromia, Central Ethiopia, and Somali states, he said.

In Oromia state, the commission has provided training to religious leaders, teachers, *Abba Gadaas*, *Haadha Sinkees*, and leaders of traditional financial institutions among others, according to the commissioner.

Similarly, the commission is undertaking discussion with scholars, civic associations,

and public leaders to supervise the national dialogue activities in Amhara state, he added.

The commission held appreciable discussion with Tigray State's interim administration and advisors while training will be given soon, Yonas indicated.

He further stated that as inclusiveness and participatory are the principles of the ENDC, all Ethiopians drawn from the four corners of the world would actively engage in the process.

People who have Ethiopian origin and living abroad have been participated in the first round discussion and conferred about their involvement in the National Dialogue, the commissioner said.

He pointed out that such discussion would continue with Ethiopians living abroad through physical and virtual meetings.

"Though some factors are persisting in the journey so far, the commission has obtained views from the people, contending political parties, civic associations, government, and religion institutions. Particularly, the people's strong belief in solving problems through discussion is vital to carry out successful National Dialogue in the country," he underlined.

# Opinion

## Ethiopia's desire to own sea outlet: A timely question but requires diligence

BY ABEBE WOLDEGIORGIS

Until the last quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Ethiopia had no neighboring countries bordering its sea coastal territories across Red Sea, Gulf of Aden and Atlantic Ocean. The advent of European colonialism in the 1880s created new countries bordering Ethiopia such as Somalia, Djibouti and lately Eritrea.

However, though Ethiopia unlawfully barred from sea access, the leaders including emperors Yohannes IV, Menilik II, and Hailesilassie I strived their diplomatic efforts to obtain sea access for its import and export trade and to have connection with the foreign world.

Following the end of the World War II after the hard diplomatic efforts in 1953, Ethiopia's plea got response from the United Nations and Eritrea was federated with Ethiopia and its dream to get access to sea was realized. However, eight years later, the abolishment of the federal status of Eritrea through unification with Ethiopia incited some nationalist groups such as Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) to engage in armed struggle. After 30 years bloodshed fight, Eritrea became independent country in 1993 and Ethiopia became land locked country again.

Cognizant of the valid demand of Ethiopia's access to sea in a peaceful and give and take principle, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) recently forwarded Ethiopia's legitimate demand to the neighboring countries and the international community and his appeal has obtained support from the large segment of the society locally and in the diaspora.

To communicate the issue with concerned bodies, public discourses have been underway and recently, Addis Ababa University organized a half day seminar. On the occasion, papers were presented by intellectuals and question and answer session was held.

Belete Belachew (PhD), a researcher on the foreign policy and international relation on the Horn of Africa who wrote various books on international relation said that access to sea is a key to meet Ethiopia's strategic economic interests. As the country has become an emerging economy with more than 120 million people in the horn Africa, it is essential to secure its economic interest in the region. Truly, it is illogical for Ethiopia to lose sea outlet situated only 60 kilo meters away from the water body.

He further said that, sea outlet is a concern raised by generations to date. However, the Red Sea had been a place of diplomatic and military confrontation among the colonial powers and east African countries. Ethiopian kings, since the era of princes in the 18<sup>th</sup> century up to emperor Menelik,

had exerted various efforts to secure access to sea. In addition, military expeditions had been underway.

Before crowned as a king of kings by the name Hailesilassie in 1931, Teferi Mekonnen asserted Ethiopia's claim to get access to sea outlet. In 1924, he visited various European countries including Italy, France, Britain, Germany, Belgium and the Netherlands. One of the objectives of his visit was to obtain diplomatic support for his endeavor to get access to Red Sea and to own Ports such as Asseb, Tajura and Obock.

As to Belete, the change of balance of power and ideology following the end of World War II brought good opportunity to Ethiopia and the federating of Eritrea with Ethiopia in 1953 was the outcome of the reality on the ground. However, as to him, the armed struggle for liberation lasted for 30 years deprived Ethiopia that opportunity and made it land locked again in 1993.

Various countries, from near and far, which regarded Ethiopia as foe, gave relentless military and diplomatic support to the rebel group to ban Ethiopia from access to the sea. As to Belete, the internal political instability which was apparent during the Derg era opened door for foreign plotters to exploit it and interfere in the internal affairs of Ethiopia.

After Eritrea's independence in 1993, Ethiopia utilized port of Asseb with fair price for 8 years but later when the war broke out between the two countries; it gave up utilization of the port and since then Ethiopia is utilizing port of Djibouti for its more than 90% of import export trade.

According to Belete, currently, Mediterranean Sea, Red Sea, Indian Ocean and Persian Gulf have become the place where super powers and Middle Eastern countries confront both diplomatically and militarily. The presence of foreign naval forces in the international territories has been common. Gulf countries such as Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Emirates have also been striving to control the Red Sea.

Iran, Turkey and Israel also play decisive role in the region. They established strong relations with some African countries. Emirates have been engaged in port constructions starting from Eritrea up to Tanzania to put its influence in the region.

In order to put Ethiopia and Israel at bay from red sea, as to Belete, Saudi Arabia established a coalition comprised Egypt, Sudan and Somalia. Ethiopia's ambition to get access to sea must overcome such obstacles. In the region, apart from the western countries such as the USA, France and Britain, China and Russia have geopolitical interest and established their respective military bases in the suburbs of the Red Sea and Indian Ocean.

In order to materialize its ambition to get sea outlet, Ethiopia, in the first place, has to improve its relations with the neighboring countries which have sea access, Belete said. Its ambition should be based on give and take principle. Providing economic opportunities to the neighboring countries by itself might not be a guarantee to secure port. As the ambition also touches the super powers' interest, Ethiopia should do diplomatic homework to ease the challenges it may face in this regard.

Matheos Ensermu (PhD), an economist specialized in logistics who works as a researcher and instructor, also presented a paper on the forum. As to him, owning port makes a country to be competent in the world market. Exporting goods through other countries' ports by paying port fee makes incompetent because other countries which use their own ports supply their goods and services to the world market through lower price to win the market.

He further said that, owning port is one of the criteria which determine the nation's economic potential and attaining development. It is also an indicator of the country's macro- economic stability. Countries which are dependent on other countries' ports for their import and export trade face various challenges and the fluctuation of port service prices makes their economy unpredictable.

In addition, it poses inflation and delays the journey to prosperity. The logistics development of one country also has its own impact on import and export trade.

He further said that custom sufficiency, loading capacity of goods, transportation cost, timeliness, development of dry and sea ports are indicators of a country's competitiveness in the world market.

According to the maritime authority, in 2021, Ethiopia became 126<sup>th</sup> in the world with regard to economic competitiveness and the absence of its own port made the country lag behind many countries.

To upgrade its status in this regard, improving its road transport infrastructure, rail way terminal, and parking places is essential. In addition, constructing new infrastructure and investing money on the sector is vital. As to him, the construction of express ways play pivotal role in transporting import and export goods rapidly.

The Addis Ababa – Djibouti electrified rail way enabled Ethiopia to reduce its transportation cost of import and export goods. 45% of Ethiopia's exported goods transportation is between Addis Ababa and Djibouti. Hence, creating conducive logistics system is essential.

Through cooperating with the neighboring countries, Ethiopia can develop new ports and upgrade the standard of ports such as Berbera, Zeyla, Mogadishu, Lamu and

Tajura and through long discussion and dialogue with the neighboring countries; it can possess its own port.

To utilize ports effectively, constructing rail ways and roads is vital and among the various ports located in the neighboring countries Assab, Djibouti and Berbera are preferable because of their adjacency.

As to him, the Council of Ministers introduced laws in 2020 which changed Ethiopia's aspire from port user to port owner. But developing ports needs huge investment and establishing institutions led by committed and dedicated professionals and port enterprises. He also said that as Ethiopia is a member of the African Free Trade Agreement, it has to use its membership as diplomatic leverage to access sea outlet and own port.

Ambassador Ibrahim Idris is a veteran diplomat and currently is working as an advisor in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. As to him, to ensure port ownership, discussing the matter among intellectuals and stakeholders is essential. International relations and diplomacy should go hand in hand since Ethiopia has a chance to possess port through its diplomatic channel. In this regard, the African Union can play pivotal role.

As to him, the demand for access to sea was tabled for negotiation since the 17<sup>th</sup> century. There is a universal consensus that poor and rich countries should get access to sea. This is applied in the case of Congo Democratic Republic when it got access to Atlantic Ocean during the colonial era based on the agreement between Portugal and Belgium and currently the country has its own port to date.

Jordan also could possess port on Ackaba in the suburb of Red Sea with the cooperation of Israel. Niger got access to port through getting land corridor from Nigeria by the exchange of land. Ukraine provided Moldova access to Danube River and now it enabled to export and import goods through that corridor. Belgium also possessed port through exchanging of land with Netherlands. Bolivia also possessed port from Peru through leasing for 99 years.

These global experiences all testify that owning port is common, logical and applicable. Accessing to sea serves not only for conducting trade but it has abundant advantages which help countries alleviate poverty. Thus, Ethiopia can obtain its own port by various means through using its diplomatic channel.

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

# Editorial

# Opinion

## Industrialized nations ought to act responsibly!

Yesterday, world leaders convened on the 20th General Conference of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) being held from 27 November to 1 December 2023, in Vienna, Austria. Speaking at the conference as special guest, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) stressed the role of industrialization in improving the livelihoods of hundreds of millions of people and then ultimately lifting them out of poverty.

Indeed, industrialization plays vital roles by involving the structural transformation of a traditional economy. Oftentimes, the traditional economy is controlled by primary activities into a modern economy where high-productivity activities in manufacturing assume an important role. Hence, economic growth and development necessitate transferring production factors from less-profitable to high-profitable activities.

As this shift is a process, nations cannot achieve it instantaneously. They ought to realize that this structural change which is one of the main drivers and outcomes of development takes huge investment of time and energy. Here, the contributions of the private sector in an economic development process ought to be valued since it serves as an engine of investment, innovation, and growth besides creating employment and prosperity.

Moreover, the manufacturing sector even in the industrialized nations has played crucial roles in transforming their economy; henceforth, the developing countries should realize this and pay attention to the manufacturing sector in their journey of economic growth. Indisputably, the progressive changes of growth of a nation are based on the extent to which the manufacturing sector is cultivated.

Cognizant of this, Ethiopia has been undertaking several measures to reinforce the transition to industrialization. A case in point, it has recently established huge industrial parks in different states and invited international investments. Essentially, international investors ought to explore the comparative advantages available along with these industrial parks. There are highly-productive human resources and adequate lands and other natural resources.

More importantly, Ethiopia encourages green-oriented industry that supports in a straight line the protection and preservation of quality of the environment. For instance, besides incorporating green resilient strategy in its national development, it has been implementing several mega projects that support green industrialization. Among these, its Grand Renaissance Dam is an environment-friendly hydropower dam that accelerates the shift to industrialization and it simultaneously plays a big role in minimizing the effect of gas emissions. Also the green legacy initiatives, the series of tree planting campaigns that even encouraged the participation of the neighboring nations, made Ethiopia a leading nation in green development which reinforces green industrialization.

Hence, developed nations that are responsible for carbon emissions ought to take accountable steps and act to reduce climate change through supporting the endeavors of the green campaign. As they consume the highest rates of energy in their industrial activities, they are the major cause of global greenhouse gases; while developing nations like Ethiopia are experiencing the consequences of climate change without contributing.

In sum, world leaders attending the UNIDO conference ought to carefully realize the current circumstances of the world. They are meeting as the world is struggling with recurrent tension and turmoil. Social inequalities, conflicts, climate hazards and the like are very pervasive. Essentially, in order to reverse these circumstances, the industrialized nations must act responsibly to promote an inclusive and sustainable industrial development.

## Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed address to the 20th General Conference of the UNIDO yesterday

Since 2018, we have embarked upon reforms rooted in a deep understanding of our potentials, challenges and opportunities to expand our economy and accelerate poverty reduction. Our vision is to fully unlock Ethiopia's untapped potential in various sectors and to drive this growth through able institutions and highly skilled labor.

Our pathway to prosperity follows a multi -sector growth approach to enable equitable development. Manufacturing remains a priority, particularly because of its close linkage with other sectors such as mining but also because it holds its own immense potential full scale learning by doing and acquisition of technological knowhow.

We are an entrepreneurial state that recognizes the private sector as the engine of growth and aims to harness our demographic dividend for productivity.

Excellences allow me to share with you briefly ingredients that comprise our reforms. First we have been making deliberate policy shifts aimed at boosting productivity in all sectors and creating a conducive investment and business environments.

Our homegrown economic reform agenda introduced macro -financial, structural and sectoral reformers aimed at liberalizing key economic sectors such as telecom and banking, fostering private sector investment, enhancing external competitiveness, productive capabilities.

The establishment of Ethiopia's sovereign wealth fund has helped reorient public enterprises to a commercial focus and enabled strong partnership with the private sector. We have strengthened our adaptive industrial policymaking by establishing a free economic zone in order to be more agile in the face of a changing world. Second, we have been investing extensively in multi -sector growth sources under our homegrown economic reform pillars of agriculture, industry, tourism, ICT and mining.

These investments have translated into noteworthy achievements, including increased agricultural productivity, the emergence of a growing mining sector, robust momentum in the digital economy and notable flagship destination initiatives in the tourism sector.

The intensified production of strategic commodities like wheat, coffee and avocado, alongside promising measures for substituting edible oil and rice production are pivotal elements in Ethiopia pursuit of food self-sufficiency.

Over the past five years, we have managed to raise our total farm area from 15.3 million hectares to 22.9 million hectares, with vast amount of land for crop production still available for cultivation as we continue expanding on our potential and the agricultural sector.

The digital economy is making substantial progress driven by the implementation of foundational elements such as a digital ID and payment systems and the establishment of the Ethiopian Artificial Intelligence Institute that focuses on research and development of solutions in our priority sectors.

In the industrial sector we have brought into operations 12 large scale industrial parks in which textile garment industries are flourishing including the introduction of three new integrated agro-industrial parks. Ethiopia's laser and laser products industry is also sizable, while chemical and construction input processing, in addition to manufacturing technology and engineering, offer great potential as import substitution industries.

The late -comer advantage for countries like Ethiopia is that we can do industry development right. Ethiopia's net-zero and climate resilient development strategy enables us to make our economic development priority compatible with climate commitments, which brings me to the third point of green growth and clean energy. We firmly recognize that sustainable industrial development must not come at the cost of the environment or the well -being of our people.

Harnessing the potential of renewable energy sources to power our industries is our priority. Through our national energy policy and the energy efficiency strategies for various sectors, the government is committed to building a climate resilient green economy by expanding electricity generation from clean energy sources.

Ethiopia already generates 98% of its energy from clean sources. The grand Ethiopian Renaissance dam is Africa's largest hydropower plant and Koysha is the third largest. We are expanding our wind, solar and geothermal sources and currently harnessing green hydrogen to support industrial growth.

Nationally, Ethiopia has more than 60,000 megawatt potential from our diversified and abundant renewable energy resources. But reaching this capacity requires significant investments. On green growth, Ethiopia remains a leader on the continent in the practical approach to climate change mitigation and adaptation.

Since 2019, we have been diligently planting trees to address our dual goal of food security and climate change mitigation. 32.5 billion Seedlings have been planted in five years through the mobilization of more than 25 million citizens throughout the country annually.

Lastly I would like to emphasize that social development is a key foundation for our development goals. "We have invested in education and the skills development of our youth, occupying them with the capabilities needed in various industries and innovative economic sectors. Our approach is to be inclusive and equitable, benefitting all segments of our society, especially the marginalized and the vulnerable."

Excellences ladies and gentlemen Ethiopia is a resourceful, resilient and productive nation on a path to unlocking many of its potentials for inclusive and sustainable growth. Our multiple reformers have allowed us to double our GDP and our per capital income in five years. But one of the basic tools for sustainable economic growth and industrialization is the attraction of foreign direct investment.

We've been hard at work creating a favorable investment and business environment to attract FDI, yet further support is needed in matching the right investments to the right sectors. Similarly, skills and technology transfer are a center of Ethiopia's industrial development policy and practice.

The jobs creation agenda is important to us and it must be a joint agenda with countries in Europe and North America which are main destinations for migrants. We have an abundant youth population that has increasingly become technologically savvy and skilled. We want to retain this talent in our country and on the continent. To do so, we seek the cooperation of developed countries in technology transfer, investments and development financing.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate that we firmly believe that by pursuing inclusive and sustainable industrialization and diversifying our economy, we can ensure prosperity, reduce inequality and contribute to a better future for our people and the world. *I thank you.*



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# Business & Economy

## Economic growth, peace: Highly attached entities

BY MENGESHA AMARE

Unarguably, peace is life. All people across the globe have been feeling the taste of peace and are heard of saying that it is the backbone of all sorts of activities since nothing can be safely carried out without it. Yes, peace is priceless human capital that knows no boundary because everything in the world can't be dealt with in human life without the presence of peaceful atmosphere and persistent security.

When it comes to the onward motion tied with economic growth, the scenario that attracts different versions as economy; the basis of livelihood and the secret behind staying alive; economy or source of food product; one of the most fundamental or basic necessities of life, of course, the role of peace is untold.

Cognizant of the fact that every activity in relation to social, political or economic progress is highly annexed or firmly intertwined with peace and serenity, *The Ethiopian Herald* had recently a stay with Mohammed Feisel, who was graduated in Agro Economics from Haramaya University, to have professional outlook regarding the peace and economic growth or affluent life style.

He said, "In the first place, no one can limit the significant of peace as it is equaled by none on the planet earth for it was, is being, has been, even will in a limitless fashion be the source of all the good, inside calmness and social repose. Truly speaking, no one can provide peace with a clear cut explanation or purpose since it is tantamount to assuming all the things found in the land in aggregate.

In simple terms, health is peace, life in the absence of scarcity is peace, harmonious living is peace, clean and mesmerizing environment is peace, showing progress in life is peace, love is peace, wealth or income is peace."

As far as the latter is concerned, wealth or economic aspect which is the basis for every life, all activities from which economy is secured need peace and peaceful trend more than anything else as every fruit can be successfully collected in the presence or peace. Needless to state, peace is life in short as every aspect of life demands it equally with what living things deserve to stay alive, equally with air, food, shelter and other related necessities for life. True, peace is the lifeblood of human existence, and its absence entirely disrupts life let alone leaving rooms for production and productivity and recording growth in economic spheres.

As to Mohammed, the relationship between the economic performances of Ethiopia, for instance, its levels of peace could hardly be expressed in words as peace acts as a reliable predictor of a country's future performance for a number of macro-economic indicators. In the prevalence of peace and peaceful atmosphere, a number of insights can be better assessed and the potential source of

economic advancement and investment perspectives of the country are going to be well expedited.

Mohamed further explained that, apart from sorting out the potential means that enable the nation to promote production and productivity in Ethiopia, taking the presence of peace and serenity for granted, properly hunting financial investment products that are likely to yield higher returns has to be well capitalized on.

Besides, it is quite important for the country to develop more comprehensively competent companies, which can decide where to invest and determine better future economic outcomes. Clearly, all the available sources of economic progress had better be exploited well thereby helping the nation come up with gratifying economic growth bedecked with peaceful environment. The role of peace especially in due course of running activities in relation to economic factors is by far invaluable since such a travel-oriented step requires peace, security, amicable social communication and peaceful coexistence.

Mohammed further elucidated, "We all need to capitalize on what peace can offer businesses instead of saying what businesses can do for peace. All economic actors and business doers have to be granted with peace and security. In order for the private sector to engage with peace building, investors' thus first need to see the benefits of peace to their investment decisions as economic performance can be predicted by movements in the same socioeconomic developmental factors that impact peacefulness."

Without a shadow of doubt, greater peacefulness is extraordinarily connected with higher levels of economic firmness of purpose, business and technological innovation, higher worker productivity and less administrative red tape, he added. Mohammed further said that the presence of peace has long been the main factor used to forecast superior economic performance by the nation since the country can set a number of economy-oriented plans, macroeconomic trajectories and national development schemes taking its unwavering peace for granted. Otherwise, it is difficult to back home out for work and conducting a range of societal associations let alone thinking about how can solicit income generating means, which in turn helps the nation garner huge economic return at the end of the day.

Hence, embarking on peace is an incomparable step to be taken in Ethiopia if the country wants to become an affluent one. Interestingly, the country has been in a position to register remarkable economic growth, win tourists' confidence, create continental market linkage and contribute a lot to the nation's economic growth though there are challenges, he added.

He said, "Peace first and all other aspects are its subordinates in life. Peacefulness is the backbone of economic progress, social connection, political interaction and even a means to drive bilateral or multilateral



ties wheel well. Therefore, nothing is much more important and rewarding than working for peace in the history of human race. Come to our point, we can absolutely say that peace and economic growth are two sides of a coin."

Mohammed said, "If the issue of peace is entirely solved in Ethiopia, the high cost of living, peculiarly witnessed in urban areas, would undoubtedly sharply fall for agricultural products are transported from place to place without restriction and reservation. If this is so, the long heaped social, political, cultural and even economic challenges from which every Ethiopian is now suffering are going to be queued in their proper pattern and provide citizens with a sigh of relief."

Yes, peace and its invaluable elements attract higher rates of foreign direct investment, promote low inflation, lift citizens' purchasing power, and ensure equitable distribution of resources thereby recording superior economic and investment performance across the nation. The reason for such superior returns lies in the relationship between the factors that create peace and those that create a robust transaction, economic bolstering and conducive economic environment, is the prevalence of lasting peace, he added.

Progress in peace indeed helps the government exercise low level of corruption and improve the everyday lives of citizens via reducing the cost of regulatory compliance for businesses, and contributing a lot to peace that targets at improving systems of doing business and making profits out of all economic activities, and this is practically being done so, Mohammed opined.

Ethiopia's progress in the peace and security framework is highly associated with increased production and productivity

with superior financial returns, outcomes on safe biodiversity and a viable social well-being. As peace is a very good forecaster of future environmental, social and governance performance, all citizens have to join force and move in unison to come up with economically, socially and even politically stable nation under the auspicious of peaceful scenario. That is why it is recurrently heralded that better economic performance assists in building peace and vice-versa.

Peace and economic growth together can form a virtuous cycle. Similarly, a worsening performance in peace hinders economic growth and contributes to the process of forming a vicious cycle. The economy and peace can therefore be thought of as a system that can move in either a beneficial or destructive direction. In simple terms, the systemic relationships between peace and favorable economic environments have to be well handled and well nurtured for a delightful return.

In a nutshell, since the nation has registered commendable economic growth and appealing tourism amid some sorts of challenges, everyone has to focus on ensuring peace and security. The best scheme for successfully addressing such a daunting challenge, which has highly compromised the smooth flow of activities in one way or another due to lack of peace and security, must be well aborted to help the nation record remarkable economic growth for attaining the intended prosperity.

Such a bold move unquestionably helps make money and do business individually or collectively out of every sector and this in turn would enable the nation bring about a better economic growth. As stated from the outset, economic growth without peace is definitely unthinkable!

# In the Sphere of Diplomacy

## A partnership to cherish

BY EYUEL KIFLU

Back in 1964, the world's most exciting sporting event, known as the Olympics, was preparing to take place beneath the sky's of Tokyo, Japan. The then-world-remarkable black Ethiopian athlete Shambel Abebe Bikila was headed to Tokyo for the Olympic Games. He is the first Ethiopian Olympic gold medallist, winning his and Africa's first gold medal at the 1960 Summer Olympics in Rome while running barefoot. He defended his medal in Tokyo, becoming the first athlete to successfully win back-to-back in an Olympic marathon. In both victories, he ran in world-record time. After his victory, Tokyo remained imprinted in the hearts of Ethiopians.

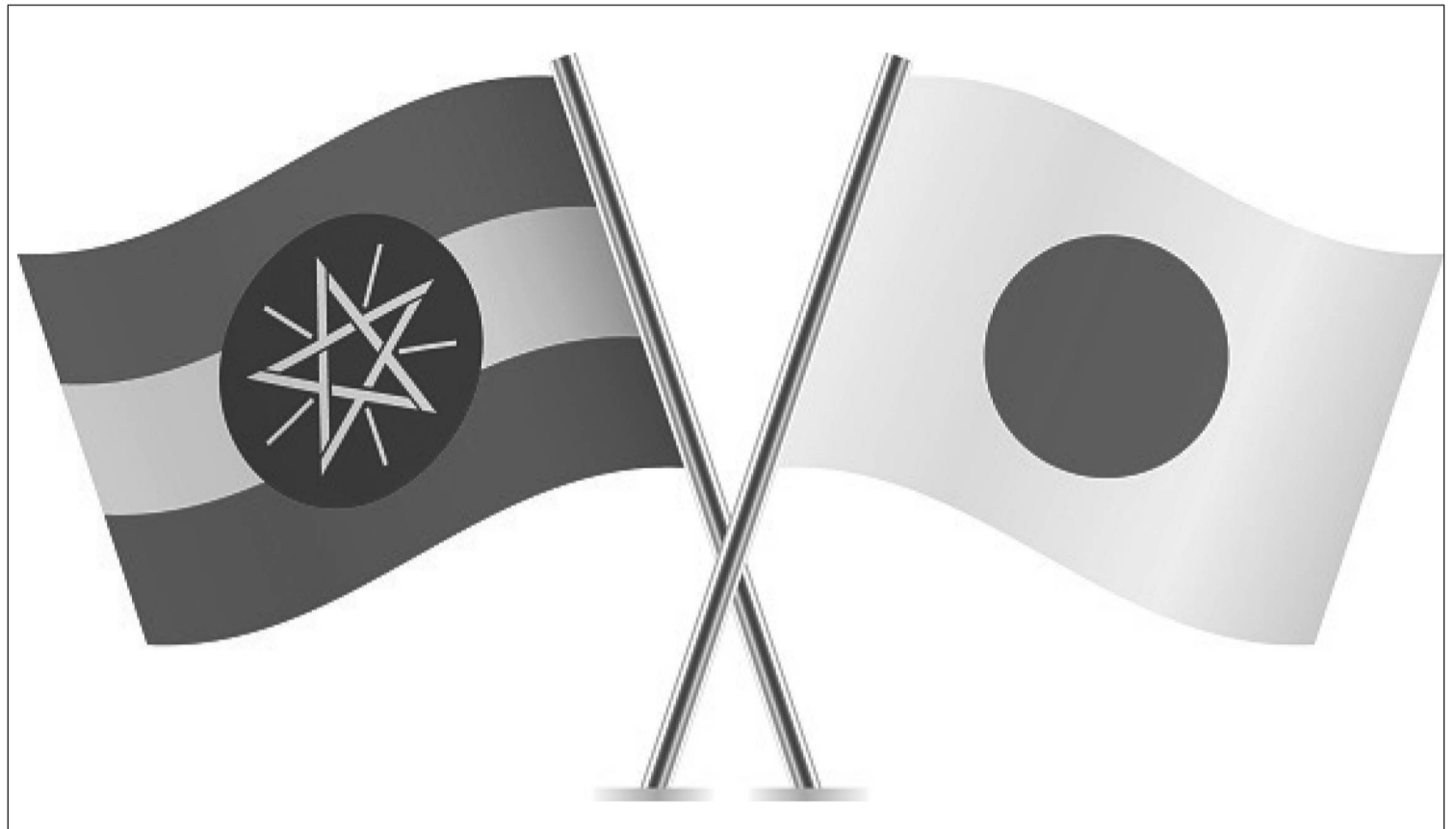
Abebe went to Tokyo as a sporting hero, but there have been many visits between Ethiopia and Japan prior to his grand triumph. But the long-distance runner remains an emblematic figure in the longstanding ties between Addis Ababa and Tokyo. The meeting between Abebe's son and the late Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in 2014 spoke volumes in this regard. In fact, the bilateral cooperation between Africa's capital and Asian nation harkens back to the 1930.

In 1955, the countries re-established diplomatic ties, and three years later, they exchanged ambassadors. From that time on, the two countries' ties expanded into multilateral agreements. Beyond that, the two nations have deepened their relations in recent years in different cooperation sectors.

Tokyo has been a key partner in Ethiopia's development, providing assistance in various sectors such as education, healthcare, and agriculture. The two countries have also collaborated on projects aimed at promoting sustainable development and addressing climate change challenges.

Especially Japan's support for Ethiopia during COVID-19 and the post-northern Ethiopian conflict rehabilitation work as an example of how the two nations' relations have excelled. The country that once witnessed first-hand the devastating impact of war has been committing financial assistance to help Ethiopia's reel from the conflict. At the heart of it is the JICA (Japan International Cooperation Agency).

Japan grants worth millions of dollars for Ethiopia's different part rehabilitation works and women- and children-focused projects. By rebuilding schools that were fully demolished during the northern Ethiopian conflict, the country is playing a pivotal role. The Japanese government works with other partners to carry out important projects that go beyond building



schools and assisting in getting kids back into the banquet of education.

The global agency has also been the frontrunner in promoting education and human resources in Ethiopia, another vital component of the two countries' partnership.

The agency is supporting the construction of schools and has been involved in improving the quality of math and science education as well as school management, benefiting over 500,000 children since 2007. Similarly, over 600,000 people have been benefiting from the agency's support from the construction of water and sanitation facilities in urban canterers and in small towns in six regions across the country since 2005, said Chief Representative of the JICA Ethiopia Office, Dr. Morihara Katsuki, in a previous interview with *The Ethiopian Herald*.

The relation between Ethiopia and Japan has been growing over the years, with both nations elevating ties in different sectors, a fact accentuated by the latter's outgoing ambassador.

In her recent stay with *The Ethiopian Herald*, Amb. Ito Takako reaffirmed that Japan has been sending experts trained in many professions to Ethiopia through the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA). According to ITO, under the framework of the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD), a human resource training centre has been completed in Addis Ababa, which is going to be the headquarters of a Kai Zen movement that provides the venue, not only for Ethiopians but for the people from Africa to learn about the Kai Zen philosophy.

"Ethiopians should use their resilience in

the face of numerous obstacles, such as conflicts, droughts, floods, inflation, and desert locust infestations, to work toward achieving peace and prosperity."

Japan's production philosophy (Kaizen) has been applied in the private and agricultural sectors in Ethiopia since 2009. In Kaizen-applied African countries, Ethiopia's experience is successful. Now over 1500 industries based in the country are using the Kizen philosophy, and based on this, over 4.5 billion birr have been saved from dissipation, Ethiopia's Minister of Industry, Melaku Alebel, told journalists back in August 2023 while indicating that the TICAD training centre's capacity to accommodate 50,000 trainees annually.

The Minister stated that, the TICAD training centre contributes a great deal to increasing production and productivity. Melaku said that, the Kaizen philosophy is a philosophy that works on the culture of work and capability of manpower while vowing a continued investment in youth training and factory workers. He pointed out that, Kaizen training should be integrated into the manufacturing sector as well as the service sector.

Moreover, according to the Japan Foreign Minister's report, the two nations' trade exchange has shown an uptick, with over 34.6 million USD of good has been exported to Japan and over 78.3 million USD imported from Ethiopia in 2018.

The Observatory of Economic Complexity (OEC) report also indicated that during 2021, Ethiopia had a large net trade with Japan in the exports of vegetable products (\$98.9 million), animal hides (\$388 million), and animal and vegetable bi-products (\$359 million). During 2021, Japan had a large net trade with Ethiopia

in the exports of Transportation (\$76M), Machines (\$41.4M), and Metals (\$17.2M).

Ethiopia has imported more of Japan's technological products and vehicles, and in return, the country's green gold coffee is more exported, covering the Japanese coffee market's consumption.

The two countries relations are also boosted by high-level visits by officials. Also, the leaders of both nations have expressed their commitment to further enhancing bilateral cooperation, exploring new areas of collaboration, and deepening the bonds between the two nations.

In August, the then Japan's foreign minister, Hayashi Yoshimasa, paid a visit to Ethiopia, and in his discussions with Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Ethiopia Demeke Mekonnen, he expressed his country's steadfast desire to strengthen the long-standing diplomatic ties and developmental cooperation with Ethiopia in the trade and investment spheres.

The strengthening of bilateral relations between Ethiopia and Japan is seen as a positive development that will benefit both countries. It is expected that this renewed commitment to cooperation will lead to increased investment opportunities for Japanese businesses in Ethiopia, as well as greater access to Japanese technology and expertise for Ethiopian industries. To sum up, Abebe Bikila might have been an unforgettable icon very much known to Japanese people for his victory and determination. But, what is equally true is, Japan also remains very popular in Ethiopia owing to a song by the renowned and late Ethiopian artist Tilahun Gessese in which he described the beauty of Japanese women. It is widely believed that Tilhaun released the hit after visiting Japan.

# Law & Politics

## Unveiling the potential of Ethio-Saudi relations

BY SOLOMON WASSIHUN

The history of relations between Ethiopia and Saudi Arabia goes back to the time before the advent of Islam. Long before the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) sent out his first group of *Sohabas* (followers), there were intense relations across the Red Sea that manifested themselves in religious, economic, and political aspects.

Endowed with centuries-old historical ties, thriving modern trade, and investment, as well as strong people-to-people ties, and shared geopolitical interests, Ethiopian-Saudi relations offer a fascinating landscape for potential growth and cooperation. Despite the ups and downs in the past, the dynamics of bilateral relations between the two countries in recent years have created a favorable environment and a promising path for mutual benefit and prosperity.

Saudi Arabia, with its position as a key player in the Middle East, has recognized the strategic importance of maintaining steadfast relations with Ethiopia. Saudi Arabia's interest in Ethiopia stems from its strategic geopolitical location and immense potential for economic cooperation.

The Saudis see Ethiopia as a gateway to the Horn of Africa's opportunities for trade, investment, and strategic partnerships for peace and security. The evolving dynamics of global economics and geopolitics have further underscored the importance of engaging with countries in the Horn of Africa, mainly Ethiopia. This interest is driven by the Saudi's shared vision of promoting stability, economic growth, and regional integration within the Horn of Africa.

The strengthening diplomatic relations between Ethiopia and Saudi Arabia enabled the two nations to navigate regional challenges and opportunities as well as set the stage for deeper economic cooperation for mutual benefit. The inclusion of the two countries in the BRICS bloc could be an additional factor for further cooperation.

Furthermore, the recent meeting of Premier Abiy Ahmed (PhD) of Ethiopia and Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman of Saudi Arabia at the sideline of the Saudi-African Summit would give a fresh impetus for consolidating the multifaceted relations between the two countries. "Our two countries have many strategic interests to cooperate on and to this end, we have reached an understanding to establish a high-level joint ministerial committee," commented the Premier after the meeting.

The potential for economic cooperation between Saudi Arabia and Ethiopia

is accentuated by the complementary resources that each country possesses. Saudi Arabia's expertise in areas such as energy, infrastructure, and mining development, can align with Ethiopia's rich natural resources and its focal development sectors defined in its Home-Grown Economic Reform Agenda.

According to a report released last year, the growth of Gulf investments in the Horn of Africa, dominated by the Saudis and the Emirates, is on the rise. The report also indicated that over 300 Saudi investors obtained licenses in ten years, to implement over 140 projects in Ethiopia in the field of agricultural and livestock production and over 60 other projects in the industrial sector.

These figures are sure to grow in the years ahead because the Arabian strategists have come to realize that uncertainties in world politics do not allow them to depend on the wheat of Ukraine/Russia or the rice of India that has to travel thousands of miles crossing several territories to reach their shore.

The volume of trade between Saudi Arabia and Ethiopia is also rising. This trend in trade volumes is another sign of the deepening economic ties and mutual reliance between the two countries. It also underscores the evolving nature of their economic relations and the opportunities that exist for further diversification and expansion of bilateral trade.

Ethiopia's agricultural sector presents a compelling opportunity for Saudi investors, given its fertile land, abundant water resources, and favorable climate for a wide range of crops. There are also other tantalizing opportunities for Saudi investment in Ethiopia, particularly in sectors such as energy, manufacturing, and mining, where the potential for collaboration and mutual benefit is significant.

Investment in Ethiopia's agriculture sector is not only aligned with the development priorities of the country but also resonates with the broader goals of enhancing food security, improving rural livelihoods, and environmental sustainability. By leveraging the expertise of agricultural technology and agribusiness of Saudi investors, Ethiopia can accelerate the modernization of its sustainable agricultural practices, improve water management systems, and foster innovation in agribusiness.

The pull factors drawing Saudi investors as well as tourists to Ethiopia include the country's geographic proximity, contrasting climate, rich cultural heritage, natural beauty, and burgeoning economic opportunities. Moreover, Ethiopia's

investment climate, characterized by liberalized policies, and incentives for foreign investors, this condition offers an attractive proposition for Saudi investors looking to diversify their portfolios and capitalize on emerging opportunities in Africa's fastest-growing economy.

Besides the growing trade and investment, the Saudis have been working with the Ethiopians as a development partner by financing various development projects in such areas as infrastructure, and energy as well as supporting Ethiopia's macroeconomic reforms through debt restructuring.

The joint interests of Saudi Arabia and Ethiopia in fighting terrorism and promoting peace have been pivotal in shaping their diplomatic and security cooperation. It serves as a unifying force that strengthens their bilateral relations and underscores the broader significance of their partnership. Both nations share concerns about the threat of terrorism and the destabilizing effects it can have on regional security and stability. The two states have also been making joint efforts to fight human trafficking and illegal migration.

The shared commitment to countering terrorism has laid the groundwork for collaborative initiatives and capacity-building efforts. In February 2020, an Ethiopian delegation led by the then Defense Force Chief of Staff conducted a working visit in Riyadh to discuss with Saudi military officials the military and security cooperation between Ethiopia and Saudi Arabia.

By aligning their efforts and resources, both nations can amplify their impact in countering terrorism and fostering peace, thereby creating a more secure and stable environment for economic cooperation and growth. The collaborative approach to addressing security challenges and promoting peace reflects the deepening of the Ethio-Saudi partnership and sets the stage for continued engagement in addressing shared concerns and advancing common goals.

Saudi Arabia's role in the signing of the historical peace treaty between Ethiopia and Eritrea, The Jeddah Peace Pact, in 2018 exemplifies its commitment to fostering peace and stability in the Horn region. This proactive diplomatic initiative by the Saudis have played a significant role in facilitating effective dialogue and reconciliation between the neighboring countries, thereby contributing to the resolution of the protracted no war –no peace tension between Asmara and Addis Ababa.

Saudi Arabia appears to have a positive reaction to Ethiopia's effort to assert its sovereign rights to have access to the Red Sea which is essential to achieve its strategic development objectives. A report issued by a Saudi think-tank in 2020 reads: "In April 2019, Riyadh held a meeting to encourage discussions between Eritrea and Ethiopia over the Red Sea, in which the Eritrean president did not participate, citing differences with Addis Ababa and insisting on an alliance between Eritrea, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and the Red Sea."

The people-to-people relations between Ethiopia and Saudi Arabia form the bedrock of their bilateral ties, fostering mutual understanding and goodwill. The deep historical and cultural connections between the two nations have created a strong foundation for interpersonal interactions, and collaborative initiatives that promote cross-cultural awareness and appreciation.

So it is no wonder to find data indicating that, Saudi Arabia is among the top four destinations for Ethiopians seeking work abroad. Many Ethiopians migrate to Saudi Arabia for employment in the construction, domestic work, retail sectors, and others. There are also some Ethiopians running their own businesses and engaged in high-skill professional jobs. The nation is also home to a large number of Ethiopian students who are studying in Saudi Arabian universities. Saudi Arabia is among the top four countries with the largest Ethiopian Diaspora population.

After all, the undisputed heavyweight, when it comes to investment in Ethiopia, is the Ethiopian-born Saudi billionaire Mohammed Al Amoudi. The people-to-people engagements have contributed to the development of a robust network of human and social capital that underpins the enduring partnership between Ethiopia and Saudi Arabia.

Ethiopian-Saudi cooperation could go beyond bilateral engagements to include regional initiatives and partnerships that contribute to the broader economic landscape in the Horn of Africa and the Middle East. Through collaborative ventures in infrastructure development, energy security, and trade facilitation, both nations can play a transformative role in promoting regional connectivity, economic resilience, and sustainable development.

Looking ahead, the future holds great promise for Ethio-Saudi relations as it reveals the potential for various cooperations characterized by shared prosperity, sustainable development, and a lasting partnership that transcends geographical boundaries and creates opportunities for mutual benefit.



# Society

## Measuring beyond the gender spectrum is worth noting

BY MENGESHA AMARE

As the saying goes, “educating a girl child is educating the society,” the Ethiopian government has now attached due emphasis to educating women and girls. In developing countries like ours, girls have long been overlooked and are still marginalized due to a dependency culture, a lack of education, limited work prospects, sociocultural impediments, and poverty, though there have been some improvements in recent days.

Taking into account the wider gaps witnessed in the rural parts of the country regarding women and girls, this writer approached Almaz Asmamaw, who graduated in Gender Studies from Addis Ababa University and is working as a reproductive health consultant, to seek professional information concerning the issue under discussion.

She said, “Girls have to have a safe place to live, receive an education, receive training and skills to support themselves, and build a prosperous life. Of course, they may be orphaned, abandoned, made to work, or forced into marriage. They are not always given an opportunity to receive an education and can be taken advantage of and abused. These girls often end up on the streets with no one to care for them and nowhere to go.”

According to her, the empowerment running in the nation has entailed the process of challenging power relations and gaining wider control over sources of power and economic self-sufficiency. However, this cannot be achieved without providing reasonable access to formal and functional education for women and young girls. This is based on the premise that education has been adjudged to be a viable instrument of positive change.

Almaz stated that, it is through education that an individual’s life can be positively affected, as education brings about changes in an individual’s behavior. Most importantly, women’s education, as a sine qua non for the social, economic, and political advancement of any nation, advocates for empowering women through education to contribute to their well-being and that of their family, community, and the nation at large.

Therefore, there is a need to educate women properly, as this will enhance their ability to transmit social values and norms to their young ones, as they raise and care for them. This means that not only do women’s education help improve the lives of individual families, but it also positively contributes to national development.

“True, education is critical in the development of modern societies. Women’s education plays a pivotal role in fostering national development, as the female is the bearer and caretaker of children. She is their



first teacher and is in contact with them right from birth to maturity. That is the very reason why educating a woman will have a direct bearing on the lives of their children, the family, as well as the society at large,” she added.

An enlightened girl eventually becomes a knowledgeable mother who has several advantages since she stands to be more productive in her home. She raises a healthy family and is capable of guiding her children positively on all concerns, Almaz opined.

Women’s education enhances national development in that it helps them secure highly paid jobs just like their male counterparts who are highly educated. If women get highly paid jobs, they will help alleviate poverty both in their families and in Ethiopian society in general.

True, women’s education enhances their access to and control over income and productive resources through improvements in poverty-alleviating and employment-generating programs. This means that women’s education helps improve the economic condition of families, rural and urban communities, and society in general. Undoubtedly, allowing women access to education serves as an indicator of social progress, and investing in the education of females can be regarded as the single most cost-effective investment to improve standards of living in developing countries like ours.

This demonstrates that, women’s education further enhances the development of the citizenry since it improves the standard of living of the population, said Almaz, adding that women are the majority of agricultural producers, playing important roles in fisheries, forestry, and farming in many developing countries like Ethiopia.

Indeed, food security depends on the availability, accessibility, adequacy, and acceptability of food. Women’s empowerment through education is a

way by which disadvantaged people are enabled to gain independence and capacity to overcome structured inequalities and inequalities that have kept them away from needed resources, land, credit, technology, power, decision-making, and information.

“This means that if a woman is cultured, gentle, and respectful, she will be better prepared to train her children to behave well and be cultured as well. Moreover, she will occupy a responsible position in her place of work. This will lead to national development,” Almaz elaborated.

In truth, said Almaz, the overall development of the country may not be realized if the education of women is not given the priority it deserves. She further stated that, women’s education has to be taken as something very important in Ethiopia for academic development and leadership opportunities. If women are developed mentally and intellectually, they can impart the right values to their sons and husbands, who can help make the world a better place. Therefore, it is necessary to educate women for the great development of countries. Despite the positive implications of women’s education on national development, some obstacles to women’s education need to be identified for immediate correction.

According to Almaz, a woman being gentle, polite, and respectful provides her with the character to be cultured and gain a better position to train her children to behave well and be responsible, competent, and productive. This will lead to national development, as the overall development of the country may not be realized if the education of women is not given the priority it deserves.

Surprisingly, some people, especially in rural areas, still believe that female education ends in the kitchen and therefore do not encourage their female children to have access to education. The negative effect of this situation is that if women are not encouraged to have access to education, the education of their children will be

hindered, said Almaz.

Furthermore, she added, a woman with little or no education and a low-paying job will not contribute much to the education of her children, let alone play vital roles in national development. What a setback to national development it is! Successful married educated women should be invited to give talks to parents to demonstrate that female education helps them take care of their families better since they have better jobs; hence, their earnings extend to their families.

“Parents should provide equal educational opportunities to all their children, whether male or female. This will contribute to national development since every child is given the opportunity to fulfill their roles regardless of gender. All levels of government, non-governmental organizations, religious organizations, traditional rulers, school administrators, teachers, parents, charity organizations, women’s associations, and other segments of society should work together towards the education of women and the equalization of educational opportunities for all, regardless of gender,” she emphasized.

Undeniably, a girl child can become a wife, mother, worker, or leader, depending on how she can maximize her potential. Globally, the issue of girl child education has caught the attention of many stakeholders due to the inequality and marginalization faced by girls in terms of access to education. This problem is particularly prevalent in underdeveloped and developing nations, especially in Africa and other developing parts of the world. Child marriage, child labor, poor policy implementation regarding girl child education, and poverty, among others, has been identified as barriers to girl child education.

In summary, women’s empowerment, effective policy implementation, and scholarships for girl child education should be put in place to help Ethiopia benefit maximally from comprehensive education. It is well-established that countries with a good number of educated and literate women experience fewer maternal and infant mortalities, increased GDP and economic growth, peaceful coexistence, and decreased domestic violence, among other positive outcomes. Therefore, the government and other concerned bodies should actively work to bridge the gaps of inequality for women in order to help the nation make a real difference in all aspects. There is no doubt that ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all is of significant importance in bringing about a rewarding change. This is why gender policies advocate for gender equality, aiming to provide equal opportunities to women and eliminate gender bias.

# Planet Earth



## Fighting against climate change through nurturing stakeholders cooperation

BY FIKADU BELAY

Ethiopia faces several natural and manmade challenges, such as droughts, floods, and insect infestations, which have a negative impact on both its people and ecosystems. It is also extremely vulnerable to climate unpredictability and change. The population and the ecosystem could also be severely affected as a result these challenges that requires environmental conservation measures.

Ethiopia's government has been and is taking various measures to combat climate change and ensure sustainable development. The Green Legacy Initiative and the REDD+ Investment Program, which support the Climate Resilient Green Economy strategy, have significantly contributed to the nation's re-greening, boosted livelihoods, decreased food insecurity, and increased climate resilience. Through green diplomacy, the programme not only benefits Ethiopia's domestic goals but also strengthens ties with neighboring countries and promotes economic cooperation, peace, and stability.

Ethiopia's forests are a source of food, wood, and medicinal plants, among numerous other necessities. They are also a cause for the creation of streams that supply freshwater apart from regulates climate change, flood, and soil erosion. Ethiopia's forests and biodiversity are seriously threatened by deforestation, forest degradation, wildfires, diseases, pests, and alien species; thus, protecting them will require immediate action.

These efforts have not only contributed to sustainable forest management and climate resilience but have also fostered regional cooperation that ends up with economic growth of countries. Through collaboration among stakeholders, it is possible to gain due support of international donors.

The launch of Phase II REDD+ Investment Program represents a significant milestone in Ethiopia's commitment to environmental conservation and climate change mitigation. The program, supported by international partners, particularly the Royal Government of Norway, plays a critical role.

Ethiopia has received substantial support from international partners, with Norway being a significant contributor. Over the years, the Norwegian government has contributed 130 million dollars to Ethiopia's forestry development as part of their climate cooperation agreement, as to sources from Ethiopian Forestry Development(EFD)

According to EFD's recent data, under the first Phase of REDD+ Investment Program, remarkable results has been recorded in reversing the loss of forest cover, enhancing forest-based economic and environmental benefits, promoting forest governance frameworks, and fostering cooperation among stakeholders.

The program has successfully protected natural forests, facilitated afforestation efforts, reduced carbon emissions, and preserved water and land resources due to the support of funds. These efforts have resulted in increased agricultural output and contributed to regional peace and stability.

Coordinator of the National Red Plus program, Yitebtu Moges (PhD), told to the Ethiopian Herald that the first Phase of the National Red Plus initiative has implemented since the end of 2017 with assistance from the Norwegian government and other partners.

According to Yitebitu in the first phase of REDD+ programme, using 75 million dollars funding from the Norwegian government, various forest resource recovery tasks were made participating the community. Accordingly, about one million hectares of land have been developed, rehabilitated, and turned into forests. Apart from increasing awareness of the community towards forest protection with this they are now start to use a range of technologies such as solar energy equipment, he added.

Regional initiatives have played a significant role in safeguarding and restoring the diminishing forest cover and rehabilitating damaged land in a nation.

In 41 districts of the Oromia region, efforts are being made to safeguard the naturally diminishing forest cover and recover damaged land. At the end of the first phase

of the programme, some 400,000,000 hectares of forest are now covered with forest of various kinds, according to Debela Tesfaye, Oromia state REDD+ program coordinator.

The same true in amhara state said Sintayew Derese State's Coordinator for the REDD+ program. Some 833 thousand hectares of land covered by forests and this in safeguard forests and restored land that has been run off by erosion, he said adding that the region's carbon emissions had been reduced to 27 million metric tons.

In the second Phase of REDD+ Investment Program targets to restore degraded landscapes, protect biodiversity and carbon-rich forests, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions from deforestation and forest degradation. The program will leverage innovation, technology, and sustainable forest management practices to achieve its goals. The Government of Ethiopia, along with its partners, is committed to implementing the program and transforming the forestry sector. The integration of the REDD+ Program into the carbon market system will help Ethiopia secure funding by measuring the impact of global carbon emissions reduction efforts.

The REDD+ Investment Program offers significant economic benefits through carbon trading. Ethiopia, with its vast forested areas, has the potential to generate revenue by reducing carbon emissions and participating in the global carbon market. The program's successful implementation will not only contribute to environmental conservation but also create employment opportunities, improve livelihoods, and support sustainable economic growth.

In the southwest region of Ethiopia alone, it was able to mitigate the emission of three million carbon credits annually in the forest cover. Yitebtu emphasized that 18 million carbon credits have been reduced between 2014 and 2020, and estimates indicate that the nation will generate more than 180 million dollars from carbon trade.

As to Debela, the Oromia region has an agreement with the World Bank that seeks to generate forty million dollars in carbon sales by 2030.

While Ethiopia has made significant progress in environmental conservation and sustainable forest management, several challenges remain. These include the need for continued community engagement, capacity building, and addressing underlying causes of deforestation and forest degradation, such as poverty and land-use conflicts. It is crucial for Ethiopia to continue its efforts, strengthen partnerships, and leverage technological advancements to overcome these challenges and achieve long-term sustainability.

Yitebtu mentioned that Phase II of REDD+ would require three years to implement and would cost forty million dollars; he stated that the government of Norway has contributed twenty-five million dollars.

He further stated that the Red Plus National Forestry Program will be integrated into the carbon market system as we move ahead. Also, he said that by measuring the effects of the global reduction in carbon emissions, the program will assist the nation in receiving funding.

The Phase II implementation of the REDD+ Investment Program marks a significant step forward in Ethiopia's environmental conservation efforts, highlighting the country's dedication to addressing global environmental challenges and contributing to a greener world.

A report shows that Ethiopia has lots of potential to boost the forest sector's contribution to sustainable economic growth, with approximately 19 million hectares of forested area and plenty of land available for forest development. The government has been working with both bilateral and international partners to improve the sustainable use of forest resources.

In this sense, sustained collaboration, partnership, and the active involvement of local communities will be key to the success and long-term sustainability of these initiatives. With ongoing commitment and collective action, Ethiopia can serve as a model for other nations in their pursuit of environmental conservation and climate change mitigation.