





# News



Shen Qinmin

## Chinese diplomat insists East Africa's tourism complementarity

BY BETELHEM BEDLU

**ADDIS ABABA-** If Ethiopia and other East African countries put together their tourism potentials to the rest of the world, they could not only enshrine the flow of global tourists, but also ensure mutual benefit in the industry, a senior Chinese diplomat said.

Chinese Embassy Deputy Chief Shen Qinmin told The Ethiopian Herald that Ethiopia's unique features and ancient civilization have given the country's tourism industry immense capacity to attract international visitors. "I don't think any African country has as many unique historical and natural attractions as Ethiopia."

Nonetheless, the diplomat stressed the need to present Ethiopia's tourism attraction sites in a package with other East African countries including Kenya and Tanzania to tap the sector's full potential.

In tourism, every country has its unique culture, custom and social setting. Ethiopia and China could exchange and learn from each other in this regard. More importantly, both countries have ancient civilizations that date back to more than 3000 years. There is a great potential of combining the resources together also.

Similarly, he described Addis Ababa as not only the capital of Ethiopia but also of the Horn of Africa and China's gateway to Africa.

"We take that advantage not only to take a day city tour but to go to Addis's environs. I believe Addis Ababa and its surroundings have a lot to offer from the tourism perspective. In this industry, you are going to have a brighter future under the current leadership."

Recently, the Chinese Ministry of Culture and Tourism designated Ethiopia as a new destination for Chinese group tourism and the designation is expected to encourage more Chinese tourists to come here.

Mentioning such designation is the manifestation for China's confidence in Ethiopia as a right place to visit, Qinmin reminded that the two countries are establishing an all-weather strategy partnership. "The fact that the two countries' leadership have become closer politically, it would allow them to get even closer in the future in terms of economy and tourism aspects."

According to him, many Chinese consider Ethiopia is the other version of China owing to the common culture and ancient history they share. Historians said in this regard that China and the Axum Empire are among the four great powers in the 4th century.

"Today we are all embarking on this great renaissance for both Ethiopia and China. That is why you say 'Great Ethiopian Renaissance Dam' because you have a glorious past. In China, we also say 'National Renaissance'; we use the same words to describe our future. Only a few other countries can claim this. And now, we are going to embark on that glory again."

# Ethiopia secures over 1.1 bln USD remittance in quarter year

BY MESERET BEHAILU

**ADDIS ABABA –** Ethiopian Diasporas sent back home over 1.1 billion USD in the form of remittance in the first quarter of the current fiscal year, the Ethiopian Diaspora Service (EDS) disclosed.

In a press statement issued yesterday, the EDS stated that consolidated activities have been carried out to increase the Diasporas' participation in supporting the national efforts towards ensuring the progress of the country.

Accordingly, in the months between July and August, more than 500 Diaspora Ethiopians opened foreign currency accounts and deposited more than 699,000 USD. Additional 93, 000 USD was raised from bond sales, gifts and various fundraising programs for the Abbay Dam.

Similarly, over 163,000 USD was raised to the "Dine for Ethiopia" initiative and an additional 488,000 USD was obtained in cash for various charitable activities. Excluding remittance and investment, over 745,000 USD (over 40,000,000 Birr) was grossed from Diaspora Ethiopians in the reported period.

"To galvanize the Diaspora's development



የኢትዮጵያ ዳያስፖራ ኤጀንሲ  
ETHIOPIAN DIASPORA AGENCY

participation, more than 230 zoom and face-to-face forums were held whereby over 89,000 Diaspora Ethiopians held constructive discussions. In addition, EDS has supported, monitored and consulted some 250 Diasporas to be involved in various trade and investment areas and facilitated training for another 33 in the

technology, health, education, safety, pharmacy, manufacturing and other areas.

The EDS would maintain collaboration with relevant stakeholders to enhance the role and contribution of the Diaspora community to their home country's development, the statement remarked.

## Oromia plans to secure 13 bln Birr from FDI

BY TAMERU REGASA

**ADDIS ABABA-** The Oromia Investment and Industry Bureau revealed a plan to attract about 13 billion Birr in Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) through 149 foreign-owned companies in the current fiscal year.

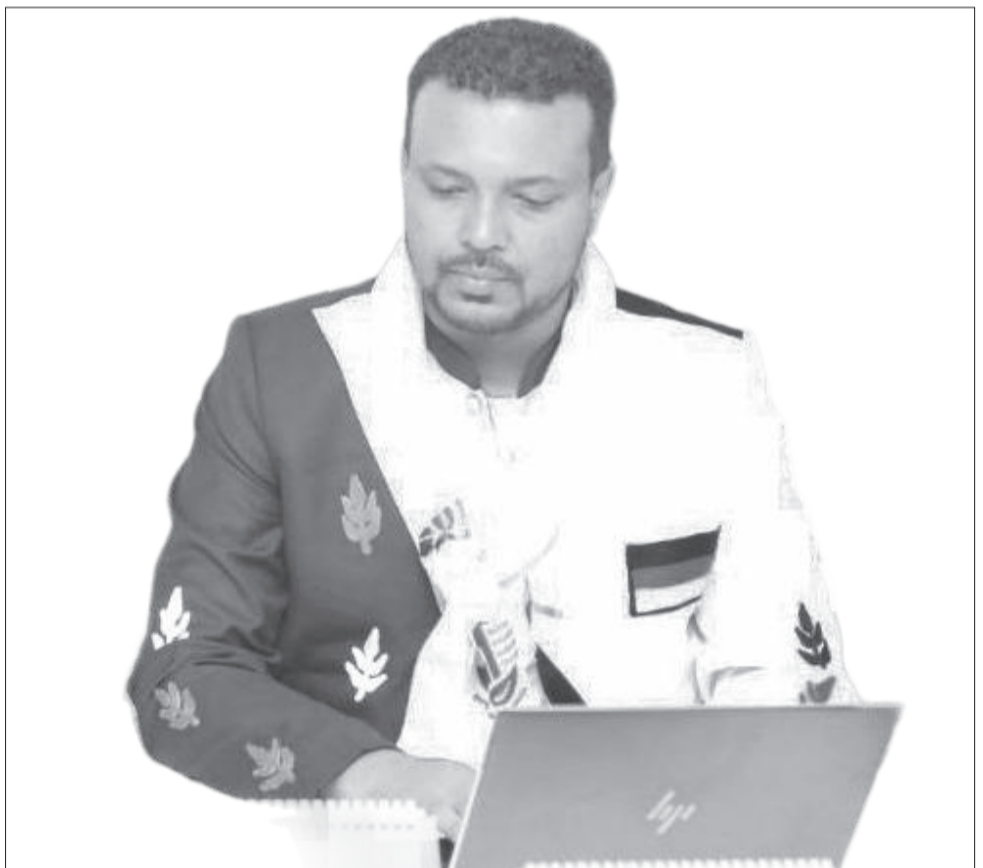
Bureau Deputy Head ErmiasDeneke told Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) that the state has huge investment potential and abundant natural resources and its central location make it the preferred investment destination for global companies.

The bureau has been taking consolidated measures to ease bureaucratic and infrastructural setbacks that hindered investment activities in the state.

He further announced a plan to attract 30,000 local investors in the reported period.

Listing types of firms that will be expected to invest in the state, Ermias said that 21,000 farmers, 705 cooperatives, 3,000 small and micro enterprises and 4,500 big companies are expected to invest in the total outlay of 770 billion Birr.

Upon operation, such investment projects are expected to employ more than two million youth. About areas of engagement, some 7728 projects are set to invest in agriculture, 5,172 in agro-industry, 3,141 in manufacturing and 13,000 in the service sector.



Ermias Deneke

Though the government's priority is the manufacturing industry, the bureau has given a huge plan in the service sector owing to the capacity of the investors and other related factors.

The persistent foreign crunch remains the major obstacle to investment activities in the state. Hence, due attention is being paid

to import substitution strategy and enhance the domestic production capacity.

The bureau also plans to support farmers organized in cooperatives and help them to produce value added agricultural production and increase product and productivity. By doing this, the bureau aims to bolster the cooperative's investing capacity.



# Editorial

## Rendering a long tie vibrant

Following the overhauling task of the investment sector Ethiopia made a point bringing into play the right policy mix amending laws, giving birth to industrial parks backed by infrastructural development, ensuring loan facilities, warranting better birr-dollar exchange and injecting potency into electric and internet services, entrepreneurs from where the sun goes around have begun to zero in on Ethiopia for a win-win deal. This augurs well to Africa too as Ethiopia is the diplomatic seat of the former.

Buttressing the aforementioned scenario, Czech Republic's PM Petr Fiala has just come to Ethiopia as part of his mission to solidify bilateral ties with Ethiopia and to enhance strategic and development cooperation in health, mining, culture, among others. He was accorded a cordial welcome by PM Abiy Ahmed (Ph.D).

The sojourn, which also entails a similar visit to other African countries, is believed to wide open the door for Czech's entrepreneurs in the Ethiopian market.

As export calibrated country, Czech places special emphasis on export support.

Currently, Ethiopia is striding towards economic transformation embracing the expansion of the manufacturing sector. In this regard, inviting Czech's investors to come to Ethiopia in droves is quite plausible. This way apart from creating job opportunities to the multitude here, it is possible ensuring technology and knowledge transfer, substituting import and bolstering export. As the expenditure on technology is average it is conducive to Ethiopia.

Here it is important to note that among the East European countries Czech stands shoulder high when it comes to technology.

Though there is a large swath of areas Czech and Ethiopia could take their relation to higher levels, the sectors that drew focal attention are peace and security, economy, education, research and studies. Czech and Slavic are separated peacefully. This sets a good example to Ethiopia and Africa of amicably handling bones of contention. Regarding education, aside from strong university-to-university clicking, efforts are underway to facilitate opportunities for Ethiopian students to go to Czech for scholarship.

For sure, when it comes to agricultural investment the Czech Republic could extend a fruitful and sustainable guide to Ethiopia. Ethiopia might draw an invaluable lesson on how to modernize its agricultural sector. This underpins Ethiopia's push to stand on its feet pertaining to food self-sufficiency. Ethiopia could as well increase export of agricultural produces both in quality and quantity.

Water treatment is another area that draws the attention of both countries. Though Ethiopia has taken a baby step towards the required end, it could benefit from the wealth of experience the Czech Republic well developed.

Regarding research, joint studies are other areas of attention the two countries possibly zoom in on for common profit and scaling up product and productivity.

Though the two countries had a long relation that spans back to 2010, since 2010, Ethiopia has been Czech salient development partner pertaining to water supply and education.

Czech is also one of the developed countries that pats Ethiopia in the latter have thrust towards ensuring a green resilient economy.

In defending foreign enemies like fascists Ethiopia was getting arms support from this friend in need. Ethiopia could benefit a lot if it draws lesson in this area too.

It is heartening to note that Czech has reiterated its unflinching support to Ethiopia especially in the sphere of water supply and education.

Hopefully, Prime Minister Petr Fiala's stay here will be one when potential areas of cooperation and common growth could be explored.

Previously, the two countries, when they were followers of the socialist ideology, they had a strong cooperation. Through its scholarship grant Czech Republic has helped Ethiopia in garnering skilled manpower in a wide spectrum of specialization such as engineering and medicine.

Against the backdrop above it would be remiss in one's duty not extending a gratitude to Czech Republic and wishing a joyful and fruitful sojourn to PM Petr Fiala.

# Opinion

## Keeping what has been recorded so far intact

BY MENGESHA AMARE

Ethiopia—an east African geopolitically tactical site—the source of the Great Nile, which is also endowed with copious wealth has started practically wining the confidence of others especially concerning the agriculture sector.

Yes, agriculture is the main stay of country's economy, source of manufacturing industry and a big business in Ethiopia as every economic wealth has in one way or another intertwined with it. Productive workforce and potentially rich farm land has to be well assimilated with technological trends to help the country attain what it has long been aspiring—defeating poverty for good and declaring economic sovereignty.

Yes, activities have to be carried out across the nation to help the country, prime operators like industrial runners and the farming community, concerned bodies live up to expectations and ambitions. Wheat, cereals, coffee, oilseed, cotton, sugarcane, cut flowers, khat, among others, have been top crops produced in the country mainly targeting at substituting import and promoting export.

Needless to state, being endowed with numerous natural and manmade resources, untapped assets, wide acre of arable land and many other lucrative wealth bases, Ethiopia should never be exposed to poverty and its peculiar manifestations. The country has to arduously endeavor to make poverty history and ensure economic sovereignty thereby a rewarding achievement in all aspects would be well observed. This fact is being well attested by others. What matters here is the country has to be found at the right place it has been bestowed, eve by internationally known organizations.

To mention but a few, a number of world countries, institutions, organizations and other entities have been witnessing Ethiopia's positive stride towards economic sovereignty and prettily acknowledging the remarkable outcomes Ethiopia has is recording. For instance, African Development Bank (ADB) President Akinwumi Adesina recently said that Ethiopia has become self-sufficient in wheat for the first time in its history.

Such a bold move would make Ethiopia self-sufficient in wheat and for the first time in its history and helps it becomes an exporter of wheat to neighboring countries.

Most importantly, Ethiopia has to embark on the agriculture sector which has been helping it secure economic progress since time immemorial and continues to be nation's prime economic driver. Hence, universities, agricultural research centers, national and regional agricultural research centers, seed and fertilizer companies and agri-business entities and others have to amalgamate forces and employ dependable technologies thereby hitting dual targets:

garnering benefits for themselves and pushing the country steps forward to be regionally, continentally and even globally competitive.

Ethiopia has already been a top African wheat producer and would continue trekking towards growth and development in the years to come. This hard fact has to be kept intact and the country should live up to expectations especially regarding wheat production and export. The country has now been sub-Saharan Africa's largest wheat producer despite it has accommodating a rapid growing population, particularly in towns and cities following the rural urban migration.

True, if the country is committed to enlarge technologies for agricultural transformation, it will seize the ladder of success and be self-sufficient within the shortest time possible as it has possessed the entire requirement for real growth. Her, rolling out irrigation systems and utilizing new types of wheat seeds that are suited to Ethiopia's hot and dry climate will boost production, help feed the country's over 120 million population. Using modern technology, pumping alert human capital to the sector, applying reliable and quality agricultural inputs like select seeds, which can better tolerate Ethiopia's hot lowlands and yield more grain at harvest time, should be well capitalized on since these are part and parcel of sectorial achievement.

Farmers in Ethiopia need to be provided with hands-on training in using new seeds, utilizing fertilizers and applying lucrative breeding schemes to be much more productive. Besides, the rollout of new seeds and irrigation systems are part of broader efforts to help farmers get fairer prices at market, invest in new equipment and benefit out of new roads and other infrastructure.

All in all, it is quite important to seek and take promising measures to sustain Ethiopia's exemplary strides towards attaining wheat self-sufficiency and export orientation, which can definitely be a model for other African countries. Thence, they need to emulate this bold initiative with their respective change treks. Ethiopia is working to accelerate and sustain wheat self-sufficiency and other potential advantages, too.

As the second largest wheat producer in sub-Saharan Africa next to South Africa, Ethiopia has planned to become wheat self-sufficient. Amid a looming food crisis, it has also emerged as an African country that has taken significant steps to achieve self-sufficiency in food production. Interestingly, the country is recognized for his exceptional and innovative work in the African food system. Hence, it has been working hard in the fertilizer industry leveraging resources for smallholder farmers thereby further boosting agricultural productivity including wheat production.

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



## The Ethiopian Herald

Established in 1943

Published daily except Mondays  
By The Ethiopian Press Agency

### Office of the CEO

Tel. 011-126-42-22  
Fax. 251-011-156-98-62  
email- [epa@press.et](mailto:epa@press.et)

### Advertisement and Dist. Department

email: [etpresspromotion@gmail.com](mailto:etpresspromotion@gmail.com)  
Tel. 011-156-98-73/011-811-13-15  
Telegram :- 0976084707 - press

### Editor-in-Chief: Worku Belachew

email- [workubelachew@press.et](mailto:workubelachew@press.et)  
Address- Nifas Silk Lafto Sub-city  
Woreda - 05, House No----  
Tel- +251 111 26 41 98

### Managing Editor: Wakuman Kudama

Email: [wakuma220@gmail.com](mailto:wakuma220@gmail.com)

### Deputy Editors-in-Chief:

Alem Hailu  
Elizabeth Mengistu  
Zekarias Woldemariam  
Desta Geberehiwot  
Daniel Beyene

### Website: [www.press.et](http://www.press.et)

email: [ethiopianherald@press.et](mailto:ethiopianherald@press.et)  
Fb//Ethiopian Press Agency/  
The Ethiopian Herald



# News

## Scientist emphasizes digital agro-advisories utilization

BY ASHENAFI ANIMUT

**ADDIS ABABA-** Bundling the utilization of digital agro-advisories and technologies remains important to overcome the effects of the climate crisis, a principal scientist said.

Approached by *The Ethiopian Herald*, a Scientist at the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center Kindie Tesfaye (PhD) said that user centric bundled climate information service and agricultural advisories help the farming community to make informed decisions. Such activities would help better manage farm risks and enhance productivity and income as well as ensure food security.

The scientist further noted that the Accelerating Impacts of CGIAR Climate Research for Africa (AICCRA) and other relevant actors have been contributing to change the livelihoods of the rural community through globally proven climate



based research adaptation. Such initiatives would help the farming community to resist the impact of climate challenges.

“We have been working with a digital platform ‘LERSHA’ to deliver integrated data and information and provide various services to smallholder farmers. Besides, this digital platform gives farmers easy access to climate informed services and agro advisories.”

Moreover, Kindi mentioned the implementation of digital agro advisory services in 51 districts to ensure the farming community’s digital literacy.

As climate change is adversely affecting the smallholder farmers, they are working to digitize the agricultural system and deploying capacity development activities via pilot projects. Hence, it managed to benefit over 130,000 people in 151 districts

of Amhara, Oromia and SNNPS in the previous year.

“We have provided technical and human capacity building training for some 5,000 development agents, 10,000 farmers and 2,000 experts from 51 districts. In Ethiopia, the demand for actionable climate information and tools is growing in response to the increased frequency and severity of weather and climate impacts and the changing nature of the climate.

So far, the project has been supporting EMI in the co-development and implementation of the National Framework for Climate Services to complete the value chain for climate services, the expert remarked.

Ethiopia is among the six African countries implementing the project that helps manage the risks of climate variability and climate change through developing and incorporating science-based climate information on the global, regional and national scale, it was learned.

### Expert underlines ensuring...

Speaking with the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA), Political Science and International Relations Lecturer within Haramaya University, Emeru Gemechu (PhD) mentioned that the nation needs to seize opportunities that would allow it to ensure its national interest.

Building smooth relationship with the Western and Eastern world would allow the country to be free from any external influence. Hence, it is important to manage diplomatic relationship with a country in a way that it doesn’t affect cooperation with the rest, he added.

“It is important to acknowledge both Western and Eastern world’s contribution for nation’s

holistic development. As China supports developing countries in technology related aspects, the Western have their own role in provision of humanitarian assistances,” Emeru said.

Owing to this fact, countries like Ethiopia need to make sure that their relationship is fair and smooth, he underlined.

During the cold war, he reminded that Ethiopia had a strong and impartial approach in its relationship with the Western and Eastern World and it had safeguarded its national interest from both sides.

However, failing to apply the same approach during the Derg regime, has costed the

country to counter fraying diplomatic ties with the western world, he noted.

To this end, the country must draw a lesson and need to ensure that its diplomatic approach allow it to work with any country that won’t affect its national interest, the expert stressed.

Each country’s relation relies on keeping national interests that’s why diplomats need to perform their duties by giving due emphasis on issues that do not affect rather than enhancing the Ethiopia’s interest, according to Emeru.

He also believed that Africa can build a relation with the rest of the world without affecting its interests.

### Government’s crop dev’t strategy...

economy.

Therefore, he suggested that campaigns to achieve all possible outcomes should be reinforced.

As to the Director, rice can be produced using small farmlands. “We can also farm fishery in parallel with rice on the same land at the same time,” he commented.

According to him, Ethiopia’s weather and soil type is suitable for rice cultivation. He, however underlined that it needs to identify potential areas and seed types.

Rice Expert and Fogera Rice Research and Training Center Director, Fiseha Worede (PhD) said that farmers are using cluster farming to increase their rice productivity.

A study conducted in 2020 by Fogera National Rice Research and Training Center indicated that Ethiopia has 30 million hectares of land appropriate for rice farming.

Fiseha believed that the country would expand rice production in the future to ensure food security.



### Ministry to distribute...

needed to treat the targeted 300,000 hectares in the fiscal year.

The allocation has been accurately planned to supply the required amount across the nation, he said, mentioning that an average of thirty quintals of lime is necessary to treat one hectare of land.

Lire further stated that this year the country has spent more than 8.5 billion birr for acidic soil treatment which shows government’s commitment to addressing this pressing agricultural concern.

The regional States of Oromia, Amhara, Sidama, Central Ethiopia, Southwest Ethiopia, South Ethiopia, and Benshangul

Gumuz will receive their respective allocations based on the number of hectares requested for treatment, he added.

Ethiopia has seven million hectares of land affected by acidity, of which 3.7 million hectare land is classified as highly acidic, according to the Leading Executive.

As to him, the Ministry’s comprehensive plan to distribute nine million quintals of lime is an essential step towards improving agricultural yields and restoring soil health.

He mentioned that of the 3.7 million hectares severely affected by acidity, some 105,000 hectares have already been treated in the previous year - representing a

significant milestone in the ongoing efforts to combat soil degradation.

The government is working in collaboration with relevant stakeholders to ensure the smooth production, delivery, and application of lime throughout the regions, he said, while urging pertinent bodies to take collective responsibility and adopt sustainable soil management practices.

Lire also stressed the importance of utilizing natural fertilizers and cultivating resistant crop varieties to preserve soil fertility and mitigate the negative impacts of poor management and environmental disasters.

### Czech Premier’s visit...

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD).

It was learned that the Premier’s visit aims to strengthen the bilateral ties with Ethiopia and to enhance strategic and development cooperation in health, mining, culture and other sectors. The visit is also said to bring new opportunities for Czech entrepreneurs in Ethiopia’s market.

Ethiopia and the Czech Republic established diplomatic relations in the late 1940’s. Since then, the two countries have been collaborating in education, agriculture, transport and other areas.



# Opinion

## Positive stride for bolstering equitable, just water utilization

BY MENGESHA AMARE

Not only has the Nile water been the source of life for Egyptians but it has also been lifeblood of Ethiopians as the majority of them have been in a state of darkness and underdevelopment despite the presence of a huge source of water concealed in their armpits.

Earlier, the sturdy and swift-flowing Nile eroded Ethiopia's soils and killed people and cattle of the nation. Instead of swallowing morsels of misery and hazards due to the river and crying over being disadvantaged, Ethiopians have now been in a position to be compensated via reaping fruits out of damming Abbay.

Yes, Abbay (Nile River) has been a major historical asset to Ethiopians and has served as their channel to retain their important connection with all riparian countries peculiarly to the Horn. Even as history would have it and as some of the Ethiopian legends have depicted, the Blue Nile as the route of migration from Egypt to Ethiopia under the pressure of famine and religious oppression and as a means of communication between the rulers of the two countries.

From this, one can easily deduce that the Nile has been a significant institutional factor in relations between Egypt and Ethiopia. Hence, the two countries and their respective population have to well enjoy having a rewarding tie engrained from history instead of exacerbating disputes and deviations citing old-fashioned colonial rhetoric.

With a prettily recognized natural right and a principled resource treatment to utilize the waters of Abbay, Nile River, Ethiopia is recurrently reflecting its sheer stance on the utilization of water resource. It has all the time expounded that the waters of the Nile have to be equitably and fairly utilized by all riparian states predominantly Egypt, Sudan and itself instead of reflecting the notion and sticking to the discounting agreements concluded by colonial power in 1929 and 1959.

Surprisingly, the 1929 agreement exclusively provided Egypt with water rights over the Nile, and other countries are not permitted to unilaterally initiate water infrastructure projects that reduce the Nile water quantity, water level, or the water arrival date, without prior permission from Egypt. Based on such an arrogant and excluding maxim, Egypt always sticks to it and reflects a stubborn stance on the Nile waters.

Ethiopia has on the contrary always been amplifying its position as far as the construction of the Grand Abbay Dam is concerned as it is all the time coming up with convincing justifications and rooted water and utilization concept. It has always

reciting the hymn of fair share and equitable water resource utilization devoid of the intention of imposing a significant harm on the downstream riparian states such as Egypt and Sudan. Even the countries themselves have known since the inception of the construction of the Dam that the scheme will never impose any harm on them ideally or practically.

Egypt has consistently held the opinion that the Nile riparian states are perpetually bound by the agreements signed by others on their behalf. How on earth! The riparian states that were not parties to such a distribution perceive it as an acceptable order.

In principle, the waters of the Nile are generally utilized for irrigation, hydro-electric power generation, water supply, fishing, tourism, flood control, water transportation and the protection of public health. The economy of almost the entire Nile Basin nations consists of agricultural activities of the Nile. Recognizing all this fact, the desert agriculture nation, Egypt, has to go with the 21st century ideology of globalization and harmoniously using a shared asset and natural property.

Yes, the Nile is a source of livelihood for all riparian especially for Egypt, Sudan and Ethiopia. However, the water is not evenly distributed either over the year or geographically. For instance, Ethiopia contributes approximately 86 percent of the volume of the water which flows annually without disruption.

The conflict in the Nile Basin mainly emanates from the fact that Egypt is more than 95 percent dependent on water that stems from upstream countries, and close to 86 percent of this water stems from the Ethiopian highlands.

The very point here is, Ethiopia has never acknowledged, will never accept the unilateral agreements concluded both in 1929 and 1959 solely in favor of Egypt because of the prejudice to the former's interest. Under the auspicious of the contemporary thinking, the position of Ethiopia is one and only one to have a win-win solution and legitimate right as well as natural right to use the Nile water for its socioeconomic development and that of the Horn, too. In addition to the historical reference to natural and territorial right, Ethiopia has to utilize its water to feed the people apart from its contribution of over 86% of the water share.

Ethiopia's stand for the most part has been a win-win situation for both the lower stream countries like Sudan and Egypt and itself. Ethiopia, as 86 percent contributor to the Nile River, still promotes the notions of collective, just and equitable water use among the Nile Basin Initiative (NBI) countries since long back.

True, Ethiopia understands the water needs and demands of downstream countries, Sudan and Egypt—which both heavily depend on waters of Nile River for irrigation, transportation, and flood-control and power generation. In its long history, Ethiopia did not interfere in other countries' affairs nor does it appreciate others making unsolicited interference in its internal affairs.

The county has firmly believed in peaceful co-existence with its neighbors including Nile Basin countries advocating for open dialogues, solving regional problems and working towards collective regional peace and mutual development. Besides, it needs to develop water use policy framework to promote fair and equitable water utilization for Nile Basin countries with a view to blistering common growth, development and prosperity among all riparian nations on the Nile River.

Unequivocally, riparian countries do have an initiative duty bound to raise their ideas in balanced and justified manner. Needless to state, eleven riparian states are sharing the basin, and the basin is made up of two sub-basins—the Eastern Nile comprising Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, South Sudan, and Sudan as well as the Nile Equatorial Lakes containing Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, Tanzania, and Uganda.

The main characteristics of the basin are an uneven distribution of the water resources, low rainfall, high climate variability and diversity, high potential evapotranspiration—especially in the downstream regions—and high vulnerability to droughts.

The basin runoff coefficient is significantly lower than other rivers of similar length, and land degradation within many parts of the Nile has reduced the soil moisture-holding capacity.

Yes, as a founding member of the Nile Basin Initiative (NBI), Ethiopia needs to push harder to develop the river in a cooperative manner, share substantial socioeconomic benefits, and promote regional peace and security. Interestingly, equitable and reasonable utilization is a core principle in the distribution of water resources on the side of Ethiopia. Practical application of the equitable and reasonable utilization principle to resolve a water allocation dispute has been a significant challenge as Egypt and Sudan have shown an ever-fluctuating stance along that line.

Egyptians have always believed that Ethiopia was the source of their Nile. Besides, they were convinced that the Ethiopians were capable of controlling or even obstructing the flow of the Nile, and Ethiopia's supposed capability to control the Nile flow was a source of pride for Ethiopians and pressure on Egyptians. This

alleged ability of the Ethiopians to control the Nile water and cause famine in Egypt was seen to be a perpetual threat by the Egyptian rulers.

Since the control of the water on the side of Ethiopia by constructing the grand Abbay Dam has been well attested that it would have no harm on downstream countries, the latter are not expected to develop sorts of threats as they themselves have also known the very fact in this regard; such a good faith would help flourish the history of the relations especially between the two sisterly nations, Ethiopia and Egypt.

The most important concept that has to be well comprehended in this regard is all Nile riparian countries have been influenced by the historical relations and have suffered from multifarious water-development challenges. In clear terms, the nations have been suffering from major confronts like underdevelopment, poverty, population growth, and climate change.

Without a shadow of doubt, all riparian countries have been suffering from different degrees of water scarcity and uneven utilization of water resources. To mention but a few, Egypt has suffered from physical water scarcity, whereas the rest of the Nile riparian countries have suffered from economic water scarcity and other related aspects as they have been made devoid of equitably and fairly utilizing their communal advantage. In addition to this, the water challenge has been compounded by the developmental steeplechases faced by all Nile riparian countries.

In a nutshell, the emergence of modern international water laws have contributed a lot to the notion of giving an awareness of the rights of riparian countries on shared water resources through its icon principle of equitable and reasonable utilization on trans-boundary water resources. In the era of globalization and means of entertaining harmonious means of common assets and natural resources utilization like water, attempting to show the validity of the historical notion of hydro-hegemony, which is basically void in any contemporary international water laws, is tantamount to departing self from the united world arena and running unlawful enrichment at the expense of others.

Predominantly, the positive stride on which Ethiopia has been trekking to bolster an equitable and a just water utilization has to be well internalized by others to have a fairer and peaceful region, continent and globe as well.

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



# Business & Economy

## Enhancing efforts in substituting imports

BY ABEBE WOLDEGIORGIS

It is obvious that the nation's economic main stay is agriculture which is characterized by subsistence farming. It is also vulnerable to climate change and global warming. In time of adversity, its yield will be critically affected and consequently, the economy will be shaken. The livestock, which is the sub sector of agriculture, is also traditional and its contribution to the sector is insignificant.

The sector supplies raw materials to the agro- industry, food to the local market and it is also a major foreign currency earner which contributes up to 70 percent. The agriculture products exported to the foreign market is less competent because it is exported in the raw form and this necessitates exporting the products with value addition.

Ethiopia imports more capital goods and commodities than it exports and there is a huge gap so that to narrow the gap, import substitution is taken as a way out by the government. Currently, the nation has faced negative trade balance, foreign currency crunch, illegal trade, inflation, high unemployment rate, dropping of export volume and others. Hence, boosting export and import substitution have been taken as remedial actions to solve shortage of hard currency. In addition, mitigating illegal trade also boosts the nation's hard currency garnering capacity because the informal channel of trade will be changed in to legal and formal and increases exports.

The government, in its 10 years perspective economic plan, underlined the value of import substitution to save its meager hard currency. Ethiopia, though it is an agrarian economy, importing agriculture products is embarrassing. Therefore, ceasing this trend as soon as possible and substituting at least imported agricultural products by local one in the shorter period is a must. The raising of wheat production through dry season irrigation farm can be taken as a good example in this regard.

Recently, the Minister of Industry said import substitution efforts will be intensified over the coming years to enhance Ethiopia's economic development. A half-day consultative discussion with stakeholders on the national import substitution strategy was conducted in Addis Ababa a week ago. On the occasion, Melaku Alebel, Minister of Industry, said that Ethiopia's foreign trade gap when compared with other countries is very huge that hampers the economic growth and poverty reduction.

Ethiopia imports products worth 18 billion USD on average while its export is not exceeding 5 billion USD, he added. For the developing countries such as Ethiopia, trade deficit is intolerable and unless reversed step by step, it overshadows the nation's efforts to attain economic growth. According to him, this is mainly due to the fact that the nation exports more of raw materials that limit its competitiveness in the global market.

The Government has been working to reverse this reality with a view to expediting the development of the country



One of the manufacturing industries to substitute import

by strengthening the industrial sector. In this regard, enhancing import substitution has been given the top priority.

Ethiopia's import substitution strategy has been bearing fruit and the nation is able to substitute products such as textiles and food stuffs. Military uniforms that used to be imported are now fully substituted with domestic products while 100 percent of beer barley seed demand of the country has also been covered with domestic products.

Encouraged by this achievement, and supported by the strategy, Ethiopia is able to substitute products worth 2.26 billion USD over the last fiscal year. The nation has also substituted import products worth 350 million USD in the first quarter of the current fiscal year.

The Minister indicated that import substitution efforts will be intensified over the coming years to enhance Ethiopia's economic development. At the consultative meeting, he further said that due attention is given to value addition and diversification of export products. Some 96 import products have been identified to be produced locally in short and long-term plans, it was indicated.

Furthermore, the Minister indicated that plans are in place to export the substituted import products. The Minister has also explained that it was planned to develop a capacity-building strategy, which will be discussed with pertinent stakeholders soon.

Cognizant of the macro-economic imbalance, the government has given emphasis to boost export through value addition and substitute import because export boosts the nation's hard currency earning capacity while the import substitute saves the meager resource which would be allocated for importation.

So far, value addition of export products has been implemented through expanding the manufacturing industry. The government established industry parks in various selected parts across the country in the places where there are sufficient raw materials and labor.

The manufacturing sector enables to boost export, substitute import, create link with the agriculture sector, create job opportunity, attract foreign and local investment and broaden role of the private sector in the economy.

One of the government's schemes to address shortage of hard currency is attract Foreign Direct Investment. In order to attract foreign investors, the government created enabling environment beforehand and among others, it has adjusted the exchange rate which is preferable as compared to other African countries, provided working places in the industry parks in a fair price, supplied water and electric power with affordable price and availed the internet and banking services inside the parks.

According to studies of the African Development Bank, countries must work effectively and governments need to withhold hard currency held in their central bank reserves in order to substitute import and expand their exports. This limits the amount that can be used by locals to import goods and equipments. Governments want hard currency to spend only on essential commodities that cannot be produced domestically.

This method is designed to increase spending on domestic products and subsequently, stimulate the manufacturing industry and decrease unemployment. However, in order for this to be achieved, governments should facilitate the building of manufacturing plants. Further effort from African governments is needed to attract foreign investment because investors often expect and it is logical to benefit from incentive packages and economically beneficial zones dedicated to specific industries for free trade zones. Nigeria, Ghana, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Kenya and Mozambique are just a few countries to have already taken these steps.

Nigeria has in fact devoted three of its six economic zones solely to manufacturing, using incentives such as tax-free imports of equipment, three-year tax holidays and preferential procurement processes to lure

foreign investment. In the case of Ethiopia, the establishment of free trade zone in Dire Dawa City in this regard can be mentioned.

In order to achieve economic growth and to reduce dependency on import products, developing countries must take expansion of manufacturing industries as a viable option. It can easily attract the emerging economies such as China, Turkish, India and Brazil.

According to the World Bank's recent report, China and India have excess forex deposited in their banks and they prefer African and other developing countries as their investment destiny. So far, they engaged in infrastructure construction, developing energy sector and manufacturing.

Currently, the two countries play a vanguard role in the manufacturing sector in Ethiopia. They engaged in textile and garment, mining and agriculture. All the products are produced for export and boost the country's foreign currency earning capacity.

The other thing which needs solution and critically hampered the nation's foreign currency earning capacity is illegal trade. According to the Ministry of Agriculture's recent report, more than 10 thousand cattle are exported illegally to the neighboring countries per week.

According to Seifu Hailu (PhD), the Animals Quarantine Regulatory Executive Director under the auspicious of the Ministry of Agriculture, some traders are resorted to engage in illegal trade by exporting cattle to the neighboring countries in order to obtain better hard currency. To contain such illegal trade, supervision work has been undergone in the border areas but the intensity of the territory made the effort in effective.

As to Seifu, the low price of cattle in the local market and distance to the central market pushed traders to engage in illegal practices through nearby borders. Therefore, in addition to strengthening import substitution, enhancing export and containing illegal trade should be taken as a way out to alleviate foreign currency crunch.



# Planet Earth

## Climate Services framework circumvents duplication efforts

BY EPHREM ANDARGACHEW

**G**lobal Framework for Climate Services (GFCS) is a framework designed to mainstream climate science into decision-making at all levels and help ensure that every country and every climate-sensitive sector of society is well equipped to access and apply the relevant climate information.

More precisely, governments and organizations develop the National Framework on Climate Service as a strategy to improve the delivery of climate services. It seeks to increase the usefulness, accessibility, and availability of climate data for various sector decision-making.

The framework encourages cooperation and coordination amongst the various parties involved in providing climate services, such as end users, research institutes, policymakers, and meteorological organizations.

The framework intends to assist informed decision-making and help societies adapt to the effects of climate change by providing standardized processes, capacity-building programs, and effective communication channels.

Due to their limited resources and lack of ability to adapt, developing nations are frequently more vulnerable to the effects of climate change. For this reason, the service is crucial. These nations may handle their unique requirements and challenges with the support of the framework, which offers an organized and well-coordinated approach to climate service delivery.

The framework can help developing countries in a variety of ways. It promotes the development of national climate information systems, which are critical for gathering and interpreting climate data. They can use these systems to monitor and predict climate patterns, assess risks, and design suitable adaptation measures.

Ethiopia is one of the developing countries that has been affected by the negative effects of climate change. The country's agricultural, water resource sectors and the health of its population are vulnerable to climate fluctuations. Recognizing the potential of a National Framework for Climate Services (NFCS) to assist these and other climate-sensitive sectors, Ethiopia held a national level.

According to the Ethiopian Metrology Institute (EMI) Director-General Fetene Teshome, Ethiopia has played a significant role in the implementation of the global climate service framework. As a result, the institute has been implementing global, national, and regional frameworks in collaboration with several ministries. The NFCS, which will be operational in 2021, has also received approval from various stakeholders to function at the federal, regional, zonal, and woreda levels.

The institute's primary focus areas include



**The framework can help developing countries in a variety of ways. It promotes the development of national climate information systems, which are critical for gathering and interpreting climate data**



weather predictions and early warning systems in short-, medium-, and long-term forecast services delivered through various channels such as TV, radio, media websites, and newspaper platforms.

Furthermore, in accordance with its 10-year strategic plan, the institute is offering short-, medium-, and long-term training at various levels, as well as expanding branch offices to cooperatively offer efficient climate services from the centers that help increase production and productivity, he stated.

Water and Energy Minister Habtamu Itefa (Dr. Eng.) in his part noted that structuring and mainstreaming the use of climate information and services at all levels is highly commendable for the effective implementation of the National Framework on Climate Service (NFCS).

It is imperative to organize institutional structures from federal to lower levels and work cooperatively to successfully implement the framework to overcome the climate crisis at the national and global levels.

Citing the multifaceted global impacts of climate change, the minister further remarked that Ethiopia has been facing various natural calamities due to inefficient utilization of information and prediction, so this structural framework would be of significant importance to utilize the early warning information system effectively in an organized manner.

"The ministry has been implementing water allocation projects via water balance schemes to distribute water for irrigation, power, and other purposes. By doing so, it was managed to overcome the flood occurrences in some parts of the country through organized task forces nationally and enabled it to successfully fill the Abbay Dam in an accelerated way," he noted.

Haramaya University College of Agriculture and Environmental Science Dean Dr. Zelalem Bekeko said that climate services are imperative to lessen the adverse effects of climate change by preventing climate risk through lowering green house gas emissions, reducing climate risk through

adaptation, and managing residual climate risks with tools like climate risk financing or transformative initiatives.

It helps also to assess the risks associated with climate change, provide services related to climate information, and enhance farmers' ability to manage risks, build their resilience, and ensure sustainable agricultural growth. Therefore, agricultural experts should apply to lessen the negative impact of climate change.

HU College of Agriculture and Environmental Science lecturer and researcher Tasisa Temesgen stated that the lack of timely climate services, climate change's negative impacts, and variability posed challenges in agricultural production and productivity across the country.

Inadequate access to climate information, for example, has contributed to increasing food demand. As a result, in the context of climate change, climate risk management in agricultural extension is a critical aspect in increasing productivity and fulfilling the expanding global food demand.

To boost agricultural productivity, it is critical to receive climatic information services through multiple channels and provide advice to farmers, particularly during crop planting preparation and harvesting, he explained.

Besides, implementing strategies such as weather monitoring and forecasting, climate-smart agriculture capacity building, and knowledge sharing, in particular, can effectively address climate risks, boost agricultural productivity, and contribute to sustainable food systems in the face of climate change, he emphasized.

According to him, climate services are essential for agricultural professionals to focus on fundamental components of climate, climate forecasts, and climatic information, current climate change and variability, and the negative effects on agricultural production.

He also stated that global climate change is accelerating and hurts agricultural production through changes in water depth and rainfall patterns. As a result, climate information services are critical to dealing with the negative effects of climate change.

More importantly, the climate information services are important in making aware of the main problems caused by climate change, understanding the methods and use of climate information, and doing critical work that benefits farmers by using accurate information sources, he elucidated.

Generally, the Ethiopian National Framework on Climate Service is critical to the country's efforts to adapt to climate change. When climate services are improved, decision-makers can make more informed decisions that reduce vulnerability and promote resilience in the face of changing climate conditions. It is also equally important to avoid duplication efforts and maximize the negative impact of climate change.



# Art & Culture

## A time when reading books has become a passion for the freak

BY MULUGETA GUDETA

There were famous “hot spots”, to borrow from cyber vocabulary, around Addis Ababa that were famous for their attraction to book warms. If memory does not fail me, the famous “Tea Room” is one of them. It was a place of gathering for the intellectuals and “book mongers” who used to frequent that particular spot on the edge of Piazza. People went there not really for its quality of tea or coffee as for its strategic location as a vantage point of visibility and display of their love for books or their passion for book reading.

Most of the regulars at “Tea Room” were middle-aged university lecturers or high government employees. They differed from the riffraff as well as university students who were fond of discussing revolutionary topics and palace scandals or marvel at the sight of the prettiest high school girl walking past the university campus.

It was the time when the best and brightest writers edited the then popular, “Mirror” and “Addis Reporter”, an English-magazine that was the equivalent of The New Yorker in the United States. Arat Kilo area at that time was supposed to be the meeting point of intellectuals with political affiliation of every hue and shape, ranging from the extreme Leftists to monarchists and everything in between. Youngsters with huge Afro haircuts, bell-bottomed trousers, easygoing manners and jaunty laughter, took their cheerful sweethearts to the movies in Piazza where a single ticket cost 50 cents or one birr.

They usually went to go to the famous Gebretensay Pastry nearby or to “Baklaba Bet” to enjoy the cakes and cappuccinos before they went into the cinema halls to see Clark Gable in “Gone with the Wind” or John Wayne in “The Alamo”. Indian movies were popular at that time and you could see some of the famous ones like, “Waqf”, “Love in Tokyo” and other romantic performances that might look weird or innocent now but were the talks of the town at that time.

What was remarkable at about time was that at least one movie addict had a newspaper or magazine or a book in their hand whenever they travel in the city. It was usual to read something until the shows started. You could see people reading, even in crowded buses and taxis that they called “Wuyiyit”. You saw people reading newspapers on the verandahs of tee shops, bars or restaurants. You could meet people reading magazines in barber shops and waiting in the queues at supermarkets.

The most famous reader of the time around the Arat Kilo area and Berhanena Selam printing press, was a journalist and author who was so obsessed with reading that he read even while peeing at a street



corners. I better withhold his name as a sign of respect for his healthy or legendary obsession. What was shocking or funny was not his peeing in the street because most people did it as they do it now. This man held his organ in one hand and the book in the other and urine flowed at the same speed as his reading.

Later on came another writer, this time a writer and bookseller known by his pen name as Awgechew Terefe (a.k.a. Hiruy Minas). He was selling and reading books first at the old book stalls in Mercato and then around the National Theatre. It was rumored at that time that Awgechew would read a dictionary if by any chance he had no favorite book with that he did not skim through but analyze the stories and characters and that was evident when he talked about the books he had read.

Most of the talks among the book reading fraternity centered the most famous Ethiopian readers including the late Dr. Kebede Michael who was said to have read some 3000 books in his lifetime before he succumbed to the vagaries of life after his home library was ransacked and his books confiscated by the Kebele officials under the Derg. His residence was turned into one of their offices while the author was forced to hire a room in Tourist Hotel where he lived for a long time. We could see him walking to and from Piazza, holding his cane in one hand while shaking his fingers at some invisible person or thing. He had aristocratic bearings and seemed to imitate the manners of George Bernard Shaw, the famous British playwright. However, he did not look well, maybe because he resented life without his books.

Even among the common folks, carrying books in their pockets or holding them with their hands was sometimes considered a

sign of erudition and everybody had their share of “mobile books” as we have now our mobile phones. There were people like the other famous journalist whose fondness with reading knew no time limit.

This man was rightly considered the best newspaper editor and news writer of his generation and he apparently sharpened his writing skills by reading The Sunday Times of London, The Guardian or The Economist magazine that he read from page one to the end. His friends sometimes poked fun at his reading obsession. He was both a legendary newspaper writer and a lover of beer he enjoyed both at the same time and with the same relish.

Reading was so common and popular at that time that even soccer lovers would not go to the Addis Ababa stadium without newspapers in their hands. They read the papers until the match started and when the sun beat hard, they used them to protect their heads from the heat. When the team they supported won, they set the papers on fire by way of celebration. In the dark, long after the match was over, you could see the flames from the burning newspapers that produce an eerie contrast with the darkness around the stadium.

Nowadays, reading books in the street, in bars or restaurants is not only a rare sight but anyone who indulges in this honorable habit might be seen as a weirdo. In those places where book lovers were often seen turning book pages, or discussing them with their pals, another generation has long settled down, a generation fond of counting wads of money in public, showing off and killing time boozing, munching raw meat and laughing excessively as if Charlie Chaplin has returned from his grave to perform for them.

This is the new generation that has

apparently abandoned the great passion his fathers had for reading books and enjoying the arts. There may still be a few young people who might be reading books, but the majority of them have switched to mobile phone tapping.

In the West, this century has produced entrepreneurs like Mark Zuckerberg who invented Facebook and made billions in his thirties. Here in Africa, the new century has given rise to a class of idle young people who kill time with mobile devices day and night, watching porn and throwing insults at one another. I say this without forgetting the few disciplined young boys and girls who are trying to use these devices not to look for tips on how to do body massage but for acquiring a certain amount of new skills, information or knowledge.

Almost no one is reading in buses and taxis these days because getting a taxi to go home after work is as almost impossible as waiting for the snow to fall at this time of the year. Arat Kilo has lost its readers and intellectuals and gave way to young job seekers who fight at vacancy notices to wait for jobs that never come. Soccer lovers these days have lost both their taste for domestic football and the passion newspapers the old spectators set alight when their teams scored goals.

The coming generation might one day stop reading books altogether, or going to the stadium. They might spend their time in front of flickering laptop screens and mobile phones. If at all they might sometimes gather the will to read something, they might read about the history of books and reading in 20th century Ethiopia and laugh how their forefathers were spending time in the idle pursuit of turning pages and telling far-fetched stories.



# Society

## More awareness on ensuring food safety

BY TEWODROS KASSA

According to the World Health Organization (WHO) report, access to sufficient amounts of safe and nutritious food is key to sustaining life and promoting good health. Unsafe food containing harmful bacteria, viruses, parasites or chemical substances causes more than 200 diseases, ranging from diarrhea to cancers. It also creates a vicious cycle of disease and malnutrition, particularly affecting infants, young children, elderly and the sick. Good collaboration between governments, producers and consumers is needed to help ensure food safety and stronger food systems.

Apparently, foodborne illnesses are usually infectious or toxic in nature and caused by bacteria, viruses, parasites or chemical substances entering the body through contaminated food. Chemical contamination can lead to acute poisoning or long-term diseases, such as cancer. Many foodborne diseases may lead to long-lasting disability and death.

Recently, new research, conducted by six food safety research projects, has revealed the health and economic impacts of foodborne diseases in Ethiopia, as well as the challenges and opportunities for improving food safety in the country. The research solely depicts the impact of foodborne diseases in Ethiopia and presented on a workshop held at the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) Addis Ababa campus.

On the occasion, experts in the field said that the health and economic impacts of foodborne diseases in milk, dairy products, meat, and tomato in Ethiopia require coordinated efforts to address the problem and improve public health. The Ethiopian National One Health Steering Committee was also launched the one health national food safety technical working group which will serve as a platform to exchange information on food safety in the country and discuss the evidence that informs how to improve food safety.

Researcher on Food Safety and Professor of Addis Ababa University Kebede Amenu told The Ethiopian Herald that foodborne diseases are estimated to cause a loss of 723 million USD annually which is close to 1 percent of the country's total GDP.

As to him, the public gives low attention to food safety; and the habit of poor hygiene remains a challenge to ensure food safety in the country. Following this, numerous citizens are exposed to unnecessary economic loss during illness, he said.

Increased efforts to reduce foodborne illness will improve public health and the economy of the country, he recommended.

"If it is not safe, it is not food. Ensuring food safety should be given attention parallel with ensuring food security. Food safety is not an assignment left for some individuals or organizations, it is a shared



responsibility of all," he said.

According to him, the research identified some of the critical knowledge gaps and research priorities for food safety in Ethiopia, such as the need for more investment from public and private sectors, the key role of consumer demand and awareness in driving improvements in food quality, and the need to use innovative tools and approaches to enhance food safety.

Many studies found high levels of bacterial pathogen contamination in different food items. Ethiopian stakeholders ranked twelve foodborne pathogens as the most significant public health concerns based on burden of diseases estimates. Stakeholders then prioritized critical control points in four food chains that would contribute most to preventing burdens in particular deaths.

On his part, Ethiopian Food and Drug Authority Technical Advisor Wondafrash Abera said that the country has endorsed a food and nutrition policy, devised national food and nutrition strategy, as well as laws and directives on food safety.

The Ethiopian Standards Agency is also doing its level best towards ensuring food safety through limiting the impact of processed and semi-processed food products, he added.

According to him, the Ministry of Health (MoH), Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), Ministry of Industry (MoI), Ministry of Trade and Regional Integration (MoTRI), among others are working closely to curb the impact of lack of food safety in the country.

Moreover, more attention should be given to ensuring food safety through excelling coordination and collaboration, strengthening food safety control systems, improving public awareness, and creating food traceability systems, he recommended.

**Good collaboration between governments, producers and consumers is needed to help ensure food safety and stronger food systems**

Food Safety Researcher from USA Barbara Kowalczyk said that more than 420 deaths occur annually in the world due to foodborne illness.

She has lost her son and founded a foundation to prevent deaths from lack of food safety.

She believes that foodborne diseases have a profound impact on children, their family, their community and the entire society.

"We have been working hard for the past five years exploring how to ensure food safety systems in Ethiopia. There is a willingness and readiness to strategizing food safety in Ethiopia which is a very promising move," she stressed.

The 2019 World Bank report on the economic burden of foodborne diseases indicated that the total productivity loss associated with foodborne disease in low- and middle-income countries was estimated at 95.2 billion USD per year, and the annual cost of treating foodborne illnesses is estimated at 15 billion USD.

Accordingly, the burden of foodborne diseases to public health and to economies has often been underestimated due to underreporting and difficulty to establish causal relationships between food contamination and resulting illness or death.

The 2015 WHO report on the estimates of the global burden of foodborne diseases presented the first-ever estimates of disease burden caused by 31 foodborne agents (bacteria, viruses, parasites, toxins and chemicals) at global and sub-regional level, highlighting that more than 600 million cases of foodborne illnesses and 420 000 deaths could occur in a year.

The burden of foodborne diseases falls disproportionately on groups in vulnerable situations and especially on children under 5, with the highest burden in low- and middle-income countries.



# Law & Politics

## Ethiopian Army's Contributions to Global Peace

BY SOLOMON WASSIHUN

The Ethiopian army is the first and foremost African army with the longest and richest experience as well as an excellent reputation in international peacekeeping missions. Ethiopia has been actively involved in global peacekeeping efforts for several decades now, with a long-standing history of deploying troops to various conflict zones around the world. The country's contributions to United Nations (UN) and African Union (AU) peacekeeping missions as well as multinational peace-making operations have earned it a reputation as a key player in promoting regional and global security.

Ethiopia's involvement in peacekeeping missions dates back to the 1950s when it first sent troops to Korea as a part of the UN Command in the Korean War. There are still several Korean War veterans who are still around to give an eyewitness account of the heroic deeds of the Ethiopian soldiers 70 years ago in Korea. It is amazing to see The Korean veterans in their 90s at the forefront of the magnificent military parade held in the capital last week as a part of the celebration of 116th Ethiopian Armed Forces Day.

Kagnew, the Ethiopian battalion that went to Korea, was mainly drawn from the Imperial Bodyguard - Ethiopia's elite troops. [The battalion sourced its name from the war-horse of Ras Mekonnen, Emperor Haile Selassie's father, and hero of the battle of Adwa.] Kagnew battalion went to Korea mission holding not only the Ethiopian flag but also a motto: "Never be captured on the war field."

Even though they were severely tested by the harsh conditions of the war, the Kagnew troops remained true to their motto. At the end of their Korean mission, around 120 paid the ultimate price while over 500 Kagnew soldiers were wounded, for the freedom of South Korean people. However, none of the Ethiopian soldiers were captured and taken prisoner by their enemy. Some of the Kagnew soldiers were decorated even by the US government for their gallantry in the Korean War.

As they say, one can not get a second chance to make the first impression. The outstanding performance of the Ethiopian army in its debut international peace-making mission in Korea has made it possible for the army to gain an indelible global reputation for sheer professionalism and discipline. The success of the Kagnew mission has opened doors for successive invitations of the Ethiopian army by international agencies like the UN and AU to participate in peacekeeping and peace-making missions around the world.

Following the Korean mission of the Kagnew battalion, The Ethiopian soldiers were invited by the UN to participate in another international mission. This time it was here in Africa, Congo. What is

**Ethiopia's Army history of involvement in peacekeeping missions demonstrates its commitment to promoting global security and stability. The country's contributions have been significant and have earned it a reputation as a reliable partner for peacekeeping efforts**

interesting here is the Commander-in-Chief of United Nations Force in Congo in 1962 was a general from the Ethiopian army, Lt. General Kebede Gebre. Thus unlike in Korea, the Ethiopian army was represented not only as a participant in the peace-making mission in Congo but also as the leader of the mission.

Since then, Ethiopia has continued to contribute troops as well as commanders to various peacekeeping missions around the world. Ethiopia contributed troops to peacekeeping missions to such conflict-stricken nations including Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, and Liberia. Ethiopian Army's involvement in peacekeeping missions has become more significant, with a particular focus on African conflicts.

As of July 2023, Ethiopia was ranked as one of the top 12 countries contributing a large number of troops to UN peacekeeping missions across the world missions around the world. Two years earlier, the figure was impressive. At that time, in 2021, Ethiopia was the largest troop-contributing country to UN peacekeeping missions from Africa, with over 6,500 troops deployed in various missions around the world. The country has also provided police officers and military experts for UN peacekeeping operations.

Ethiopia's Army history of involvement in peacekeeping missions demonstrates its commitment to promoting global security and stability. The country's contributions have been significant and have earned it a reputation as a reliable partner for peacekeeping efforts.

In the context of African peacekeeping efforts, Ethiopia has played a critical role in promoting regional security and stability. The country has been actively involved in the African Union's peace and security architecture, contributing troops and resources to various AU-led missions.

For instance, Ethiopia's role in bringing stability to the Horn region has been critical, particularly in Somalia, which has been plagued by conflict and instability for several decades. Ethiopia was one of the first countries to contribute troops to the AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) in 2007, which has been instrumental in stabilizing the country and countering extremist groups such as Al-Shabaab. In addition, The Ethiopian army provides military capacity-building support to the Somali National Army.

Ethiopia's involvement in Somalia dates back to the early 2000s when it provided military assistance to the Transitional Federal Government (TFG). In 2006, Ethiopian troops entered Somalia to oust the religious fundamentalist group Islamic Courts Union (ICU), which had taken control of much of southern Somalia.

In addition to its efforts in Somalia, Ethiopia has also played a significant role in promoting regional security and stability. The country has been

involved in efforts to resolve conflicts in South Sudan and Sudan. Ethiopia has contributed troops to the AU mission in Sudan (AMIS), which later evolved into the UN-AU Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID).

Ethiopia's peacekeeping efforts have had a significant impact on regional and global security. By contributing troops to UN and AU peacekeeping missions, Ethiopia's army has played a critical role in promoting peace and stability in conflict-affected regions. The country's involvement in peacekeeping operations has helped to reduce the risk of violence and conflict, creating conditions for sustainable development and economic growth.

In the context of the Horn region, Ethiopia's peacekeeping efforts have been particularly significant. The country's contributions to AMISOM have been instrumental in stabilizing Somalia and countering extremist groups such as Al-Shabaab. Ethiopia's involvement in efforts to resolve conflicts in South Sudan and Sudan has also helped to promote regional security and stability.

On a global scale, Ethiopia's contributions to UN peacekeeping missions have been critical for promoting international security. As a major troop-contributing country to UN peacekeeping missions from Africa, Ethiopia has demonstrated its commitment to multilateralism and global peace. By providing troops, police officers, and military experts to various peacekeeping operations around the world, Ethiopia has helped to build global capacity for responding to conflict and crisis.

The country's contributions have helped to promote peace and stability in conflict-affected regions, reducing the risk of violence and creating conditions for sustainable development. Ethiopia's continued involvement in peacekeeping efforts will be essential for promoting global security and stability in the years ahead.

The future of Ethiopia's involvement in global peacekeeping is expected to remain significant. The country's commitment to promoting regional and global security through multilateralism will continue to make it a valuable partner for international peacekeeping initiatives.

The well-established reputation, training, and discipline of the Ethiopian army are essential components of its success in peacekeeping missions, and its continued involvement in peacekeeping efforts will be crucial for promoting global security and stability.

As the world faces ongoing challenges related to conflict, terrorism, and extremism, Ethiopia's Army contributions to UN and AU peacekeeping missions will remain vital for building capacity for responding to crises and promoting sustainable development.





Ephrem Endale  
Contributor

# Between you & me

## “The Bars Have Been Raised!”

The other weekend a few of us were discussing an issue which we don't seem to talk about much these days. The issue was about our childhood, dreams aspirations and how many of us have actually realized those dreams, aspirations. Isn't that one hell of an issue in a world which seem to be cracking at the seams all over the place!

Look, I can tell you it is hard to imagine times when this world was worse than it is now in recent times. At times we're so confused that some of us think that there must be something very wrong with the way or brains work and in the way we think about things because the level of utter ignorance, arrogance and rolling it into one, stupidity out there is astounding. Is it that only the pole in the streets or, to borrow some term which makes sense despite the 'commie' connotation ascribed to it, the masses that are seeing the World War III is rushing towards us at breakneck speed because of decisions or indecisions by people in the wrong places? The level of hatred towards other people open or camouflaged in 'sweet talk' is scary to say the least. In live and recorded TV interviews we hear calls for the destruction of entire people and the so-called show hosts and interviewers, so unethically, don't try to play down the venomous narratives. Being angry, frustrated and highly motivated is one thing. But talk of the annihilation of an entire people, whoever they are, I whichever part of the world they might be, is a completely different story.

So back to childhood dreams and the group of us had quite a time and realized that the issue we raised to while away the time was indeed an important issue. “Young people no more dream

about the future and they are focused only on the present,” one amongst us said. In the absence of data or any credible argument our friend's comment might somewhat overboard. But the feeling that these days we don't hear that much about the dreams and aspirations of young people. What happened? Search me; but I have this feeling the accusing finger isn't only on the youngsters but the society as a whole, too.

We talked if any of us achieved our childhood dreams, and aspirations. Well, the result while not surprising creates questions. None of us seems to have come anywhere close to what we aspired as children. Why? That is the million-dollar question with potentially hundreds of answers. How many of us have really made it all the way to the kind of career we dreamt about? How many of us have reached the finish line of that childhood race and bragged; “The champ is home! Hail the champ!” We're still waiting for answers.

Even though we don't have the numbers to quote the fair guess would be that not many of us, if any, have gone the whole way. The girl who always thought she would be a fashion designer ending up as a simple clerk at some low level office wouldn't see her smiling much. Now why did she fail to realize her dreams? Did society maybe in its highly conservative ways most of which still seem to be in play, prevent her from going the distance? Or, and this is important, was some bad spell cast upon her so that she would never achieve her dreams? I said “this is important” because these days, for some reason, there is a lot of talk about such things. Of course such stories are most of the

time difficult even impossible to investigate. In fact, the very thought of investigating them is scary because there is the fear that the spell would be thrown our way too.

It doesn't mean that you throw in the towel at the starting line. Well, at least most of the times that isn't the case, though there are some. In fact there could even be those who, except for the verbal narratives, never even came anywhere close to the starting line. But for those who have traveled a long way towards their dreams the stumbling blocks appear in various forms and intensity. And when they are close to their dream line life frowns at them. It always does that to us, doesn't it? I mean when we thought the sun would be even brighter and we don't even notice the gathering clouds life bumps us head-on in one or several of its nasty ways. You want to be in the place and position you aspired?

“Ok welcome; but sorry, the bars have been raised!” Hmmm.

In the old days even relatives, friends and neighbors take could be part of the 'advisory' committee which you never knew existed. Their role deciding what you should be when you grow up.

“She should be a doctor.”

“I think she should be engineer.”

And then for the elderly grandparents all these just doesn't make sense.

“What are you people trying to do with her? Why are you putting the wrong thoughts into her mind?”

“What do you mean?”

“She should be a house wife! Who do you think should raise the children!”

The very question of her having children isn't an “if” question; it is a “when” issue. So if you have the audacity (which actually is stupidity) to raise something like “Well she might not have any children to raise!” that would be an unpardonable blasphemy and the disapproving stares and glares would melt you. I mean it would practically melt you giving you the feeling that you've began shedding off pounds from your not very imposing physique!

I remember before I even edged closer to the early teens they were one-day discussing what I should be when I grew up. I would be misleading you if I try to bring up the suggestions that were being hurled all over the room. You know why; I barely remember them! But one comment from one close relative stuck in my brain as if it became part of the anatomy of that body part. He says, “He should be a policeman.” A what! I can tell even the tiny creature I was how I hated him for bringing up such a thing. Me a policeman! Not that I knew anything about being a policeman. But in those days talking about people in uniform even the kid who barely could walk upright dreamt of being in the navy. Yes, I mean it. The way the navy personnel dressed up was so out of this world and imposing what almost every one of us just craved for it. And this relative wants to make a policeman out of me! Maybe I should one day sit down and quiz myself if I ever forgave him.

How many of us reached the finish line only to be unceremoniously told “The bars have been raised?”

## ‘Take Your Prejudices Elsewhere!’

I've told you that I live one of the oldest villages in the city, didn't I? (I could feel a few smirking; “Don't tell me this moron thinks we're going to blow him kisses for that!” ‘Old’ is about numbers. Over the years the place filled with many drinking places and night spots, achieved a reputation for being, how do I put this, one of the scariest places in the city. Yes, over the years especially during the late evening hours there are many bust-ups and literally mini-battles as groups fight groups with alcohol having sent their testosterone levels through the roof to the point where they believe they could break jaws or knock out teeth at will. It isn't reputation that gives comfort. But then despite the dangers of stupid conclusions spoiling arguments it's easy to come up with reasons and excuses for such scenes. But let's not get into that, as things have changed over the years and issues have kind of shifted.

Look, while we're at it, there is this talk that the village being fairly close to the Addis Ababa University, freshmen used to discover their manhood especially on the eve of Easter. That's for 'general knowledge' sake and comments have been turned off.

I laugh when people react with surprise whenever I tell them where I live. “What!” For many that loud and sort of emotional “What!” tells the whole story. Well, especially in later years while there still are a lot of drinking places and night spots many parts of the city seem to have taken the title over. But all said, and this is not an attempt at niceties, the social life is a completely different story. And I can tell

you words like “scary” don't feature here. It's one of the places where many of the residents are on the lower rungs of the economic ladder and still you can't believe the level of societal interactions.

Of course even though times have changed and the entire structure of our moral standards is shaking to the roots humane behaviors still are in abundance. Decades back in the last days of the monarchy there were this rich couple in the village who owned a good portion of it. They had coffee plantations and when harvest time comes the villagers mostly got kilos of coffee for free. You see at times the rich/poor divide while there was much of it doesn't always work.

The coffee ceremonies are one of the very rich cultures though the pseudo-civilized for years try to paint them otherwise. The coffee ceremonies where largely women of the area gathered to enjoy coffee and also discuss issues, borrow in cups of shuro or ground peeper. “Can you give me three injera? I'll give it back tomorrow.” You don't hesitate to present such questions. With condos the script has changed much.

Take the iddirs for example, the communal associations where villager rich or poor congregate. Though the iddirs mainly focus on ensuring that members or their immediate families get proper sending off when they pass away there are many positive aspects which bring people closer together. It's so wonderful members who before they became iddir

members barely greet each other become good friends because of their membership.

“Do you know Bekele?”

“Bekele? Sorry I couldn't ...”

“Bekele, that heavy set man who works...”

“Oh you mean that Bekele! I know him very well. We're in the same iddir.” You see what I mean? Even being members of the same iddir brings people together to the point where they develop relationships where they borrow and lend each other food or other items. In such places even many of the residents who are on the higher economic rungs don't try to flaunt their economic advantages; no one acts as they could buy half of Gibraltar for the asking; no one looks down on any one.

Now the difference between the good old villages and the 'modern' condos are multiple. Many who have lived much of their lives in villages where life is always full and the communal feeling is displayed in a hundred and one way going to places where your doors are locked almost 24/7 is hard transition. I've told you about people I know who haven't seen their next door neighbors for years! Yes, for years!

In the villages any villager you're familiar with could knock on your door for one reason or another and much of the time received well even offered some drink or a bite or two of some food. In fact they could even knock and when you open say, “I just came to see if you're well.” Now isn't that what community is about! A month or so back I had to go to one of the

most striking residences not for tea or coffee but to discuss about some writing issue. Now I used the term ‘the most striking’ based on my own measuring roads. But once I was out and told that to a couple of friends they laughed. In fact they ignored my adjectives and said “You haven't yet seen anything.”

In the place where the villa I went to is found most of the houses were residences of rich people and it wouldn't be exaggeration to say there is little or no sign of poverty. Hmm, the gates are locked like they were highly sensitive nuclear sites. Now that contrasts with the open doors in poorer neighborhoods where despite far from full dining tables humanity still thrives.

Now why am I writing this at this time when we aren't short of pressing agendas? I saw this social post belittling traditional neighborhoods of the city and painting them as nothing but the last resting place before Hell! Whoever wrote that demeaning hate-filled post in the first place knows nothing about the places and must be one of those who because they probably were born into money and riches think the rest of humanity is below par on the scale of humanity whatever that means. The danger such hate-filled narratives which do nothing to do away with artificial walls built to keep humanity divided infect fresh minds of the youth.

To those who write venomous, uninformed and purely evil narratives like the one I told you about we have only this to say; ‘Take Your Prejudices Elsewhere!’



## PM Abiy launches Niin Lee Palm Lodge project in Afar



BY DARGIE KAHSAY

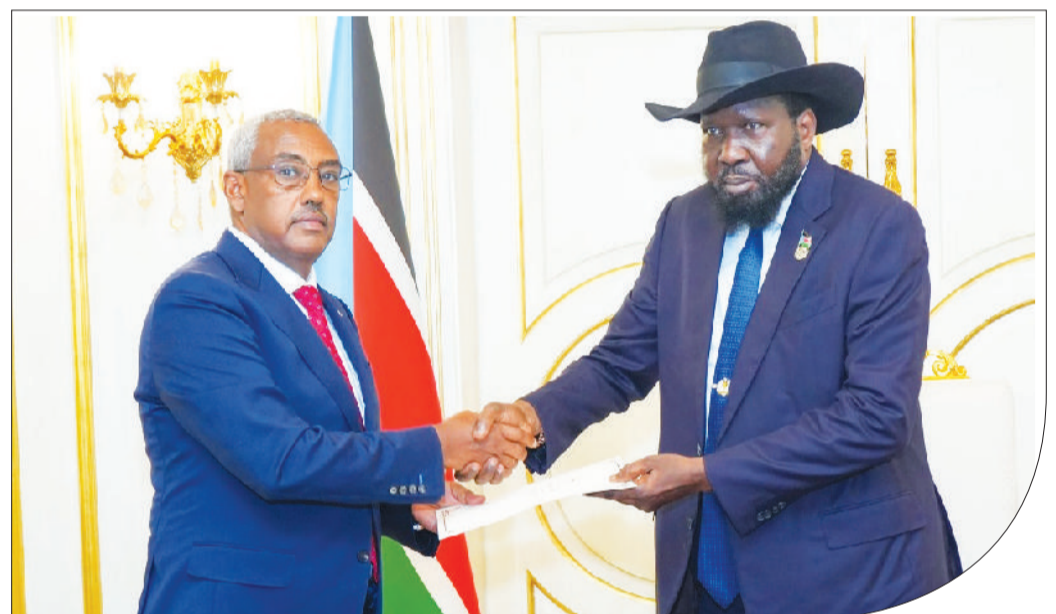
Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) visited Afar regional state last Saturday. During his visit to Afar, PM Abiy launched the Niin Lee Palm Spring Lodge project, which is part of the 'Dine for generations' initiative in Afar Region. The project is one of the seven tourism destination projects to be built through the third "Dine" initiatives of PM Abiy.

During his visit to Afar with his delegation, PM Abiy also officially launch summer wheat production in Dubti Woreda of Afar region. The community in Dubti Woreda has prepared to cultivate summer wheat on 8,000 hectares of land which is part of the national plan of the year to cultivate three million hectares of summer wheat this year.

### Ethiopia, South Sudan agree to strengthen ties

Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Affairs Minister of Ethiopia, Demeke Mekonnen visited South Sudan to deliver message of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed to President Salva Kiir. During his visit to Juba, DPM and FM Demeke discussed with the President of South Sudan, Salva Kiir Mayardit.

During their discussion, both sides agreed to deepen bilateral and multilateral cooperation between Ethiopia and South Sudan. The parties have agreed to work together to build the necessary infrastructure to connect both countries.



### Ethiopia, Venezuela FM's discussion

Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Affairs Minister of Ethiopia, Demeke Mekonnen received Yvan Gil Pinto, the Foreign Minister of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. The two sides discussed on bilateral and multilateral issues of common interest.

DPM and FM Demeke commended Venezuela for its principled and consistent support at multilateral forums. Both sides have agreed to commence Joint Ministerial Commission between the two countries.

### Addis Ababa, Chuncheon mark 20th sisterhood anniversary

Addis Ababa city and South Korea's Chuncheon city have marked the 20th anniversary of their sisterhood this week. Chuncheon city is one of the 24 sister cities of Addis Ababa.

The two cities enhance their relationships for the past 20 years and the two cities reaffirmed their commitment to further strengthen their cooperation. South Korea's Chuncheon City Mayor, Yook Dong Han with his delegation visited Addis Ababa for an official working visit and mark the 20th anniversary of the two cities. The delegation discussed with Addis Ababa City Mayor, Adanech Abiebie.

During the visit, Chuncheon City has donated 2,000 books to Addis Ababa's Abrehot Library.

