



# The Ethiopian Herald

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## GCS refutes right group's allegation

BY ASHENAFI ANIMUT

**ADDIS ABABA** – The Government Communication Service (GCS) has refuted the Ethiopia Human Rights Commission's (EHRC) report on the security forces' striking of non-combatants and killings of innocent civilians in the Amhara State.

In a press briefing he gave here yesterday, GCS Minister Legesse Tulu (PhD) said the government would not accept the issuance of unfounded reports indicating the violation of human rights and the execution of unnecessary measures.

The EHRC's reports on the killings of civilians by heavy weapons in Amhara is baseless and not supported by research. Such kind of reports would undermine the credibility of the institution and the

See GCS refutes ... page 3



Photo: Eyob Teferi

## Ethiopia, South Sudan reaffirm commitment to expand infrastructure dev't

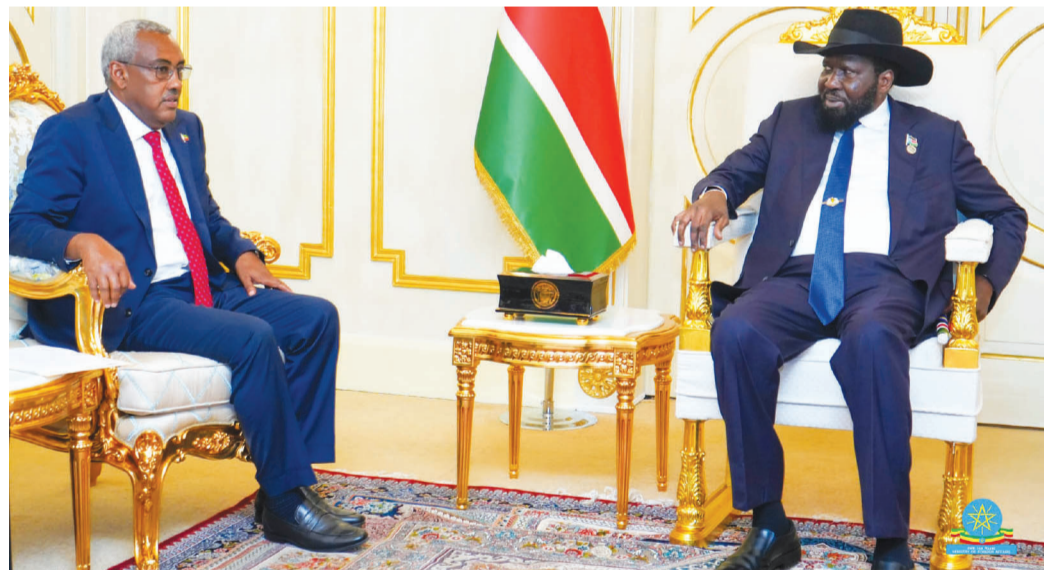
BY STAFF REPORTER

**ADDIS ABABA**—Ethiopia and South Sudan have reiterated commitment to expand infrastructure that connect the two countries and accelerate regional integration.

High government officials of the two countries have talked on the need to strengthening cooperation among Nile Basin member countries in a bid to utilize shared resources, according to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA).

Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Affairs

See Ethiopia, South Sudan ... page 3



## Ethiopia's political diplomacy creates vast opportunities for investors

**ADDIS ABABA (ENA)**- The success of political diplomacy which has been carried out since recent times has created vast opportunities for economic diplomacy, Spokesperson of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs(MoFA) said.

MoFA's Spokesperson Ambassador Meles Alem gave a bi-weekly press briefing to journalists yesterday on the major diplomatic activities of Ethiopia.

See Ethiopia's political ... page 3

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## 'Let Ethiopia Produce' central to transform emerging economy: Demeke

- Supports 364 industries get back to operation

BY TSEGAYE TILAHUN

**ADDIS ABABA** – The 'Let Ethiopia Produce Movement' is central to transforming Ethiopia's emerging economy and expediting its economic growth progress, the Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister said.

The 'Let Ethiopia Produce Movement' String Committee held discussion yesterday with stakeholders on ways to enhance production and productivity of manufacturing industries as well as import substitution.

Speaking at the occasion, the Deputy Premier and the Committee's Chairman Demeke Mekonnen stated that the formation of a string committee would facilitate the project to achieve its goals and keep the project moving forward. "The leadership has a key responsibility to make the project effective, especially in problem solving."

See 'Let Ethiopia Produce' ... page 3

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**Awash E-School Management System**  
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# News

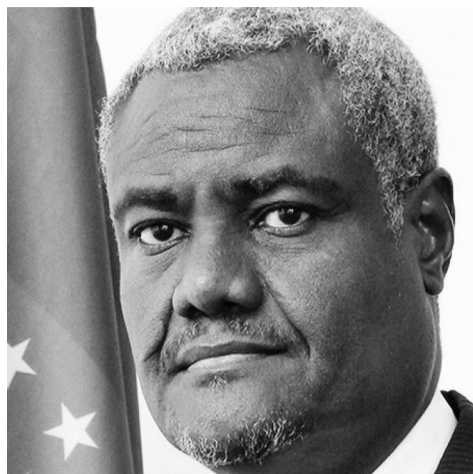
## AUC chairperson commends Ethiopians for embracing peace, reconciliation

**ADDIS ABABA (FBC)** – The African Union Commission Chairperson Moussa Faki Mahamat commended all Ethiopians for embracing peace, National Dialogue and reconciliation since the signing of the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement on 2 November 2022 in Pretoria, South Africa.

In an official press release, the AUC Chairperson congratulated Ethiopians on the First Anniversary of the signing of the Agreement for Lasting Peace through the Permanent Cessation of Hostilities (COHA) between the Federal Government and TPLF on 2 November 2022 in Pretoria, South Africa.

The Chairperson saluted the Ethiopian Government under the leadership of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD), and the TPLF hierarchy for the sacrifice, unwavering commitment and mutual political will to permanently silence the guns in the northern part of the country through the steady, timely and continuous implementation of the AU-facilitated Pretoria Agreement.

In the spirit of African Solutions to African Problems, the Chairperson acknowledged the exemplary role and the contributions of African stakeholders to the Peace Agreement, particularly the AU Peace and Security Council, which endorsed the



Peace Agreement on 9 November 2022; the 3-member High-Level Panel, comprising former Presidents Olusegun Obasanjo (Nigeria), Uhuru Kenyatta (Kenya) and former Deputy President Pumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka (South Africa), and equally, the Government of South Africa for successfully hosting the AU-led peace talks.

The Chairperson welcomed the vital performance of the Team of African Experts serving under the AU Monitoring, Verification and Compliance Mission (MVCM).

He further commended all AU Member States, particularly the Governments of Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa, for the

support extended to the MVCM through the prompt deployment of uniformed personnel to monitor the Peace Agreement. The Chairperson also extended his gratitude to partners for their concrete support to the AU-led Ethiopian peace process.

The Chairperson applauded the notable milestones being recorded in the implementation of the Peace Agreement and its Nairobi Roadmap. In this regard, he highlighted the restoration of basic services, the resumption of schools and commercial activities in the Tigray state, the establishment of an Interim Regional Administration, and the Working Group on Transitional Justice as well as the National Commission for Reintegration.

According to him, these vital actions powerfully demonstrate the commitment of the Signatory Parties to chart a path for sustainable peace and security in Ethiopia.

The Chairperson reaffirmed the full solidarity and commitment of the AU to intensify support for the implementation of the Peace Agreement as the implementation moves to the crucial phase of DDR. He reassured the people and Government of Ethiopia that the AU stands ready to consolidate the gains being made and resolve the pending issues in implementing the COHA.

## Manufacturing industry attracts 4.68 bln Birr FDI

- Creates over 46, 000 jobs

BY TSEGAYE TILAHUN

**ADDIS ABABA** - Ministry of Industry stated that the manufacturing industry sector has attracted over 4.68 billion Birr Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in the first quarter of the current Ethiopian fiscal year.

Speaking at the event organized to discuss the ongoing import substitution efforts and to review three months performance of the ministry on Wednesday, Industry Minister Melaku Albel said that the manufacturing sector attracted 4.68 billion Birr FDI as well as 8.93 billion Birr capital local investment over the last three months of the current fiscal year.

It also created over 46,000 jobs during the stated period. Large scale industries took a lion's share in creating jobs, the report from the Ministry stated.

Ethiopian Enterprise Development Institute Desk Head Tsegaye Gugsu on his part said that the country saved over 34 million USD foreign exchange earnings by substituting its import by producing imported products locally via small and medium enterprises.

The country generated some 44 million USD from export of manufacturing products over the last three months. It also generated a total of 10.154 million USD foreign exchange earnings (14%) from export of small and medium manufacturing industries products to the foreign markets.

Although the main bottleneck of industries these days is shortage of input supply import substitution gives a special opportunity, he added.

Moreover, special emphasis is attached to address export bottlenecks, a range of awareness creation and other rewarding interventions have been carried out.

It was learnt that export volume has been decreasing from time to time in spite of the immense efforts.

The ministry reached a consensus with State Bureaus and others to institutionalize the 'Let Ethiopia Produce' initiative this year. Most of the bureaus have allocated budget for this initiative thereby facilitating the productivity of industries, the minister said.



Seleshi Girma (PhD)



Shen Qinmin



Ambassador Nezha AlaouiM'hamdi

## Ministry appeals to diplomatic community, dev't partner's role in tourism

BY BETELHEM BEDLU

**ADDIS ABABA-** The Tourism Ministry has called on members of the diplomatic community and development partners based in Addis to take tourism as a priority area of engagement for the benefit of the people and economy of Ethiopia.

The ministry held a briefing session with members of the diplomatic community and development collaborates here yesterday under the theme the 'Tourism Development, Opportunity and Challenges.'

Speaking at the occasion Tourism State Minister Seleshi Girma (PhD) said development partners and embassies are expected to encourage investment inflow in the tourism and hospitality sectors and inspire more people to come and visit Ethiopia.

Owing to Ethiopia's enormous potential in the tourism sector, embassies and development partners need to make the sector a priority area of intervention and support both government and private sectors initiatives in tourism as well as heritage reparations.

"Ethiopia's strategic location, the reputable airlines, its diverse tourism resources and

history could attract more tourists across the globe. Nonetheless, service quality assurance, technology, heritage and wildlife conservation are among the areas where we want to collaborate," the state minister elaborated.

For Shen Qinmin, Deputy Chief of the Chinese Embassy, Ethiopia's tourism industry is on the move and holds a great potential in the future; expressing his country's support in various areas including job creation and economic promotion.

"Ethiopia not only a beautiful country but also rich in culture, history and tourism resources as well. Both Ethiopia and China are countries of ancient civilizations where the two people have a lot to share. My embassy is encouraging more Chinese tourists to come here."

Ethiopia has the biggest number of UNESCO-inscribed cultural sites in the Horn of Africa while Asia and China share a great resource of tourism as well. Therefore, the two countries can work together and bridge together to let people come to visit each other's sites.

Mentioning the tourism industry's huge contribution to the green development initiative, Qinmin asserted his country's alignment with Ethiopia and its tourism aspirations.

Moroccan Ambassador to Ethiopia Nezha AlaouiM'hamdi expressed optimism about the two countries ability and keen interest to work together in the tourism sector. The briefing event not only offers a potential partnership with Ethiopia but it is also a good opportunity to strengthen the south-south cooperation in the field of tourism.

"The briefing is not only a way to market and make known Ethiopia but it is also an excellent initiative to open our eyes not only to the diplomatic community and foreigners but also Ethiopians to see how huge the country's tourism potential is."

The Ambassador further highlighted that tourism is not only leisure but it is deeply linked with culture and heritages. "Hence, preserving heritages by restitution of cultural goods are very important, in this regard, both countries are keen and sensitive to this topic."



# News

## CBE says providing Muslim community with auxiliary banking service

- CBE Noor facilitates access to interest free banking service

BY ESSEYE MENGISTE

**ADDIS ABABA**—Commercial Bank of Ethiopia (CBE) stated that CBE Noor has helped all Muslim community members, who are away from banking services due to interest access to banking services.

Speaking at the occasion for celebrating the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of CBE Noor, an interest-free banking service launched in 2013, yesterday, Commercial Bank of Ethiopia President Abie Sano said that CBE Noor has enabled customers, predominantly the Muslim community, who are away from banks due to interest to benefit out of the banking services.

He said: “The service has been widely accepted by the society over the last 10 years and is significantly expanding. CBE Noor has facilitated unbanked customers to enjoy banking and satisfying demand using as an alternative scheme in addition to interest-based banking services; interest-



Abie Sano

free banking services are currently widely accepted, expanded and grown.”

CBE Noor Service has embraced the society who moved away from banking services ten years ago, and continues benefiting customers by implementing procedures compatible with principles of Sharia, which in turn fit the teachings of the religion, he added.

As to President Abie, there are some reasons

to the establishment of CBE Noor interest free services, like the government had the responsibility to providing alternative banking services to the Muslim community and banks have to accommodate the interest of citizens instead of merely serving those who would like to enjoy having interest-based banking services.

Vice president of CBE Noor with Commercial Bank of Ethiopia, Nur Hussein on his part said that CBE Noor service has been providing the community with reliable service by opening 153 branches in different parts of the country.

As to him, currently, the number of CBE Noor customers has reached 6.4 million and the capital has reached 98.2 billion Birr.

CBE will continue strengthening efforts to make all segments of society benefitted out of modern banking services. It is to be recalled that the CBE Noor service was launched in 2013 at Abakoran and Anwar branches.

## Ethiopia's political...

A lot of efforts are being made at bilateral and multilateral levels in the area of economic diplomacy following Ethiopia's growing diplomatic engagements, he noted.

Accordingly, he highlighted various activities that are being carried out to encourage foreign investors to visit the country and explore investment options.

Moreover, Meles explained that Ethiopia participated in 48 international investment promotion forums where Ethiopia's investment options and potentials as well as luring of foreign direct investment (FDI) were emphasized.

The forums that took place in New York City, USA, and in Shanghai and Shandong, China, with over 600 enterprises in attendance were a case in point, it was indicated.

The ministry and other stakeholders have made a substantial effort for the achievements of the forums, he added.

On other hand, more than fifty-three international investors have visited Ethiopia to identify investment opportunities, he said, adding five companies from the U.S., Europe, Asia, and the Middle East have been consulted to collaborate with Ethiopian businesses.

Speaking of promoting tourism destinations in Ethiopia, Meles stated that 31 forums were held to promote the country's tourist destinations.

In addition to boosting travel opportunities, 33 tour operators have been communicated to incorporate Ethiopia into their itineraries.

Ethiopia intends to actively participate in a number of international conferences in the upcoming weeks, he added.

## GCS refutes right group's...

commission should base findings on the right source and present it in the right context.

Legesse urged the commission to discharge its responsibilities independently and neutrally as per its mandates.

The minister further stated that the State of Emergency (SoE) that has been implementing in the Amhara State has played an immense role in restoring law and order and in reversing the danger posed to the safety of the public. The emergency law has also maintained constitutional order in the state.

According to him, some political elements hijacked the legitimate public concerns to trigger the recent unrest in the state, thus causing loss of lives and property damage.

“The outlaw group that was causing havoc in the region has been reduced to a level where it cannot challenge the security forces. The evaluations of the emergency law implementation showed that a strong leadership should be organized in Amhara and have the capacity to solve the basic needs of the people. The government is working to ensure people's right to live and for peace to prevail.”

Citizens who were cooperating with the destructive group with false information and ignorance have come to understand the situation and they are on the side of the Ethiopian National Defense Forces. Government's actions are transparent and will be checked by a steering board established by the House of Peoples Representatives.

In his statement, the minister also announced that 1,051 of the 3,200 suspects who were under the control of the SoE Command Post have been rehabilitated and reunited with their families. Some 931 citizens are undergoing the second round of rehabilitation training and the case of 317 are under scrutiny. There is a possibility that another 304 people would be held accountable by law.

On the other hand, the government is providing extensive support to the food shortage in Amhara, Oromia, Tigray, and Afar border areas.

The government is assisting 7.3 million citizens who are exposed to drought due to man-made and natural disasters, Legesse remarked.

## 'Let Ethiopia Produce' central to transform...

According to him, the 'Let Ethiopia Produce Movement' is one of flagship projects of the Homegrown Economic Reform. The country has been realizing and leading these flagship projects at various levels. “It is a great brand that would contribute to improve production and productivity of industries to substitute import and increase export volume.”

To substitute imports and expand export, Ethiopia needs to produce and supply products with high quality standards to local and foreign markets. So far, Ethiopia's economy has been progressing remarkably, withstanding various challenges.

Strengthening the movement would strongly galvanize the already started efforts to realize Ethiopia's 10-year Homegrown Economic Reform agenda, Demeke emphasized.

For his part, Industry Minister Melaku

Alebel stressed the need to give priority to enhance service delivery, input supply, and investment competitiveness and power supply. Shortage of foreign exchange earnings, skill and working culture, coordination and other challenges of the manufacturing industry should also be addressed.

The ministry has been working to replace some 96 new products, which were imported from abroad. Manufacturing industries managed to save some 350 million USD via import substitution during the first quarter of the current Ethiopian fiscal year.

Also, the movement has helped some 364 industries get back to business and it has brought tangible achievements in encouraging the manufacturing industry and job creation, Melaku remarked.

## Ethiopia, South Sudan...

Minister Demeke Mekonnen have met and discussed with the South Sudan President, SalvaKiir Mayardit and shared views on issues that would enable the two nations to advance their bilateral cooperation on regional and international issues.

The information obtained from MoFA indicated that the two have restated keenness to work together to build the necessary infrastructure that connect both countries.

Demeke and SalvaKiir also held consultations on strengthening the people-to-people relations between the two nations.

Meanwhile, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Demeke

Mekonnen has met and discussed with Speaker of South Sudan's Transitional National Legislative Assembly Jemna Nunu Kumba.

During the meeting, Demeke stated that Ethiopia has made a commitment to facilitate infrastructure projects that will strengthen the relationship between the two countries.

The Speaker on her part highlighted the significance of linking Ethiopia and South Sudan through infrastructure.

In May, 2023, Ethiopia and South Sudan had inked an agreement to construct a road project that enhances trade and people to people relations through connecting Western Ethiopia with North Eastern South Sudan.



# Opinion

## The interconnected Eastern African peoples: Opportunities to prosper together

BY STAFF REPORTER

Eastern Africa, part of sub-Saharan Africa comprising two traditionally recognized regions: East Africa, made up of Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda; and the Horn of Africa, made up of Somalia, Djibouti, Eritrea, and Ethiopia.

Peoples of this region have a lot of features in common that magnify their unity to enable them grow together via combining resources the region endowed with instead of differences that make them go apart. Among the common features tie the peoples together are: topography of the land, languages, life style, dressing fashion and basic means of living, agriculture and animals' herding among others.

Similarity between landscapes of the region contributes to the similarity of the peoples as they share the same geography such as plateaus, valleys, and grasslands and so on. Eastern Africa consists largely of plateaus and has most of the highest elevations in the continent. The two most striking highlands are in Ethiopia and Kenya, respectively, where large areas reach elevations of 6,500 to 10,000 feet (2,000 to 3,000 meters).

Twin parallel rift valleys that are part of the East African Rift System run through the region. The Eastern, or Great, Rift Valley extends from the Red Sea's junction with the Gulf of Aden southward across the highlands of Ethiopia and Kenya and continues on into Tanzania. As a result of unique feature of the rift valley, peoples residing there enjoy the same climate and temperature whether it is cold or hot, dry or wet, humid or windy, as well as sunny or rainy.

Though it is not one and the same, their presence in the similar climate and landscape brings them together like they are eating from the same table and drinking from the same spring and knowingly or unknowingly, they reveal the same characteristics in their lifestyle.

The Western Rift Valley curves along the western borders of Uganda and Tanzania. Between the two rift valleys lies a plateau that comprises most of Uganda and western Tanzania and includes Lake Victoria. The volcanic massif of Kilimanjaro, the highest mountain in Africa, reaches 19,340 feet (5,895 meters) in northeastern Tanzania. The Horn of Africa, a major peninsular extension of the African mainland into the Arabian Sea, contains the vast lowland coastal plains of Somalia.

Peoples living in these areas have many things in common like their dressing style, their interrelated languages, their way of earning life, and their economic base founded on agriculture and animals' breeding. These similarities should

contribute to unification instead of separation.

One important thing Africans should not forget is the big rift of perception the foreigners, especially the Western Whites, have to Africans and that of Africans have for themselves. Africans perceive themselves as independent peoples with their own respective sovereign States and boundaries; their unique history and cultures as well. Of course, they are independent politically speaking with the reservation of their dependency on the Whites more of economically and technological advancement.

On the contrary, the Whites categorize and put not only the Eastern Africa, but the entire continent, in one basket which they call it "The Blacks" or even "The Dark Continent". These terms do not stand alone; they rather accompany with the third world, the underdeveloped continent, the unstable, the burden of the whites and many other disgusting expressions.

Though they are also dependent on Africa especially for its natural resources and educated personnel, the degree varies one from the other. Africa's dependency is backed by unwise usage of its own resources and ignorance to modernity that enables the society to transform into civilization.

Big weakness Africans should get rid of soon is the way they utilize their resources. Pitifully, like elephants fighting on the grass, they are fighting for the same resource to consume independently instead of sharing fairly. Sadly, they fight each other by the weapons bought from the Whites.

Thus, it is time for Africans to come to their mind be wise in communicating their fellow Africans to not in the way there is enmity between them but fraternity; not differences but similarity; not sheltered in different baskets but one basket that is Africa.

By the same token, the Eastern Africa ought to focus on what makes peoples of the region the same than separates them, the climate for instance. The climate of Eastern Africa is generally tropical, though average temperatures tend to be reduced by the region's high elevations. Precipitation also is affected by varying elevation: Uganda, Tanzania, and western Kenya receive plentiful rainfall, while Somalia, eastern Ethiopia, and northeastern Kenya receive far less.

The region's vegetation ranges from woodlands and grasslands in the wetter regions to thorn bushes in semiarid areas. The grasslands of Tanzania and Kenya are renowned for their wildlife, in particular large migratory herds of ungulates (e.g., gnus, zebras, and gazelles) and predators (lions, hyenas, and leopards).

The region is also interconnected by

hosting similar ethnic groups. Eastern Africa is populated by 160 different ethnic groups or more, depending on the method of counting. Most of the peoples of Eritrea and Ethiopia—and some of those in Tanzania and Kenya—speak languages belonging to the Cushitic branch of the Afro Asiatic languages. Speakers of Nilo-Saharan languages populate Uganda and the rift valley portions of Kenya and Tanzania, while speakers of Bantu languages constitute much of the remainder of these countries' population.

The largest ethnic groups in eastern Africa are the Oromo, Cushitic speakers who occupy much of southern Ethiopia, and the related Somali, who occupy all of Somalia, southeastern Ethiopia, and much of Djibouti. The Afar is found in Ethiopia, Eritrea and Djibouti.

The main ethnic groups of Eritrea, the Tigray and the Tigre, are speakers of Semitic languages. Both the Tigray and the Amhara, another Semitic-speaking group, dominate northwestern Ethiopia.

The ethnic fabric in Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda is much more fragmented, with many smaller peoples intermingled or occupying discrete territories. The largest numbers of Nilo-Saharan speakers belong to the Luo, Lango, Kalenjin, Maasai, and Karimojong peoples, while the principal Bantu-speaking ethnic groups are the Kikuyu, Chaga, and Kamba.

History of the eastern Africa tells that the area has relations not only within the region, but with the foreign world including the Far East. The earliest written accounts of the East African coast occur in the *Periplus Maris Erythraei*—apparently written by a Greek merchant living in Egypt in the second half of the 1st century CE—and in Ptolemy's *Guide to Geography*, the East African section of which, in its extant form, probably represents a compilation of geographic knowledge available at Byzantium about 400 CE.

The *Periplus* describes in some detail the shore of what was to become northern Somalia. Ships sailed from there to western India to bring back cotton cloth, grain, oil, sugar, and ghee, while others moved down the Red Sea to the East African coast bringing cloaks, tunics, copper, and tin. Aromatic gums, tortoiseshell, ivory, and slaves were traded in return.

Researches indicate that the region has also been chosen by the countries from the Middle East for its proximity to trade with and the route to the rest of the world. Because of offshore islands, better landing places, and wetter climate, Arab traders from about 700 CE seem to have preferred the East African coast to the south of modern Somalia. They sailed there with the northeast monsoon, returning home in the summer with the southwest.

They dubbed the part of the coast to which they sailed Azania, or the Land of Zanj—by which they meant the land of the blacks and by which they knew it until the 10th century. South of Sarapion, Nikon, the Pyralae Islands, and the island of Diorux (about whose precise location only speculation seems possible), the chief town was Rhapta, which may lie buried in the Rufiji delta of present-day Tanzania.

Here the situation differed somewhat from that in the north, and, though tortoiseshell and rhinoceros horn were exported from there—as were quantities of ivory and coconut oil—no mention is made of slaves. Rhapta's main imports were metal weapons and iron tools—suggesting that iron smelting was not yet known.

Mafia Island, which lies out to sea here, could perhaps be Menouthias, the only island named in both the *Periplus* and the *Guide*, although this could also be either Pemba or Zanzibar (perhaps there has been a conflation of all three in the one name).

There is little information concerning the period until the 8th century. Greek and Roman coins have been found, and there are some accounts of overseas migrations to the coast. No settlements from this period have been found.

A new period opened, it seems, in the 9th century. The first identifiable building sites are dated from this time, and, according to Arab geographers, the East African coast was then generally thought of as being divided into four: (1) Berber (Amazigh) lands, which ran down the Somalian coast to the Shebelle River, (2) Zanj proper, (3) the land of Sofala in present-day Mozambique, whence gold was beginning to be shipped by about the 10th century, and (4) a vaguely described land of Waq waq, beyond. The only island that is mentioned is Qanbalu, which appears to have been what now Tanzania's Pemba Island is.

Though there is some suggestion that in the 10th century the Muslims had not yet begun to move farther south than Somalia, on Qanbalu they soon became rulers of a pagan population, whose language they adopted. Moreover, at Zanzibar an extant Kūfic inscription (the only one) recording the construction of a mosque by Sheikh al-Sayyid Abū 'Imrān Mūsā ibn al-Ḥasan ibn Muḥammad in 1107 confirms that by this time substantial Muslim settlements had been established.

These all similarities among the peoples of Eastern Africa and beyond give clue that Africans better live in unity via sharing their assets aspiring mutual prosperity rather than fighting simply for mutual destruction.

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

# Editorial

## A dividend to all!

Over the years, Ethiopia being a regional hub has been rallying its neighbors to foster collective socioeconomic development. The country has been at the forefront of joint development projects that bring dividends to the entire region. From LAMU (LAPSSET) Corridor project to other infrastructural projects, Ethiopia remains steadfast in availing much-needed support and there appears to be a big appetite from the Ethiopian government to invest in regional projects. It is in this sense that the country has been striking bilateral and multilateral deals with various regional countries in an effort to achieve collective growth.

The country's commitment and will are indicated in its supply of electricity and energy to neighboring nations. Interestingly, the country has invested in projects that will bring far-reaching positive impacts beyond its borders. At the heart of such initiatives is the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD). The emblematic project solely financed and being constructed by Ethiopians is laden with a multitude of benefits to the downstream nations.

Contrary to false speculations and farfetched allegations, Africa's colossal hydro dam has basin-wide significance. From curtailing flooding to ensuring a regulated water supply, the dam has layers of opportunities that serve the entire region. With its hydropower capacity, Ethiopia can export the much-needed electricity to neighboring as well as regional nations. The project also opens a window of opportunities for regional cooperation in the basin that has been marred by centuries of animosity.

Cooperation rather than confrontation is what Ethiopia has already maintained as the sole policy in the region. The flagship project also sets an example for other nations to find ways for common development. Over the years, as the dam's construction progresses, the flooding event is in decline in Sudan. For years, Sudan has been facing flooding endangering cities and towns.

Semi-arid and arid countries are more prone to climatic variability than temperate ones. And, droughts and flooding in Sudan are most likely to be caused by climate change. Water infrastructure development of upstream countries including reservoir construction is the best alternative to mitigate extreme hydro-logical events, including the alteration of and flooding, most likely to be caused by climate change.

Water infrastructure development of upstream countries including reservoir construction is the best alternative to mitigate extreme hydro-logical events, including the alteration of and flooding, most likely to be caused by climate change. It has been expressed that the dam will allow for regulated and sustainable minimum flow levels in the dry season. It will regulate the steady water flow throughout the year and it will avoid unexpected flooding to downstream countries.

The green project is also vital to reviving underperforming downstream hydro-power schemes to perform more effectively as there will be more reliable sediment-free, and regular availability of water throughout the year. Indeed, GERD will benefit Sudan and Egypt immensely by delivering steady water flow throughout the year.

Moreover, the dam also has biodiversity conservation and climate change mitigation benefits. As water remains acutely scarce and the ramifications of climate change increase, the time behooves nations to work closely and invest collectively. That is why Ethiopia has been saying GERD could not be a bone of contention but a source of win-win cooperation.



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# Opinion

## High time to retribute African cultural treasures

BY GIRMACHEW GASHAW

Cultural assets portray a given community's or society's way of life. Sculpture, manuscripts, monuments, and artifacts are some of the legendary artistic works of Africans that articulate the continent's ancient civilization.

African cultural heritage is not only a mirror of people's identities; it is a fundamental pillar for building a common future. It is a legacy that unites all Africans, strengthens their solidarity, and shapes their identity as a continent.

However, these cultural assets, which showcase the ancient civilization of Africans, disappeared or were not found in their actual present. These heritages were either looted by African colonizers or robbed by the greedy sons and daughters of Africans who wanted to gain some wealth by selling and collecting these materials.

Experts estimate that 80–90% of Africa's cultural heritage can be found in European museums, or rather, in their storage. In any case, all Africans agreed that these heritages are now in the museums of European countries.

The looters are not ashamed of the tasks done; instead, they display or exhibit these cultural works of Africans in their museums and generate income. The displayed cultural assets of Africa depicted the immoral behavior of European countries and how they scrambled African countries instead of showing their identity.

By no means should these cultural assets of Africa return to their former places. Looting the cultural heritage is a shameful act, as it defames the reputation of these countries. All in all, looting cultural heritage is a criminal act that should be condemned.

The restitution of the cultural heritage of Africa is not a matter of recovering art objects; it aims to preserve and translate our history, values, and culture for future generations. Thus, the restitution of African cultural assets deeply needs the close collaboration of African countries as well as dialogue with the countries holding these cultural goods.

The importance of enhancing and preserving African heritage has increased recently, especially the classical African art works that are still located outside our continent. This enables our culture to shine throughout the world.

In this regard, Africans are invited to work together towards the common goal, which is the development of continental and national policies aimed at protecting and enhancing their cultural heritage, especially by educating the young generation about its knowledge and preservation.

They are also invited to engage in implementing policies to support the development of cultural and creative works that will contribute to the sustainable development of the continent.

Nowadays, Africa is going through a transformative cultural revolution. Increasingly, the creative and cultural industries have become a very soft power in global computation, as art is one of the rapidly growing sectors.

Preserving and fostering an appreciation for cultural heritage entails a concentration on monuments, artistic works, and cultural practices and traditions that mirror the identity of a society or human community.

Facilitating the return and restitution of cultural properties under the intergovernmental committee for promoting the right of cultural property to the country of origin is the objective of the flagship on cultural heritage to support African Union member states.

African countries need to collaborate jointly and work for the preservation and restitution of cultural heritage. In this regard, much is expected from the Africa Union in terms of creating solidarity among nations and facilitating conditions for the return of cultural heritage.

Indeed, the task of restituting cultural heritage should not be on the agenda at once. As it takes a long time to negotiate, it requires the due attention of Africans. For example, the Axum obelisk, which was in Rome, was returned to Ethiopia after 68 years. Hence, the continent should make a persistent effort until their diplomatic effort ends with success. On the other hand, the restitution should focus on culturally relevant and secret historical objects. It is not difficult to imagine that some of the cultural assets of Africa may not be in the area they deserve. As a result, some of these assets might be damaged.

Apart from returning these heritages, it is quite imperative to offer training for Africans on heritage management. This helps African countries rescue their heritages from being sold again and again by robbers.

So far, African countries have carried out a number of deliberations with regard to the restitution and preservation of cultural heritages. However, the concluding remarks of those meetings were not translated into action. Apart from condemning the looting of cultural heritage, African countries have to begin to talk with the countries where these treasures are found.

On the other hand, African countries should come up with strong policies and strategies in order to impede the illegal trafficking of cultural heritage. It is high time for Africa to work for the return of its heritage!

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



# Business & Economy

## E-consultation portals:

### Promoting inclusiveness, transparency in ease doing business

BY DANIEL ALEMAYEHU

Talking about a better life, it is crucial to equip people with the most advanced technologies. The people of a country should be treated in the way that the necessary services should be served at their door steps. To achieve this, the use of technology and transforming the system to a digital should be the first step to be taken.

Unlike most developed nation across the world, nations in the third world have been accused of lack of delivering services that meet the needs of the people. So as to curb such difficulties, the best way could be finding a system to deliver services that could be easily applicable and accessible to the customer. In this regard, the essence of digitalization and e- governance might be the ideal way to bring the sought after outcome.

In the present climate, the government of Ethiopia has been working on transforming the nation and its system to be a technology assisted. Realizing digital Ethiopia, accordingly, is one of the core objectives of the current incumbent. The government and responsible stakeholders have been working on achieving the objective of realizing the digital nation that is assisted by e- governance and ease of doing business ideas.

In the past few months, selected government Ministerial Offices have been working on a project that is designed to help the government bringing e- governance and ease of doing business. The Technical Assistance for Business Environment and Investment Climate, including e-government (BEIC), the EU funded program which is implemented by GIZ International Services in partnership with McKinsey & Company, is working on supporting national reforms to improve the Ease of Doing Business and E- governance in Ethiopia.

It is to be recalled, multiple government entities including Ministry of Innovation and Technology (MInT), the National Bank of Ethiopia (NBE), Ministry of Revenue (MoR), Ministry of Trade and Regional Integration (MoTRI) have been working closely with GIZ's BEIC project in creating favorable conditions for businesses.

Not only working closely with the project implementation, it is not long ago that Ministry of Trade and Regional Integration (MoTRI) has signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with GIZ's BEIC (Business Environment and Investment Climate including e-government) to make the nation's licensing and registration process easy to investors. The MoU was signed between the Ministry and the BEIC

Project that incorporates a 2.4 million Euro fund through the EU funded BEIC project.

Recently, the project conducted a training session to selected staff members from the Ethiopian Ministry of Innovation and Technology (MInT) and Ministry of Justice (MoJ) and tested the platform at an event organized at Ramada Addis.

The project of e- governance and ease of doing business has been carried on to multiple phases to be more applicable and bringing it into action. In this point, the country is preparing to unveil the nation's inaugural electronic consultation platform for the consultation of draft laws. The Business Environment and Investment Climate (BEIC), including e-government project is supporting the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) by spearheading the development of the platform.

The ministry engages in a consultation process with various stakeholders when the inception of new legislations takes form. The electronic consultation portal, designed by BEIC, will simplify this process through digitalization, enabling all citizens in Ethiopia, including members of the private sector to provide comments, opinions and propose changes on the draft laws.

The electronic platform will facilitate consultations on draft proclamations, including directives and regulations that are initiated by government institutions. The objective of having the portal is to create inclusiveness and transparency in the regulatory preparation of laws and introduce a complete traceability in the legislation process.

The initiative is expected to enhance the quality of the legislation process in Ethiopia, as it will enable all stakeholders to offer transparent feedback in a user-friendly manner. The interactive portal also contributes to promoting electronic democracy in the country by providing a convenient platform where people can express their opinions on laws to be drafted and influence decision making processes.

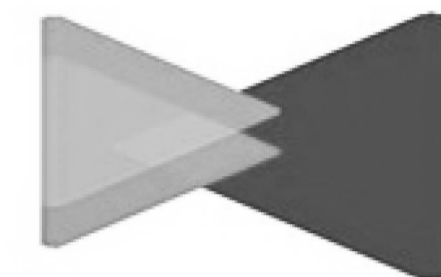
Having a stay with *The Ethiopian Herald*, Key expert to e- governance, Elie Sawaya recalled that the objective of the project is to improve the ease of doing business in Ethiopia. As to him, the project has several pillars which might be different according to the institutions' need. From those pillars, the project is working on access to credit with the National Bank of Ethiopia to improve the system. With Ministry of Revenue, the project helps the ministry on improving the taxpaying systems. Again, with Ministry of Innovation and Technology, the project helps on digitalization. The project is also assisting Ministry of Trade and Regional Integration on maximizing company creation process.

Elie further mentioned that they are working with Ethiopian Ministry of Innovation and Technology (MInT) and Ministry of Justice (MoJ) on creating the E- consultation portal. "The E- consultation portal has been developed and now available. The portal is used as a tool to create inclusiveness and transparency in the law drafting process. There is a request from both ministries," the expert added.

The portal, as to the expert, will allow any citizen to give comments and recommendations on any law that has been drafted. A drafted law that has not been acted on yet will be available for all citizens in order to comment, and the ministry who is in charge of drafting the law will also able to reply for those comments and recommendations.

"The e- consultation portal will help the nation to create a corner stone for electronic democracy." It is also an important initiative from the Government of Ethiopia in order to create more inclusiveness and transparency in the law drafting process, Elie Elaborated.

The project is working with multiple government ministries like the Ministry of Justice coupled with other private sector associations such as the Ethiopian Chamber of Commerce and Sectorial Association, European Chamber of Commerce.



# BEIC

Business Environment and Investment Climate, including e-government

"Speaking of the E-consultation platform, we are working with the Ministry of Justice on business law making side and with the Ministry of Innovation and Technology on technical implementation part." The impact of the portal is mainly creating inclusiveness and transparency that will lead to a better environment for law drafting, Elie said.

According to Elie, the purpose of the event is to deliver training for Ministry of Justice on the application and for Ministry of Innovation and Technology on the management of the application. Both agents from both ministries will test the portal to validate aligned with their objectives and requirements in order to move to the final phase where it will be deployed all over Ethiopia. It will also shorten the distance between the federal government and all the regions as the nation is very big.

Elie also noted that they will further implement different platforms. We are working with the Ethiopian Chamber of Commerce and Sectorial Association to create an electronic public- private dialogue (PPD) platform to achieve the set objectives," the expert said.

By the same token, the portal's software developer, Wubetu Shiferaw, on his part said that the platform will foster people's participation on drafting laws. Previously, the process was implemented manually and it was very expensive and hard to apply. However, this electronic portal will curb those challenges and create more access for all part of the community to take part on the process.

In order to use the platform, Wubetu elucidated, first the institution that drafts the law will publish or post it on the platform in order to introduce it to the public. Then, any citizen can give its opinion and comments. After that stakeholders who drafted the law will revise it carefully and it will be endorsed to become the law enacted.



# Art & Culture

## Tulip

BY ALEM HAILU G/KRISTOS

I saw a full-blown flower  
Underground for long  
That was taking a shower.

It put down a root  
Soon  
To develop three a shoot;  
With green mantle,  
Eye-catching, fully attired  
It sported its pink head.

Its elegance  
Doesn't allow one  
Walk past it casting  
A glance only once.

Its aroma, fragrance  
A panacea serve  
To the olfactory nerve.

It majestic beauty tempts  
Beholders to fondle  
Her breast

Getting closer to her chest,  
A bee,  
Her nectar to sip and taste.

Reminds me this tulip  
A girl child,  
My juvenile friend,  
I often see when I sleep.

Jumping  
From a seed to a flower  
She has now ascended  
Attractiveness' tower.  
Does she now me remember?  
As distance and time  
Have put us asunder!

She must  
Remember me why  
As her do I?  
She has turned  
Many a man's  
Apple of the eye!



## Teen crush

BY EMBET MESFINE

Four boys in my neighborhood  
who were interested craftily zoomed  
formed a group to help them scoop  
my attention using individual invention  
this happening left a lifelong impression  
especially when I heard from my friend  
who was dubbed a courier of a kind  
by one of them who grew up with her  
to intervene in his favor  
I was informed but wasn't moved  
couldn't submit at all to his proposal  
when he heard was bewildered  
girls he knew wouldn't have dared  
to go against advice from peers  
got back at me for the diss  
telling my friend the group's intent  
in getting together to win my heart.

The eldest of all pulled out automatically  
handling the situation diplomatically  
weighing how it would be unfair  
competing with a wild younger brother  
the third one was so direct  
expressing himself as to how he felt  
asked me out with such assertion  
his ruse being same level of education  
I declined deflating his righteous mind  
I shouldn't have been told about the boys world  
I was hopelessly hooked when I examined  
preferred the one who first deserted  
chasing him became my mission  
waiting patiently during intermission  
inside the compound of summer school  
followed his every move like a fool  
a new era was unfolding before my eyes  
am having confusing exciting disturbing desires  
my heart pounding when he appeared  
aching for his acquaintance, I wondered.

Why oh why wasn't he like his brother?  
who smoothly blended like the weather



befriended my sibling through pigeoning  
started bringing to our house  
his colorful pigeons in a large box  
the boys summer passion joined force  
they searched high and low going around  
with other boys in our neighborhood  
they spent hours studying their possession  
the two of them looking like leaders of a nation  
coaching their allies with such strong urge  
how to rescue birds when they surge  
unsuspectingly into traps set by foes.

Now I declare if you care  
to hear more about teens back then  
when school closed in the rainy season  
apart from soccer chasing each other  
wrestling boxing outsmarting waging war  
nothing comes close to lying on the ground  
listening to the tottering sound  
brought about by the caged pigeons  
confining them in boxes with holes  
restricting their movements  
depriving them  
their freedom

now that isn't the only worry  
if they let them out to be free  
they fly away and will be lost  
so they delight keeping them tight

Am no pigeon but fell in to  
trap set for me by you know who  
frequent visitor of brother dear  
who succeeded in drawing near  
enough to produce the proper means  
of approaching the girl he loves  
narrating about the pigeons he had  
methods he used to keep them sound  
dramatizing making me giggle  
displaying how they always wiggle  
I thrived in his company  
became inseparable gradually  
his brother didn't mind when I overstayed  
for all they know am the girlfriend  
decided to clear the air once and for all  
pointing out to my friend they caused my fall

Everyone thought we were in love  
both of us were trying to solve  
the problem close at heart  
couldn't hide the misery we felt  
disclosed the intense feeling I harbored  
to the big brother he was horrified  
at my relentless audacity guised  
in the cloak of friendship  
disregarding the relationship  
he took no heed no matter how I pleaded  
defending his brother who patiently waited  
going great lengths to please  
covering his hurt not to lose  
the friendship he valued  
more than the wound he carried  
I salute you big brother  
for the simple truth you utter  
hold on to what you have.



# Science & Technology



Negri Lencho (PhD)



Belete Molla (PhD)

## Accelerating technology import-substitution through investing in capacity building

BY DARGIE KAHSAY

The Ministry of Innovation and Technology (MinT) recently presented its 2023/24 budget year annual plan and the first quarter of the year's performance report to the House of Peoples Representatives (HPR) Human Resource Development, Employment and Technology Affairs Standing Committee.

Presenting the annual plan and the performance report, Minister of MinT Belete Molla (PhD) said that national science, innovation and technology development, infrastructural development, digital economy and service digitalization and the creation of enabling legislation are the four basic programs of the ministry during this budget year. As to him, these four basic programs are part of the institution's three-year strategic development plan in the science, technology and innovation sector, which is planned to be implemented in the coming three years.

During the discussion with members of the HPR standing committee, the Ministry of Innovation and Technology (MoIT) and institutions accountable to it briefed their activities and plans. The institutions stated that they are striving for the development of scientific research, technological development and innovations. In addition, the Ministry reiterated that it is working to realize the Digital Ethiopia Strategy 2025 through introducing modern technological services and expanding infrastructural networking that can accelerate digital development and inclusion in the country.

Speaking on the occasion, Minister Belete said that efforts are underway to create a suitable environment at the national level for the science, technology and innovation sectors to make the sector the backbone of Ethiopia's development endeavors. The four programs are set to be achieved by the ministry during its three-year strategic plan to be implemented starting in this budget year.

Human Resource Development, Employment and Technology Affairs Standing Committee of the House of Peoples Representatives (HPR) Chairman,

Negri Lencho (PhD) during the occasion recommends the Ministry to give serious attention to human resource development in the technology sector. Training of talented youths at home and abroad, making the technology sector among the top job creating sectors, awareness raising, e-service expansion, conducting meaningful researches, skilled human power gaps bridging should get serious attention in the next activities of the ministry to make technology among the key sectors in Ethiopia.

Negeri underlined that in today's world, the development of the technology sector is becoming unpredictable. As to him, not only to sustain development initiatives and realizing prosperity, investing in technology is becoming a matter of survival for countries in the today's competitive world.

According to the chairperson, realizing technology transfer and advancing the local technological development is unthinkable without continuous human resource development in the sector. Development of innovations, researches, technology transfer and other technological developments need capable and well-trained professional citizens. "It is critically high time for Ethiopia to invest in empowering professionals in the technology sector and to invite youths to join the sector," he stated.

"As we are experiencing, the inventions and innovations in the technology sector are making the sector more sophisticated and as a nation we are remaining behind in this regard. We have to go parallel with the technological advancements of the world so as to keep our development in tempo and even to keep our country's national interests," he stated. As to him, without capable and trained professionals in the sector and increasing the number of trained and equipped professionals with the latest technological innovations, it is tough to manage the technology and to maximize the benefits from the advanced technologies. "The current technologies needs well trained scholars and researchers," he underlined.

Understanding the level of the technological development of the current world, he

recommends the Ministry and the sectors under it to give due focus for meaningful human resource development. "Technology transfer and local technological innovation is impossible unless we create an opportunity for the younger generation to get the chance to join the well-known international technological institutions to develop their capacity."

Started by asking the activities being undertaken by the Ministry in expanding professional trainings at home and abroad targeting different areas of specializations in the technology sector, Negeri stated that successful technological transfer is unthinkable without trained human resource. "If we want to realize the strategies we are dreaming in the technology sector, it is critical to invest in building the capacity of professionals in the sector and to create a platform for youths to join international technology institutions to study different technology fields."

The chairman noted that it is important to think beyond business as usual activities in the technology sector and recommends going further. Parallel to developing the capacity of higher education institutions and technical and vocational training centers at home, he recommends creating a national platform for talented students to provide opportunity to join international well-known technology institutes.

"I know, there are Ethiopian students and professionals taking trainings within the well-known international technology institutions and universities by their own efforts or by the ministry of Education," Negeri stated adding "but, I am asking the activities and efforts of the Ministry in expanding this initiative which would help for Ethiopia to exploit well the potential and advantages of the sector with its own professional innovators and researchers," he stated.

Giving an opportunity for young Ethiopians to get practical education in the top technology universities of the world has got a new attention with the available resources. "I am not talking about short term or usual trainings; I am talking about education

for young and talented Ethiopians given scholarships to join top higher education institutions of the world to equip them with the technology of the time."

The chairman also raised the necessity to give due attention for technological researches at home. For Negeri, investing in technological researches would promote innovations, inventions, to modify available ones and to wisely manage technology and its impacts.

During the day, Ministry of Innovation and Technology (MinT) reported that so far the technology sector has created over 200 thousand opportunities nationwide. Appreciating and praising the job opportunities created by the sector, Negeri still recommends exploiting the sector's potential to create more job opportunities.

The job opportunity in the technology sector so far is not matched with the available potential of the sector. "We didn't create enough job opportunity in the sector as expected," Negeri stated adding that "if we create enough jobs in the sector, we can develop the experience to invent and innovate new technological products."

There is high demand of technology at home and the technology we are using is imported, Negeri recommended focusing on technology import-substitution through promoting local technological productions and innovations. "That will be realistic only if we trained professionals by creating more and more job opportunities" Negeri stated. The chairperson reiterated that investing in training of youths; promoting investors in the technology sector and awareness creation in technology have to go parallel so as to promote the development of the sector.

Negeri also recommends Ministry's vibrancy towards creating strong connections with schools from primary to higher education institutions so as to find talented professionals in the science, innovation and technology sectors. "We have to cultivate talented and gifted youths early. The capability and the talent is there, we have to find the professionals by working with schools."



# Society



*Every children, on this planet, has a purpose*

## Transforming Lives through adopting street children

BY LEULSEGED WORKU

Every child is a seed to this planet and within every seed there is a generation that builds a nation. However, for economic, social or political reasons, it is not always common to see every seed bearing the expected fruit. For one or another reason, most seeds (children) are seen perishing with all the potential, hopes and talents entrusted to them from the creator. For the reasons stated above and due to the negative impacts of poverty, several children who are supposed to be the future doctors, pilots, teachers, engineers and others will end up on streets where life is full of suffering. This is not particular to poor countries. It is also common among economically advanced nations where modernization and child protection policy is strong.

Lately, the 6<sup>th</sup> DEBO Orphan Care Summit was held here in Addis Ababa. At the event several stakeholders, NGOs that are working on orphanages and others have shared their experiences on the importance of helping and adopting vulnerable children.

Mamusha Fenta (PhD), is a gospel teacher. He was among the participants of the Summit. Speaking to *The Ethiopian Herald* he said, the culture of adoption must be encouraged among the society. There were times where Ethiopian children used to be adopted or fostered by foreigners. But these days for various reasons, this practice is banned for good. "Now, it is our turn to raise at least one child from the street and adopt him/her into our family.

It is the responsibility of every Ethiopian to show kindness to those orphaned children. Adopting or fostering them into our family has both spiritual and moral rewards. Throwing coins or food to those little children on the street cannot solve their problem. We need to alleviate their challenge in a sustainable way."

According to him, every street child deserves love, care and support in order to overcome

**I**t is the responsibility of every Ethiopian to show kindness to those orphaned children

all the challenging circumstances and lead a decent life. These vulnerable children often face numerous hardships, such as poverty, homelessness, lack of access to education, and exposure to violence and exploitation.

Yonatan Mengistu, is a program Manager at Make your Mark. According to him, children are precious gifts to our planet and hold the key to our collective future. They bring joy, innocence, and a sense of wonder to the world around them. As they grow and develop, they have the potential to become agents of positive change, to shape the future of our society, economy, and environment. In this regard, nurturing them with love and care is the responsibility of every citizen. This includes those orphaned children suffering on streets.

Saving a single child is saving the whole nation and it is the responsibility of every individual. Taking care of orphans or street children, because they are kids with purpose, should not be the only responsibility of either the government or NGOs. It is the duty of all humankind. No matter where they are or what their status is, children need love from their respective families, their surrounding community and the society at large. "This is what we are trying to do. They may have been once victims of addictions; they may have difficult or defiant behavior to handle, but it is our responsibility to show them love and respect and guide them to the right direction.

As to him, we, Ethiopians, have a good culture of helping each other and a tradition that promotes adoption of children. This

culture must be nurtured to help those unfortunate children who suffer due to social and economic challenges. Whether it is through orphan centered institutions or individually, we should learn to cultivate the sense of love within their heart. This can be done either by adopting them into our family or sharing what we have.

Family is the only place where productive and responsible citizens are formed. It is where children feel more protected. No matter what kind of support children may receive from any charity organization, it cannot be compared with the support and love they get from a family. In this regard, while supporting vulnerable children within the institutions. We should also do our best to create family affection. As part of this mission, "Make Your Mark" is working aggressively on family prevention program—that focuses on supporting vulnerable children within their own families.

Most children are seen on streets for various reasons. Lack of security or safety is one reason that drives them into the streets. This safety issue could be absence of food, shelter, access to education or other needs which are basic to all human kinds. Sometimes, having abusive parents or divorce could be a reason that forces children to leave their house and end up on streets. For this reason, the issue of safety is one of the basic considerations of "Make your Mark" as it is trying to reunite orphan children with their parents.

Yonatan also said, as an organization that works focusing on vulnerable children and women, building their psychological and physical health is another area MYM is aggressively working on. Almost all vulnerable children are experiencing hard times on streets or abused by abusive families. Providing them spiritual as well as psychological help has a key role in mending what is broken.

Trent Post is an American citizen and founder of the "Make Your Mark" organization.

Trent had once an opportunity to visit Ethiopia and to adopt a girl who was born on the street. When he found her along with her mom, who was only 13, she was only seven years old. After taking that little girl, Trent and his wife are able to provide her all her necessary needs and that little girl is now a third year college student in the U.S.

According to Trent, we bring children to this world either by birth or adoption. But in either way we have a responsibility to show them love and care. The same is true for street children who suffer from lots of traumas and pains, aside from economic deprivation. We should show them love. This could be by providing all the care they need or adopting them. Having lots of money by itself will not guarantee adoption. It is the love and compassion that makes people adopt or foster children. In this regard, Ethiopians are good examples. There are lots of individuals who are committed to raising street children and adopt them. Even if they do not have sufficient wealth, they do it with compassion, kindness and out of selflessness.

It is crucial for society to recognize the inherent worth and potential of every street child. By offering them love and compassion, we can provide a nurturing environment where they feel valued and supported. Love can make a significant difference in their lives; help them to rebuild their sense of self-worth and provide them with the emotional stability they need to move forward.

Love also entails providing practical assistance and opportunities for street children. This can include access to education, healthcare services, nutrition, and shelter.

Additionally, love means advocating for the rights of street children and working towards systemic changes that address the root causes of their predicament. It involves raising awareness, devising policies that protect their rights and creating a society that supports their well-being.



# International News

## Ugandans worry as government terminates fuel import deals with the Kenya

Uganda's Ministry of Energy and Mineral has proposed a Bill in parliament that seeks to cut reliance on Kenya for importation of its petroleum products.

In a statement from the Ministry on Tuesday, the landlocked nation seeks to cease its reliance on Kenya to access petroleum products citing exposure to "occasional supply vulnerabilities" and an increase in pump prices.

"These vulnerabilities paused additional challenges, resulting in Uganda receiving relatively costly products and ultimately impacting the retail pump prices," read part of the statement adding that the move has been prompted by Kenya's government-to-government importation deal with UAE and Saudi Arabia.

If the Bill is passed into law, the Ministry adds, Uganda shall maintain its overall responsibility of regulating the importation of petroleum products into Uganda by granting the Uganda National Oil Company Limited (UNOC) the mandate to source and supply petroleum products for their markets.

Currently, Uganda imports more than 90 per cent of its petroleum products through

the Port of Mombasa in Kenya and the rest through the Dar es Salaam port in Tanzania.

The importation is done independently by the licensed Ugandan Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) however through the importation structures in Kenya and Tanzania.

Uganda will now ensure that there will be buffer stocks in Uganda and Tanzania will be called upon should there be supply disruptions to the country as a move to guarantee the security of supply.

"The Ugandan government remains in active dialogue with the Government of Kenya for a seamless implementation of the policy change. Both nations The importation is done independently by the licensed Ugandan Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) however through the importation structures in Kenya and Tanzania.

Uganda will now ensure that there will be buffer stocks and Tanzania will be called upon should there be supply disruptions to the country as a move to guarantee the security of supply.

"The Ugandan government remains in active dialogue with the Government of

Kenya for a seamless implementation of the policy change.

Both nations share a commitment to regional stability and economic growth," read the statement.

So far, the law has been approved by the Cabinet and is now waiting for Parliament's approval.

This comes in the wake of an all-time-high fuel price hike in Kenya which has been said to be abetted by the high cost of living but experts have opined something to the contrary.

In Nairobi, a litre of petrol under the new pump price guidelines is Ksh.217.36 diesel Ksh.205.47 and kerosene Ksh.205.06.

In Uganda, a litre of PMS ( Petroleum Motor Spirit ) costs an average of Shs 5400, UGX 5200 for AGO ( Automotive Gasoline Oil )

Officials at UNOC and the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development say that the move will not affect pricing at the Pump, worries among motorists and economists are high.

(Source: Nile post)



## South Africa declares public holiday for World Cup win

South African President Cyril Ramaphosa declared a public holiday after the country won the 2023 Rugby World Cup in Paris on Saturday,

The Springboks claimed their fourth Rugby World Cup win at the weekend, defeating New Zealand by one point, 12-11.

The president said he had made the decision "in celebration of the Springboks' momentous achievement" in a nationwide address Monday.

It will take place on 15 December.

Mr Ramaphosa said the government wanted the day to be a "day of hope, a day of celebration and unity. Our sportsmen and

women have shown us what is possible".

The win has been hailed by the president as a sign of hope, as the country struggles with the world's highest unemployment rate at 42%, as well as other economic problems including high poverty rates and frequent blackouts.

Following the team's World Cup win in Stade de France, Mr Ramaphosa said he wanted the team's unity to become a greater feature of society.

"We need more of this, and not just in the domain of sporting achievement," he said, pointing out that the number of black players in the squad had gone up from one in

1995 to almost half of South Africa's players in the 2023 final.

At the weekend, Mr Ramaphosa also said the team showed many of the qualities he felt would be necessary to tackle South Africa's status as the most unequal country in the world.

"The patriotism we display in sports stadiums should be reflected in our approach to overcoming our challenges," he added.

South Africa's Saturday win means the team has now won half of the eight tournaments they have participated in.

(Source: BBC)

## Africa: Plans to Boost Intra-Africa Trade Underway

The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) with support from the World Food Programme (WFP) and in collaboration with the Ghana Community Exchange convened a meeting of heads of African commodities exchanges and associated entities in Accra, Ghana, recently to establish an Association of African Commodities Exchanges under the AfCFTA umbrella.

AfCFTA will be creating a huge free trade area with 1,3 billion people to boost trade and economic growth within Africa.

By eliminating barriers to trade in Africa the objective of AfCFTA is to significantly boost intra-Africa trade particularly trade in value added production and trade across all sectors of Africa's economy.

The Zimbabwe Mercantile Exchange (ZMX) along with other 15 African commodity exchanges participated in the forum held in Ghana and subsequently joined and became pioneer members of the General Assembly of the Association of African Commodities Exchange (A-ACX). Trade ministry officials from participating countries attended the meeting.

The A-ACX seeks to establish a framework for the operationalisation of intra-continental commodities trading under the AfCFTA protocol.

To facilitate the immediate commencement of activities of A-ACX , a steering committee was formed comprising CEOs from five of the member commodity exchanges, including ZMX CEO Mr Collen Tapfumaneyi. Other members of the committee were drawn from Ghana, Nigeria, Ivory Coast and Tanzania.

The participants at the forum included also trade ministry officials from various African countries.

The A-ACX adopted several key next steps including the signing of a memorandum of understanding at a trade meeting in Cairo shortly to formalize the A-ACX.

The A-ACX will engage stakeholders in each country to share essential insights into the technicalities of intra continental commodity trading, settlement and logistics modalities.

In an interview Mr Tapfumaneyi said the establishment of the A-ACX marks an important step forward in promoting intra African Trade in commodities and related services.

"In line with the objectives of AfCFTA, the A-ACX strives to enhance intra Africa trade across all sectors of Africa's economy, thereby fostering economic growth for the continent. We are deeply honoured to have been appointed as a committee member. We acknowledge the significance of this appointment and the potential for ZMX AND Zimbabwe at large to play a meaningful role in advancing the objectives of the A-ACX and the broader AfCFTA initiative," he said.

The objectives of the initiative is to enhance food security and support sustainability and ethical practices in commodity production and trade, promoting intra African trade in commodities and related services. It also fosters collaboration, knowledge sharing, capacity building and adoption of best practices among member exchanges. This will also enhance visibility of African commodity exchanges and facilitate intra African trade.

(Source: The Herald)





# This is Ethiopia

## Effective marketing strategy to harness tourism potentials

BY TEWODROS KASSA

Ethiopia with its new tourism motto “Land of Origins” is known with numerous exclusive tourist attractions in the world. The country has a potential to increase the number of international tourists inflow through its various diversified and human made tourist attractions.

During the current Ethiopian budget year, the country has set a target to increase the number of international tourists and generate over one billion USD, according to the Ministry of Tourism.

In fact, being the origin and home to more tourist attractions is not enough to generate the planned income from the tourism sector. Thus, the government and pertinent stakeholders are expected to undertake various measures towards harnessing the potential of the sector. These include employing better tourism marketing and promotion activities, new tourist destinations development as well as improving touristic services, tourism experts repeatedly uttered.

Tourism State Minister Sileshi Girma revealed the plan to stage ambassadors’ forum that aims to mobilize Ethiopian diplomats across the globe to be involved in tourism promotion and attract visitors to come and see the country. The forum also intends to enhance the role of diplomacy in increasing tourist’s inflow to Ethiopia. Sileshi further mentioned the government’s plan to employ local and international forums to promote the tourism industry.

According to him, efforts are underway to boost the flow of visitors by developing tourism packages linking the new and existing tourist destinations in the country.

More importantly, digital marketing strategy has become more appropriate to grab the attention of international tourists to motivate them to visit the country. Thus, various social media promotional messages are effective tools to promote the country’s vast tourism endowments.

He further said that the government of Ethiopia has given a great deal of attention to the development of tourism. Many tourist destinations are being developed, he said; citing projects such as Dine for Sheger, Dine for Nation and Dine for Generation, that are schemes initiated by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed.

At the same time, he stated that the constructions of necessary infrastructure works are being carried out around tourist destinations. In this regard, he explained the construction of roads, community eco-lodges and tourism information centers that are underway around parks and tourist destinations.

The State Minister also stated that hotels, lodges and resorts have been constructed by



*Danakil Depression - the hottest place on earth - Afar State, Ethiopia*



*Rock-Hewn Churches, Lalibela - UNESCO World Heritage*

the private sector, pointing out that necessary support is being given to encourage them.

Moreover, by connecting new tourist destinations with the existing ones, efforts are being made to promote them to the world market and increase the flow of tourists.

“All the new destinations that are being built can be visited alone, but works are also underway to link them together with existing tourist destinations to increase the number of tourists. In this regard, we are working hard to develop many new tourist packages,” he said.

Tour operators on their part pointed out that they are working to increase the flow of tourists into the country by introducing tourism packages in the international market by connecting the new ones with the existing.

The effort to renovate tourism sites and develop existing ones will further be consolidated in order to improve the tourist flow, it was indicated.

On her part, Tourism Minister Amb. Nassise Chali stated that 85 companies in the tourism and hospitality sector are taking part in the ongoing Tourism and Hospitality Exhibition inside the premises of the science museum.

While tourism firms have been displaying the historical and natural attraction sites located across the country, technology companies are also involved in the exhibition and presenting their products. Thus, the exhibition is beyond destination promotion; it equally provides the opportunity to encourage investors to be involved in the tourism and hospitality sectors.

The tourism sector has untapped potential for investments and government’s door is always open for investment dialogues and to support businesses, the Minister affirmed.

The tourism exhibition opened in Addis Ababa Science Museum enables 85 exhibitors to promote Ethiopia’s world-famous attraction sites, the Tourism Minister said, adding that more than 200,000 people are expected to visit the display.

Recently, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) also launched the Niin Lee Palm Spring Lodge project in Afar State as part of the ‘Dine for Generations’ initiative.

According to the Office of the Prime Minister (PMO), the project is one of seven tourism destinations to be built through the third ‘Dine’ Prime Ministerial initiative. In the second tour of development initiatives in the Afar State, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) also visited the Afar Bentonite Mineral Mining and Production Factory in Warseso woreda.

Bentonite is a natural mineral considered as a “miracle mud” and “clay of a thousand uses,” with its application in the making of ceramics, paint and other uses.

Afar State is among the top tourist destinations in the country. The State is the origin of humankind; home of the earliest remains of human ancestors ever found, the first being which routinely walked on two feet named the prominent Lucy (*Dinknesh*) oldest fossil, the Danakil Depression, active volcanoes, various hot springs, among others.

However, lack of attention to the sector in the past, lack of infrastructure development and, poor promotion of tourism resources are the major bottlenecks behind the State’s poor tourism sector achievement. Thus, the new initiatives by the Prime Minister sought to boost the State’s international and local tourists’ arrival. At the same time such projects will have significant contributions towards creating numerous job opportunities to the youths and women.

Accordingly, Afar is the home to all kinds of tourist attractions but has not tapped its untapped tourism potential. Thus, the newly launched destination development is another milestone to reinvigorate its tourism sector.