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Photo: Berihu Tadele



Cherishing differences gateway for peaceful, resolute Ethiopia: President

• Ethiopia marks 18th Nations, Nationalities, People's Day

BY MENGESHA AMARE

ADDIS ABABA- Cherishing differences and promoting equality is the path for Ethiopia to build lasting peace and overcome pressing challenges through a determined effort of people with different ethnic backgrounds, President Sahlework Zewde said.

The President made the above remark while addressing the 18th Nations, Nationalities, and People's Day that was held yesterday in Somali State capital Jijiga. The event was held under the theme "Diversity and Equality for national Unity,"

President Sahlework further highlighted that Ethiopia's existence is subject to its people's ability to accept and cherish differences and create a country where everyone treated equally. Ethiopia's democracy is based on

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Alemayehu Erkyihun (PhD)

Ethiopia's sea access enshrines stable political landscape: Historian

BY MENGESHA AMARE

ADDIS ABABA- Apart from its significant economic contribution, Ethiopia's sovereign access to seaports would bring stable political landscape and amicable foreign

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Center eyes restituting stolen African heritages

BY YESUF ENDRIS

ADDIS ABABA- The Global Black History, Heritage and Education Center said it would work on restituting stolen African heritages immediately following the accomplishment of its office.

Center Chairman Tsegaye Chemma said they would launch initiatives to retribute African and black peoples' heritages which are now being owned and exhibited by non African countries.

Initiatives would be launched immediately after the full establishment of the center's office.

The inauguration of the center has already been done with the support of the Ethiopian government and the African Union Commission. So, the next step will

See Center eyes ... page 4



Photo: Gebabo Gebrie

Authority to launch fuel management system to control contraband

• Transacts over 124 bln. Birr via electronic system

BY ASHENAFA ANIMUT

ADDIS ABABA – The Ethiopian Petroleum and Energy Authority (EPEA) expressed that it has been

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The expo that connected manufacturer with buyer, experience and technology

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"New-Age" children: Smarter than their parents?

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Empowering women via art, creativity

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News

South Korea pledges 5.2 bln USD support to Ethiopia

BY MISGANAW ASNAKE

ADDIS ABABA - The Republic of Korea has pledged to increase development assistance to Ethiopia by two billion USD in 2024.

State Minister of Finance, Semereta Sewasew and Kang Seokhee, Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to Ethiopia have discussed bilateral issues focusing on strengthening Korea's support to Ethiopia particularly in the economic sphere.

During the discussion, Ambassador Kang Seokhee expressed his satisfaction about the overall cooperation between the two countries and affirmed his government's commitment to increase its development assistance to Ethiopia from 3.2 billion USD in 2023 to 5.2 billion USD in 2024.

He also indicated that Ethiopia's participation in the next year's Korea-Africa Summit will be vital to take advantage of his country's assistance.

State Minister Semereta expressed gratitude to the government of Republic of Korea for its long-term cooperation and supporting Ethiopia, mentioning the assistance as epitome of flourishing historical relationship between the two nations and peoples.

Country Director of KOICA Ethiopia office, Cho Han Deog also explained that the development assistance aimed at strengthening manufacturing capabilities, health care services, climate change response, and enhancing resilience and social integration.

The Director added that there are 18 ongoing projects with a budget of 140 million USD and 7 projects in the pipeline with an estimated budget of 105 million USD and 15 volunteers are rendering services at the moment.

Chief Representative of Korea EXIM Bank, Sunmyung Hwang highlighted the progress of the eleven ongoing projects worth of 870 million USD and other projects in the pipeline.

Both sides agreed to hold bilateral policy consultations annually and put emphasis on the preparation for more impactful projects in the future.

MoLS promotes workers' union establishment

BY MISGANAW ASNAKE

ADDIS ABABA - Ministry of Labor and Skills (MoLS) stated that either domestic or overseas employees' union needs to be established to ensure the rights and benefits of workers.

In his keynote speech during the National Conference on Domestic Workers held yesterday, Labor and Skills State Minister Nigusu Tilahun stated that the government encourages a principle based interaction and benefit exchanges between employers and workers.

He noted that employers and workers relation should be relied on labor law to achieve mutual benefit and create successful boundary between them.

"When workers have a union, their voice will be heard during right violation. The relationship and interaction between employers and employees needs to be peaceful during their tenure," he said.

ComunitàVolontari per il Mondo (CVM) Ethiopia Country Representative, Laura Vallesion on her part said that domestic workers also have the right to fair treatment and acquire legal protection.

"But the first question we should ask is how we treat our domestic workers, does she has a decent place to sleep, does she has enough food and days off, do we pay her fairly, do we treat her respectfully, we all agree on solution, insertion, which is the insertion



Nigusu Tilahun

of domestic work in the Ethiopian labor law 1156/2019 and ratification of the convention ILO 189," she stated.

Adding that the big responsibility to ensure the right of employee's lies on governments; the representative expressed that her organization will support Ethiopia to this end.

"We are ready to support and collaborate in supporting of the government in filling these gaps to move forward. Domestic workers have a voice, we will keep supporting them to raise their voices more and awareness and change start from ourselves and inside our houses," she said.

According to CVM, the ministry has agreed to issue the contractual agreement document for domestic workers by January 2024.

On the other hand, MoLS has been recruiting workers and providing them with the needed capacity building trainings before sending them overseas for employment.

In the last four months, the ministry has sent 108,000 workers to overseas employment based on the international employment contract agreement it has signed with employee requiring nations to ensure the right and benefits of Ethiopian workers, according to the State Minister.

Israeli, Ethiopian physicians conduct 65 eye surgeries

BY DANIEL ALEMAYEHU

ADDIS ABABA - Operation Ethiopia and HCP Cure Blindness have conducted 65 eye operations at Menelik II Referral Hospital.

Israelis and Ethiopian eye doctors teamed up under the aforementioned organizations have conducted 65 successful surgeries within a week.

Addressing journalists, Deputy Ambassador of Israel to Ethiopia, Tomer Bar-Lavi stated that the program which is sponsored by Operation Ethiopia through Professor Morris Hartstein (MD) together with HCP Organization has been delivered all week.

"We see this as an expression of the close partnership between the people of Israel and Ethiopia," said the Ambassador adding, Prof. Morris has started this program in 2014.

During those years, the program addresses more than 10,000 patients and trained many doctors from Ethiopia, he stated.

"The point of the training and connection is to continue building up the expertise in Ethiopia. In addition to the trained doctors, there has been equipment that has been supplied to conduct the operations," he said.

Even if Israel is in difficult time due to the war, its people are supportive to the people of Ethiopia. Though Prof. Morris Hartstein (MD) could not be available here, his support is still continued, according to the Deputy Ambassador.

HCP Country Director, Dr. Zelalem



Habtamu for his part said facilitating the whole process and training Ethiopian doctors are the two objectives of the project.

"The program is to provide patient care for 75 patients who have waited the service for the last two years. We are also providing the supplies for the operations, mobilizing doctors, and covering their expenses to conduct the service," he said.

He added that three Ethiopian doctors from St. Paul Hospital, DebreBerhan, and Mekele Universities also engaged in the program to improve their surgical capabilities.

"HCP is supporting 7 eye doctors training academic institutions in Ethiopia. It is also supporting 50 percent of the nation's sub-specialties. Of the 43 sub-specialists in Ethiopia, 23 of them are trained by HCP.

The prof. Morris Project and HCP cover the expense of the doctors who take the training. Currently, we are working with 28 government hospitals in different part of Ethiopia including Minilik Comprehensive Hospital," noted Zelalem.

Eye Treatment Specialist, Watery Eyes and Eye Cancer Sub-specialist, and program coordinator, Dr. Meseret Ejigu said, "By the support of Operation Ethiopia and HCP, we are conducting more than 65 eye operations. We are also training fellow doctors."

"We have screened 75 patients who need the service very badly. Of which, we have conducted 65 operations successfully within a week. The rest of the patients need additional health treatments so that they will get the service according to their schedule," Dr. Meseret elaborated.

Editorial

Home-grown economic reform gaining attention of dev't partners

Resilient Ethiopia is marked for navigating hurdles and leaving them behind its back to jumpstart its development initiative that ultimately aspires to ensure affluence.

The initiative Ethiopia took to settle the conflict that erupted in the northern part of the country as per the Pretoria agreement as well as the national dialogue it tries to kick start in a bid to throw its full weight behind the home-grown economic reform corroborate the aforementioned fact.

Home-grown economic reform roadmap is decisive to multi-faceted national prosperity. A country remiss in chalking out a home-grown economic reform plan, which is reflective of current situation and that prognosis unfolding down the road, could but have a stagnant economy.

Though before the change drive, there were attempts to implement home-grown economic reform plan, most of them failed to take into account the willingness of loaners and to buy the credence of citizens.

As such, many of them ended up botched efforts. Accordingly, on the average a 9.2 per cent economic growth was registered. But there was a conspicuous gap in creating job opportunities and equitable wealth distribution. There was a chasm in bringing forth structural reform and strengthening sectorial chains. Constraints on foreign loan, imbalance between saving and investment, failure to tame inflation, ever escalating unemployment, and lapses in the supply of social services and chasms in putting in place infrastructural facilities were the strangleholds strangulating the country.

Zeroing in on these bottlenecks, charting out various remedial solutions, it was made possible to come up with a home-grown economic reform policy.

On the morrow of the wind of reform that wafted across the country five years back, the country has rolled out a tenth year development plan. This reform has its peculiar features that make it stick out from its predecessors. It doesn't only take nation's potential into consideration, but also focuses on enhancing performance as well as strictly monitoring project execution dispositions in the minimum time possible. Luckily, the country has portrayed such a turnaround in the domain of possibility.

The reform policy's being a home-grown one has rendered the policy instrumental in rooting out own problems. In so doing, the home-grown economic policy is believed to spur nation's surge forward. This plan is believed to be translated into action between 2021 and 2030.

Against the backdrop above, the number of local and foreign investors coming to the country has made an upward swing. Manufacturers are filling industrial parks both that saw completion previously and those in the pipeline. The direction put is one that invites investors to eagerly come to the country in droves.

Tasks underway by the government and especially by the National Bank to tame the inflation, as soon as possible, hold promise that things will return to normalcy. The performance report of the reform will be assessed by 2030. For the successful completion of the reform all stakeholders and citizens must rally behind the incumbent's push forward. The government's commitment in the follow up and execution of projects deserve a high five. For this beneficiaries of the projects are living billboards.

On the other hand, attracted by the lucrative investment ventures many investors are coming to the country. Apart from creating job opportunities, the investments help in generating badly-needed hard currency. Thwarting bottlenecks in the investment sector allows the country to be investors' magnet. This week Japanese companies' interest to invest in Ethiopia is indicative of this fact.

According to different institutions, the home-grown economic reform is also believed to bridge the gap in finance. One among the allies is World Bank. Recently, officials of WB, Ethiopia's Ministry of Finance and National Bank had deliberated on so many issues like bolstering the infrastructural development works in the country. WB's officials have appreciated Ethiopia's development effort. They have pledged to buttress Ethiopia's effort to cushion economic constraints.

Ethiopia's noteworthy project execution task has helped her to win the hearts of loaners. Hence, it is high time to distil gained achievements and scale them up.

Opinion

Diplomatic duets: Navigating Ethiopia-UAE relations

BY ELSA TESSEMA

Ethiopia's diplomatic dance with the United Arab Emirates (UAE) has caught the attention of global observers, and as the relationship deepens, it brings to light a myriad of potential advantages and challenges. In the past decade or so the UAE has shown increasing interest in the Horn of Africa (HoA). The intricate web of regional military collaborations, financial partnerships, and geopolitical alignments, underscores the need for Ethiopia to craft a nuanced approach that maximizes benefits while safeguarding against potential risks.

Military Cooperation and Technological Advancements: One facet of this evolving relationship lies in the realm of military collaboration, specifically in technology transfer. The UAE's provision of military assistance offers Ethiopia an opportunity to fortify its defense capabilities and contribute to regional security, especially important for Addis Ababa, in light of the troubled HoA. This collaborative effort extends beyond mere military transactions, holding the promise of technological advancements beneficial to both nations.

Human rights groups have accused the UAE of exacerbating human rights in Ethiopia by aiding the government's fight against rebel groups. On the other hand rebel groups aiming to forcibly overthrow the government in Addis Ababa have also found support from the likes of Egypt, Sudan and others. Although relations have since improved, Saudi Arabia also seemed to provide implicit support for regime change in Ethiopia from 2020 to 2022.

Economic Growth through Financial Support: Ethiopia's economic landscape stands poised for transformation, though it faces debt financing difficulties and a constrained foreign exchange market in the short term. In the Past, cash injections from the UAE have provided a lifeline to the stability of the Birr. Ethiopia is currently in a drawn-out negotiation with multilateral development bank, as well as bilateral lenders to restructure its debt. With the financial support and investments pledged by the UAE this process and be expedited further.

This financial infusion has the potential to drive economic growth and foster infrastructure development, opening avenues for mutually beneficial partnerships across various sectors. The UAE for its part sees potential in Ethiopia growing market size and its untapped potential.

Strategic Maritime Access and Geopolitical Alignment: The UAE's expressed interest in supporting Ethiopia's bid for Red Sea port access was revealed in 2018, when it initiated refurbishment of the port Assab, after Ethiopia reached a peace agreement with Eritrea. The plan was to turn Assab into a free trade hub. The initiative fell apart over disagreements between the two neighboring counties not long after its start.

The UEA appears to be interested in anchoring itself on the Red Sea. This is also something Ethiopia wants to do for itself. The convergence of the two countries on the issue has immediate roots in their exclusion from the new Red Sea forum organization. There is no doubt however it

goes beyond just the Forum. Both nations see it as strategic to their long term maritime interests.

Prime Minister Abiy of Ethiopia recently publicly spoke about "breaking the silence" on the Red Sea. This adds urgency and significance to the endeavors at least in the near term. Abiy says, "Ethiopia needs a reliable port a navy". But it has irritated neighbors, particularly Eritrea, which has a history of fraught relations with Ethiopia, ever since it broke away as an independent country in the early 1990s.

Ideological Misalignments and Democratic Challenges: The UAE has in the recent past supported militarism in Yemen, Sudan. It was involved in the war in Yemen extensively before exiting after outcries of human rights violations. The UAE's hard-hitting and agile diplomacy introduces a layer of complexity. It's small size, a strategic alliance with the United States, and lots of cash to spend allows it to take risks. Ethiopia, with its democratic aspirations, faces the challenge of balancing economic and security matters on a much tighter budget, with plans of developing fast. Negotiating this ideological as well as economic terrain will be crucial for Ethiopia's long-term stability as it manages its relationships.

Preserving Democratic Foundations: The governance models of both nations stand in stark contrast, especially concerning basic tenants. The UAE is a highly authoritarian monarchy with a very small and affluent population. Ethiopia on the other hand is a developing country with a nascent parliamentary democracy, one that has bouts of serious authoritarian tendencies. The fear is that growing ties with the UAE could potentially undermine its commitment to nurturing democratic institutions. The challenge lies in avoiding compromises that might undermine the democratic foundations that the nation aspires to uphold, especially given its diverse and sizable population.

Ethiopia's diplomatic journey with the UAE unveils a complex tapestry of opportunities and challenges. As Ethiopia charts its course through this intricate relationship, a strategic tailoring of diplomatic engagements is imperative. Achieving a delicate equilibrium between economic collaboration, security interests, and democratic values will define Ethiopia's trajectory. Thoughtful diplomacy in the interest of long term strategic values should steer Ethiopia relations with the UAE towards a future that is mutually beneficial.

Up to now, Ethiopia seems to have successfully navigated and benefited from the increased attention the Middle East has shown in the HoA. It has solidified alliances by joining BRICS, gained reprieve from debt repayment schedules to China and the EU, all while upholding its independent foreign policy. However, this delicate balance poses risks. The mix of transactional politics in the Gulf, corruption and conflict in the HoA could be perilous, especially as historical rivalries take unexpected turns, potentially spiraling matters beyond the Horn's influence.

The writer of this piece Elsa Tessema studied Linguistics, Anthropology and Home Craft. She is a guest lecturer at Addis Ababa University. She is also avid reader of African history.

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



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News



Authority to launch...

conducting a fuel supply management system pilot project to tackle contraband and smuggling.

Authority Public Relations Director Bekelech Kuma told the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) that the authority has been putting in place a fuel supply chain management system pilot project to monitor fuel usage and optimize fuel efficiency in the capital and Sheger City thereby tackling fuel diversion by 85%.

She further remarked that the system would have a paramount importance on fully functioning the electronic payment system appropriately and regulating contrabands

and smuggling witnessed in neighboring countries.

In addition, the authority has also been subsidizing fuel to the targeted beneficiaries who offer mass transport through a quota system benefitting about 198,237 vehicles on the spot allocating over 25 billion Birr since the commencement of fuel subsidy scheme.

Similarly, it has managed to transact the amount exceeding 124 billion Birr via electronic payment system till 10 November 2023, she added.

In the course of action, she said that the authority has taken corrective measures

to five gas stations operating against the system.

“Out of the 1,553 registered gas stations including Tigray State, 1,476 transacted via Telebirr,” she remarked. The quota system also helps regulate the volume of fuel distribution from 69% in the Somali region and 60% in western Oromia,” she pinpointed.

Due to price adjustment made so far, the director noted that the authority has managed to bridge the price gaps witnessed among neighboring countries, as a result, fuel smuggling has diminished significantly.

Cherishing...

accepting and acknowledging ethnic, religious and ideological differences and this is manifested in the Constitution, which all should uphold.

The greatness of Ethiopia is based on the greatness of its people and resolving differences in a civilized manner and shunning the use of violence as a political tool would put the country’s peace in strong foundation, she emphasized.

“When conflicts arise, they have to be resolved through close discussion and internally framed reconciliation means, and making the celebration of the day needs to be made a weapon to further consolidate unity and fraternity.”

As Ethiopia has to seize the ladder of success by keeping its citizens peace and security, the government is expected to

work from grassroots level and involve the public in the process. The public on the other hand need to uphold the collaboration with the government in safeguarding their own peace, President Sahlework pleaded.

Somali State Chief Administrator Mustefe Mohammed on his part said that Ethiopians have many virtues that potentially cement their unity than widen differences. The Nations, Nationalities, and People’s Day marked the constitutionally guaranteed rights of the people of Ethiopia and the Constitution is the foundation of Ethiopia’s renaissance and creating a generation of development patriots.

According to him, over the years, the Ethiopians have been immensely contributing to eradicate poverty, ignorance and backwardness from their country and

building a peaceful and prosperous nation.

“True, the celebration is a commemoration of the people of Ethiopia’s ultimate triumph against the repressive regimes that had deprived them of their rights in their own land,” Mustefe remarked.

It is well recognized that Ethiopia, which has housed over 120 million people and more than eighty ethnics and diverse cultures and languages, has been working to foster people-to-people ties, unity and fraternity to strengthen peaceful coexistence.

State chiefs, high-level government officials and representatives from all nations, nationalities and peoples as well Jijiga dwellers were in attendance of the celebration which was also complemented by sport and other colorful events.

Center eyes...

be fulfilling office resources and retribute African and Black Peoples’ heritages, Tsegaye elaborated.

“All stolen and smuggled heritages should be returned to their home. So, all black people should join the upcoming campaigns of restituting heritages.”

The center would also have an African iconic museum here in Ethiopia and it is

expected to have collections of restituted heritages, according to him.

The chairman further revealed center’s plan of creating continental platforms to create new narratives about black peoples’ history.

“The history of Africa is dominantly made of colonization and decolonization narratives. We need to rewrite this history because Africa has contributed a lot to

global history. The center will initiate new educational curriculums considering African values.”

“It was our motive to establish an institution that could help the black people to return to their origins and to develop their motherland together. We will make the centera platform to facilitate mechanisms to rewrite the history of the Black peoples’ history,” he remarked.

Ethiopia’s sea...

relations with neighboring states and beyond, according to a Historian.

Speaking to the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA), Wollo University History Instructor and researcher Alemayehu Erkyihun (PhD) said access to the sea would have a broader importance for Ethiopia and would help to ensure enduring stability.

Having seaports should be seen beyond the economic horizon and it is instrumental to prevail stable political landscape, sustainable socio-economic development and nurturing good neighborliness, he added.

“As Ethiopia has been challenged by high cost of living and soaring unemployment, access to seaports would be instrumental to ease such daunting challenges. Also, the sovereign use ports facilitates the country’s import-export trade and create a significant number of jobs for the youth.”

Considering the geopolitics of the Horn of Africa whereby global powers are an intensified race to military bases and the subsequent militarization of the region, Ethiopia’s aspiration to a direct access to the Red Sea is a timely and viable move.

Mentioning the universality of Ethiopia’s port aspiration, Alemayehu called on other countries, particularly the landlocked ones, to back its quest. “Furthermore, those countries, which attain their ambition to sea access peacefully should show the way for Ethiopia to do the same.”

The historian further noted that the Ethiopian government has made commendable job in informing coastal neighbors about how youth unemployment and rapid population growth intensify the country’s demand for seaports. “Not only access to the sea has economic and political implications, but also it is highly intertwined with Ethiopia’s historical identity as the Red Sea and its ports were centers of the country’s civilization.”

He added, “Unquestionably, Ethiopia had been one of the ancient independent civilizations in the world and it was an influential actor in East Africa with strong connection with the then global powers through the Red Sea. A number of countries from Europe, Asia, and South America had firm ties with Ethiopia and this clearly indicated that the latter was solely controlling the Red Sea region.”

Now the fashion to execute political ambition through a military means is changed and the attempt to realize Ethiopia’s port aspiration through force is absolutely wrong. Hence, the government is expected to forge a meticulous diplomatic approach and table a win-win alternative to convince coastal to embrace Ethiopia’s appeal, the academician remarked.

Opinion

Strategic patience for leadership

BY GETACHEW MINAS

Strategic patience is related to a purposeful, conscious and calculated approach in the decision-making process and action. This often requires a long-term perspective and a will to overcome short-term challenges. This is done for the purpose of achieving broader, more important and significant goals and objectives. In the situation of Ethiopian leaders at all levels, applying and practicing strategic patience could be predominantly relevant given the complex challenges the country is faced with. These challenges are multifaceted, making it difficult to devise remedial actions.

However, there are some alternative approaches for dealing with complex challenges by applying strategic patience by Ethiopian leaders and managers. These challenges include political, ethnic and economic issues. Strategic patience entails recognizing, appreciating and understanding that these challenges are time consuming. They necessitate, require and demand a comprehensive, long-term and all-inclusive strategy.

Ethiopia has been faced with social conflicts in its recent history. These have been transformed into political skirmishes, clashes, and unrests. In such a situation, leaders applying strategic patience may prioritize sustainable solutions over immediate, potentially destabilizing actions. There may not be lasting solutions if problems are not recognized and accepted by all. If there are differences in conceiving or understanding problems, it is nearly impossible to reach a compromise.

Prioritization of solutions to problems is conceived differently by various groups contending for power. Those looking for acceptable and sustainable solutions have to refrain from immediate but destabilizing actions and reactions. Ethiopian leaders express their desire for inclusive governance. Building an inclusive and participatory governance structure may require time. Leaders may need to patiently aspire towards building unity, addressing historical grievances, and ensuring representation for diverse ethnic groups.

The inclusion of different social groups is an important step forward in enhancing socio-economic development. Achieving sustainable economic development often presupposes inclusive strategy and long-term planning. Leaders interested in practicing strategic patience may develop policies that promote participatory economic growth and development, job creation, and poverty reduction. These imply effective implementation of political reforms that serve the society at large.

However, such reforms may encounter resistance and challenges from different groups. In this case, leaders may need patience to navigate these challenges. In doing so, they may have to stay committed to democratic principles and inclusive

To ensure success in the practice of democracy social and community leaders have to be devoted for its practice

governance. The question is how to check such commitment of leaders to the people of Ethiopia. Are the people politically organized to ensure that democratic principles are in place? Are they in a position to ensure inclusive democracy in the country? As mentioned earlier, strategic patience is of the essence in introducing and implementing democratic attitude, standard and code of conduct.

To ensure success in the practice of democracy social and community leaders have to be devoted for its practice. These leaders have to be determined to inculcate the principles and practices of democracy in the people they represent. In doing so they may need internal as well as external support in the area. Internally, the political leadership may facilitate the necessary training and education for party functionaries. However, they may also need international support in the field. But, navigating global support requires positive relations and partnerships through patient and diplomatic approach.

Normally, political leaders prioritize the needs of Ethiopia in building constructive relationships. They define the requirements when dealing with neighboring countries and international partners. These requirements are, however, based on the political agenda of the country. The principle of give and

take has to be respected to build long-lasting relationships with both the neighboring countries and global partners in political, social and economic development. This, however, needs to be preceded by social cohesion at country level.

Fostering social cohesion and national unity may take time. National unity is created primarily at the local level where all residents concur and create harmony on issues that affect their communal life. This is transformed into a consensus reached at higher levels and finally at national level. This process demands strategic patience from leaders at all levels. They may invest in initiatives that promote dialogue, understanding, and shared national identity without which consensus building becomes difficult. All these efforts have to be based on the rule of law. Strengthening the rule of law and ensuring a fair and impartial judiciary may be a gradual process. This process, however, builds confidence in the Ethiopian people in the initiatives that promote dialogue and national identity.

In this respect, leaders at all levels may need to patiently work on institutional reforms. These would help in enhancing the confidence of Ethiopians in the effectiveness of legal frameworks that guarantee peace, security, law and order at all levels. Primarily, the people become confident that human rights and accountability are guaranteed. Addressing human rights concerns may require patience as it needs longer time to materialize.

Similarly, ensuring accountability for past actions may be a prolonged effort. It demands gathering the correct information so that innocent and injured persons are properly and legally compensated for the wrong acts they suffered from in the past. Gathering data and information is very critical, but it needs qualified and honest legal entities and functionaries in the system. Their primary duty is to identify those who wrongly abused their power for personal benefits. They killed, amputated, raped, and disfigured poor Ethiopians for sins they have not committed. In these circumstances, leaders may communicate with relevant local and global institutions to address these issues of crime in the country.

Leaders practicing strategic patience should communicate their long-term vision and goals transparently to the public. This builds confidence of the people in the leadership and the judicial system in Ethiopia. Communication is a critical instrument that brings leaders closer to the people. When people stay in the dark without any information, they will be exposed to misinformation as a result of which they are bound to engage in misguided beliefs and actions. They will be led by false information and unrealistic expectations. In Ethiopia, where most people live in the rural areas, they are sometimes exposed to the wind of fabricated news blowing in all directions. These days some of them have access to means of communication, including Radio, TV and other media gadgets. However, due

to the burdensome agricultural activities they are engaged with, they may not have the time to distinguish the true from false information.

Some of the people residing in and around the urban areas may not be in a better position to winnow the grain from the chaff of the blowing news. Those engaged in the media industry have, therefore, great responsibility to screen what is good for the country from that of politically motivated and antagonistic news and messages.

Various media outlets, locally and abroad, seems to be infested with whistle blowers. These persons are unlawful and immoral persons whose duty is to make money for their leisure at the expense of Ethiopians who are looking for the truth about their country. There used to be foreigners who used to gather and report materials for their employer abroad. Their official duty was to teach in schools and universities, but this was only a cover for their hidden mission. Whenever they run out of materials, they used to fabricate news and mail it to their external employers, international media moguls. They were promoted to higher posts in their country and left Ethiopia decades ago. Newsmen and diplomats come into the country in different colors and assignments. Concerned authorities have to be strategically patient while watching alien forces carefully.

It is very necessary to manage expectations while fostering public understanding of the complexities involved in political, economic and social developments in the country. In the social field, it is critical to engage with communities affected by conflicts or challenges. But, this requires patience. Leaders at all levels may have to work towards building trust, understanding local dynamics, and addressing grievances over time. Strategic patience for Ethiopian leaders at all levels involves balancing the urgency of addressing immediate challenges.

It also requires designing long-term vision for sustainable development, peace, and stability in Ethiopia. This requires a careful and calculated approach that recognizes the enduring difficulties in the country. This is a step necessary to achieve more significant, lasting positive outcomes. These efforts have to be accompanied by effective communication, inclusivity, and a commitment to democratic principles. All these are inputs to successfully practicing strategic patience in the context of Ethiopian leaders at all levels. As the situation evolves and changes, concerned Ethiopian authorities should adapt their strategies in line with the principles of good governance and national development.

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

Business & Economy

The expo that connected manufacturer with buyer, experience and technology

BY BACHA ZEWDIE

One of the most important factors for developing mineral resources is investment in the sector. In line with this, among the activities that can attract investment in the mining sector is expo. Ethiopia is working to benefit more from the sector by organizing expo that promotes this mineral wealth and favorable conditions for developing it, brings together actors in the mining sector, and attracts foreign investment.

Last year, it held the first international mining and technology expo. This year, the second “Mintex” Expo was held in Addis Ababa at the Millennium Hall for five consecutive days from 24 – 28, November, 2023. This year’s expo is different from last year’s in many ways. Last year it was held for only three days and this year it was held for five days. Discussion papers were presented and discussions were held on various topics this year.

It has been pointed out that the expo has created great potential for the country and the parties involved in the sector. Citizens are called to develop the country’s mineral resources by joining together and establishing shares. Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) said at the opening of the expo; Ethiopia is a country blessed with mineral wealth. It is possible to handover a better Ethiopia to the succeeding generation by using this mineral wealth at the desired level.

“There are wonderful mineral resources in all areas of the country,” the Prime Minister said. “If we are able to know and use this mineral resource properly, we will lay the foundation for the country’s journey to prosperity. For this reason, the government has made the mining sector one of the five sectors that it has focused on for the homegrown economic reforms.

“In the past few years, we have been trying to find out and understand whether we have mineral wealth or not. Now, even though we have not fully identified the existing mineral resources, we have come to understand that Ethiopia is a country blessed with many mineral resources,” he said.

The prime minister mentioned that the expo indicated that Ethiopia is the source of gold, precious stones and many precious minerals. Students, researchers, traders, investors and other stakeholders should understand what is happening in the sector and work to support the economy.

As to him, it can be understood that the Expo is a sector that shows Ethiopia’s mineral reserves, creates a favorable environment for exporting mineral resources and lays the foundation for the next journey of prosperity. It is where mineral producers, exporters, users, technology manufacturers and suppliers meet to promote their products and services and create connections.

Therefore, in order to reach the level



of envisioned development, Ethiopian private sector should stop producing and investing individually and create a way to work together, gather knowledge and prosper. There is no problem-free way of recruitment, and it is necessary to jointly solve the problems faced in the sector to advance to the height of prosperity and handover a better Ethiopia to the next generation, he said.

Minister of Mines, Habtamu Tegegn said that the expo could create many opportunities for the country’s citizens and allowed the mineral resources available in all parts of the country to be used. It is also where the government created a great opportunity for investors to get closer with fellow investors.

He also pointed out that the expo was important to promote Ethiopia’s mineral resources. The role of investors and the private sector involved in the sector was important, and it allowed investors to look at the available resources and start working.

The minister said; “If we are not able to exploit the minerals at the required level, the country’s economic development will be in question.” To help this, he announced the establishment of the National Mining Council, which is believed to solve problems in the sector. He called on the stakeholders to work together.

More than 90 companies participated in this expo holding gold, coal, precious metals used for jewelry and industrial minerals like cement and steel and technology, Engineer Habtamu mentioned. He also announced that the expo was accompanied by conferences and gained a lot of knowledge.

He described the expo as unique in many ways. Countries with experience in the field shared their experiences, and what the country’s minerals look like. The research that indicated where they are located and how they should be developed is one of the reasons that make them unique. It is an indication of the future direction for manufacturers, investors and the government. It also enabled students and researchers to understand where the

knowledge of the sector is, and it has also given foreign investors a signal as to which and where they can go and develop.

Alongside the expo, three symposiums were held and discussions were undergone. Associate Professor of Geology at Addis Ababa University of Science and Technology, Tarekegn Tadese, is one of those who presented a research paper at the expo. No need to wait for only one party to get proper benefits from the mining sector; everyone has its share, he said.

He emphasized that in the case of mining, it is necessary to work together from the individual to the community. The reason for this is that the wealth is common and both the benefit and the harm are shared. “Every job requires passion. It is not enough to say that Ethiopia is the owner of many mineral resources. After that, we should work on the development,” he pointed out.

Tarekegn said; “The work of developing the mining sector is indeed a lot of wealth; it requires skilled manpower, and technologies in the field. The government should pay special attention to this.”

Expanding technology and exploring heavily is needed more than anything else. The government is expressing its commitment in this regard. The parties involved in the sector should take advantage of this opportunity. For this reason, such expos will bring good luck if they are focused on their implementation. Therefore, he recommended that everyone should turn into work and use the mineral for the development of the country.

Elizabet Worku is among those who participated in the expo. She established a company called Roman Marble and Granite Trading and work as a manufacturer and distributor. She announced that they could understand from the conferences that the country has a lot of natural mineral resources, but it has not gone far in the utilization of these resources.

The sector can lay the foundation for the country’s economic development. She mentioned that she has observed that the

sector had not been given due attention in the past, and she mentioned her own organization as an example of what kind of changes are coming in recent activities.

As to her, Ethiopia has limitations in terms of building capacity to identify and manage its mineral resources. This is evidenced by the fact that although there are many types of minerals in the country, they are being imported and used from abroad.

This affects the country as well as the trader or distributor in many ways. One is the issue of foreign currency. If mineral products are produced locally and distributors have minerals to supply to the local market, many things will be easier. The withdrawal of foreign currency will be stopped and the deposit will be normal.

Elizabet said that the attention given by the government to the mining sector will help to solve these and similar problems. It has saved foreign exchange in many ways while producing and distributing granite and lime stone in the country.

“With these kinds of expos, we have been able to create fertile ground to export. Because the expo has introduced us to importers and exporters, foreign companies and entities working in the sector,” he said.

She added; “The expo allowed us to learn work practices from others such as marble processes that we do not have and to exchange experiences; it has also enabled us to make new clients. Therefore, the expo has a special meaning for us in many ways.”

Masre Hassen, who is engaged in opal production in an organization called “Jobs for Development Opal Production Association”, said that the government has implemented the multi-economy perspective and has made the mining sector considered as one of the pillars of the economy. This is especially the case where the traditional way of production is organized to produce in the modern way or industrially; an opportunity is created to become a quality producer.

Masre said he feels that the government is working in coordination with actors of the sector to ensure benefit of the country’s mineral resources due to the special attention it has given to the sector. The mining sector needs high technology. He asked that it would be good if the support included them.

“At our current level, we are investing a lot of energy in extracting the ore. Instead, if we have the opportunity to get the technology to produce it, we can reduce many things. For example, it helps us to be able to produce in quantity and quality, and provide it to local distributors at a low price.”

He said that they know from experience that it takes a lot of investment and long time to utilize mineral resources. If not only the government but also investors pool their resources and invest in the sector and help associations like theirs, or facilitate the opportunity for them to work together, it would be good.

Planet Earth

Join forces to combat climate change impacts

BY FIKADU BELAY

Nowadays, an urgent issue that grabs the attention of the world is climate change. It takes long-term to address the changes in temperature and weather patterns that are mostly brought about by human day-to-day activities, especially the high consumption of firewood to cook foods. Climate change is affecting many parts of the world. Apart from hampering ecosystems, it makes the livelihood of society arduous.

Through altering weather patterns, climate change brings extreme weather conditions, sometimes making them more severe and unpredictable. The increased frequency and intensity of droughts, heat waves, storms, and heavy rainfall are wreaking devastation on agriculture, infrastructure, and human life. Communities may be displaced as a result of these terrible weather occurrences and also exposed to waterborne diseases.

Additionally, climate change has adverse effects on ecosystems and biodiversity. Many species are struggling to adapt to the rapidly changing environment, leading to shifts in migration patterns, altered breeding seasons, and increased extinction rates.

According to studies on the impact of climate change on fish biodiversity, fish biodiversity is being impacted by climate change. The research suggested that safeguarding the diversity of fish in the oceans and seas requires a close look at the issue of fostering and strengthening relationships between various fish species. Fish stocks are declining globally as a result of rising water temperatures and the significant ocean acidity, it says.

Additionally, the research indicates that fish mortality will rise by 34 times over the next 70 years if current global warming conditions persist. As the waters absorb more heat and carbon dioxide during high temperatures, millions of dead fish have been discovered on the coast.

The consequences of climate change are not limited to the environment and ecosystems alone. They also have significant social and economic ramifications. Disadvantaged communities, particularly those in developing countries, bear the brunt of climate change impacts, as they often lack the resources and infrastructure to adapt and recover from its effects. Additionally, climate change exacerbates existing social inequalities, as marginalized populations are more likely to suffer disproportionately from its consequences.

The respiratory system is impacted by climate change, which also raises the risk of heart disease, lung cancer, and other linked issues. According to a Lancet journal report, more people are becoming exposed to air pollution-related cancers.

Data from the World Health Organization (WHO) also indicates that over 20,000 people die every day in the world as a result of air pollution. According to WHO data, 99% of people on the planet breathe "dirty" air. Additionally, the study shows that in over two-thirds of the world's countries, air pollution is a contributing factor to health issues.

It is crucial to address climate change and mitigate its effects to ensure a sustainable future for the planet and its inhabitants

It is crucial to address climate change and mitigate its effects to ensure a sustainable future for the planet and its inhabitants. This requires a collective effort of all concerned parties, such as individuals, governments, businesses, and international organizations, to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, transition to renewable energy sources, protect ecosystems, and promote sustainable practices.

In order to address such climate change impacts, the 28th World Climate Change Conference (COP28), being held in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, has brought together leaders, experts, and policymakers from around the world. At the summit, high-level world officials are expected to pass viable

decisions to deal with the pressing issue of climate change. Also, it has been marked by significant progress and ambitious commitments towards mitigating climate change.

Ethiopia's practical efforts in order to prevent climate change, which have involved all parties at the national level, have led to the introduction of the Green Legacy Initiative around the globe.

The East African country has demonstrated this practical application around the globe. The participants of the COP-28 have been visiting Ethiopia's green pavilion, according to Kebede Yimam, Ethiopia's Forest Development Director, General, while he stayed for short with the Ethiopian Press Agency.

Kebede stated that Ethiopia has showcased its efforts to tackle climate change at this year's COP 28, and we can consider it Ethiopia's COP. In addition, he stated that Ethiopia had kept its promise under the Paris Agreement. The country has conveyed a strong message to other countries on the possibilities of preventing climate change through promoting the green legacy initiative.

In this sense, he said, the country is anticipated to get financial, technical, and other assistance for its efforts to combat climate change from developed countries and other organizations. The country will also invite other countries to expand large-scale carbon trading.

Africa emits little more than three percent of the world's greenhouse gases. However, the continent is becoming the main vector of climate change.

The impact of climate change is causing an average annual loss of 5% in Africa's Gross Domestic Product. In addition, 1/5th of the continent's population faces famine as a result of natural calamities like floods and droughts. Climate change has caused a tripled increase in the number of displaced citizens in the previous three years.

Africa has only gotten 12% of the help needed to address the issue of climate change, despite the fact that 250 billion dollars are required, according to data from the COP28 summit.

The Green Legacy Initiative provides for lowering the opportunity of droughts and floods that have occurred in East African countries. Kebede stated that Ethiopia's unique achievements in forest development will maintain regional peace and food security.

An agreement to fund measures that will mitigate climate change was made during the COP 28 meeting in Dubai.

The developed countries have pledged to provide financial support of around 83 billion dollars, up on the agreement made at the summit. The figure may rise as the summit does not reach its end. These funds will be crucial in supporting climate change mitigation projects, renewable energy development, and adapting efforts to mitigate the impacts of climate change.

With the initiation of the United Arab

Emirates, Arab countries donated 30 billion USD to strengthen climate change protection efforts. The UAE, independently, has contributed 100 million USD to climate compensation and has become a pioneer in supporting the challenges posed by climate change.

Agriculture and the food system are not the only things being impacted by climate change; it has also been decided to reduce emissions from large industries and to assist countries whose food security is very vulnerable. According to COP 28 data, over 140 countries committed to donate 2.6 billion dollars to help mitigate the impact of climate change on agricultural and food security.

The conference has established a fund to respond to the impacts of climate change on food systems and health, receiving a substantial USD 568 million in support for technology transfer. Also, the European Union has expressed its commitment to contribute to the USD 100 billion climate change compensation fund, further bolstering global efforts to combat climate change.

Alongside financial commitments, COP28 has witnessed the signing of a document that has 11 articles. These documents outline strategies and initiatives to address the challenges posed by climate change. The funds gained can cover a wide range of areas, including renewable energy, technology transfer, food systems, and health. Moreover, these agreements signify a significant step forward in the fight against climate change and offer hope for a sustainable future.

Furthermore, these documents highlight the collective determination of participating nations to tackle the global climate crisis. In addition to the financial support pledged, COP28 has focused on other critical aspects of climate change mitigation.

Moreover, African countries are setting up institutions together with other international institutions to improve the carbon payment and green bond systems. Such programs would enforce the development objectives related to the mitigation of climate change, encourage sustainable investment, and receive financial support from the world's wealthiest countries.

Methane gas emissions must be decreased, and developed countries should take proactive measures in order to reduce the release of these powerful greenhouse gases.

Sultan Al Jaber (PhD), the president of COP28, has urged countries to keep their word and continue to make progress in mitigating climate change. In reaction to the losses and harms brought on by climate change, he added, the conference seeks to find additional funding.

The way the world reacts to climate change will be greatly influenced by the decisions made at COP28. There is hope for a sustainable future because of the global promises made thus far. Together, countries can meet the challenges presented by climate change and open the door to a society that is more resilient and environmentally responsible.

Art & Culture

“New-Age” children: Smarter than their parents?

BY MULUGETA GUDETA

Children nowadays are increasingly occupying centre stages in many social events and media presentations. Children are allowed to be guests at social media events, and encouraged to speak their minds whether what they say may or may not be of any use to their peers or to society at large. Children are also encouraged to comment in public on issues that are not “childlike” and sometimes act as overgrown adults. Children are cherished and spoiled simply because they are but innocent children. It does not really matter whether some of them are, judging from the over-maturity of their ideas, have gone past the age of innocence.

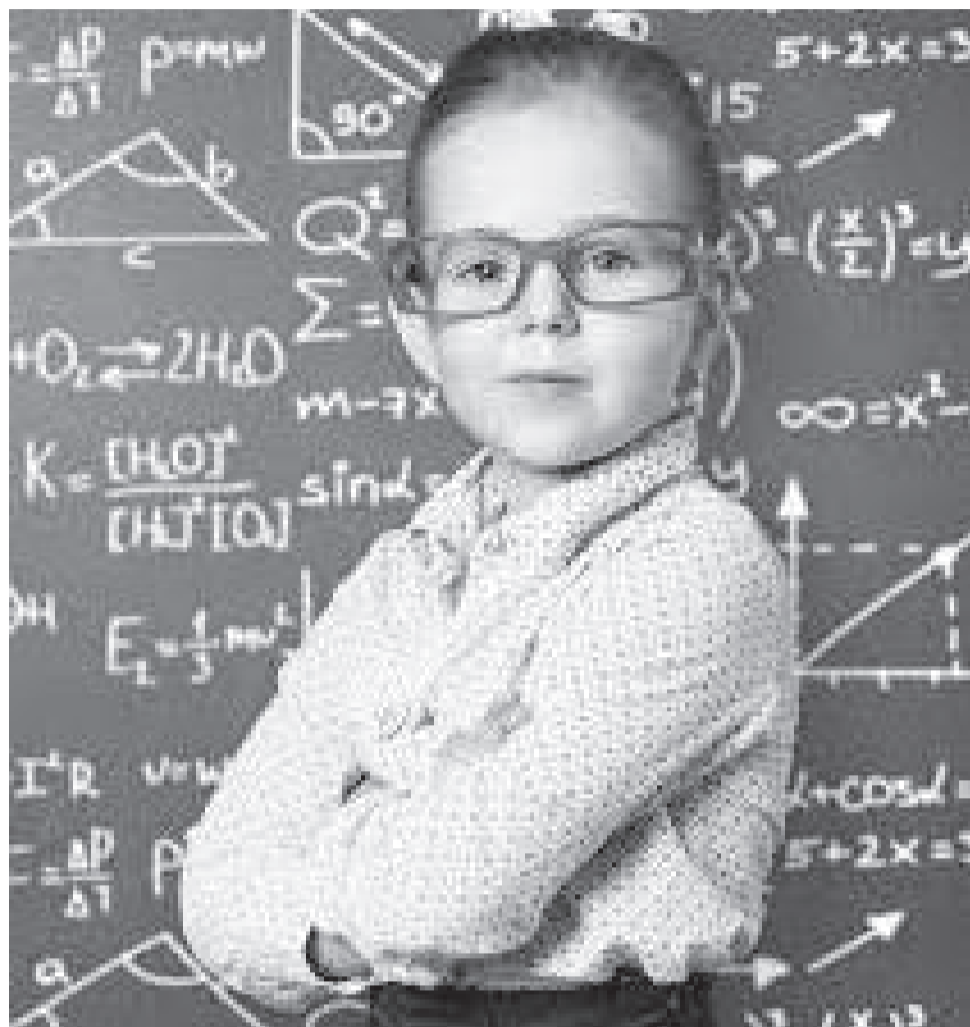
In Ethiopian tradition everywhere, children are indeed precious members of the family and the community. They are often adored and sometimes spoiled; but overall they are regarded as the hopes of the future providing support to their parents in their old ages. Having children is not only a matter of reproduction but also an insurance against difficult times when parents get older and children step in to support their families.

This was the prevalent belief in traditional Ethiopian communities. In traditional Ethiopia, children had only one ultimate task to perform in their lives and that is to grow up fast if possible and help their parents in domestic and fields works. Nevertheless, children did not always enjoy happy childhoods for many reasons, mainly economic ones. They lived in dire circumstances as average household revenues were very low and opportunities were hard to come by.

The situation is rather different in urban settings where children enjoy the same parental love and care but are allowed to grow up in full freedom, enjoying overflowing love and attention and care from their families who invest their future in them as they are eager to see them succeed. Some fortunate families give their kids the best of everything: best food, best treatment, best schooling and best anything. These are families that are lucky enough to afford the best things in life.

Some of the families may not however be the best educators for many reasons. There is obviously a generation gap between parents and their children who grew up and came of age in different social and economic environments. There is also a wide gap in educational opportunities and parent-children relations.

There was once a rather funny joke that was making the rounds of our capital about a father who often went home late at night after making a phone call and asking his wife whether their son was asleep. The boy was already fluent in English and spoke it like Americans while he was still in grade school. The father who presumably belonged to the fast rising business class had his roots in one of the rural areas and was alleged to have made fortunes soon after moving to the capital in search of



better opportunities. Most members of the local middle class are said to be sending their kids to expensive schools where the teachers are mostly foreigners.

So, the father in our story stayed at his pub sipping whiskey until his son went to bed and drove back home in the wee hours of the night. However, before going home he asked his dear wife, “Is that terrible kid still awake playing video games?” He returned home if his wife’s answer is a no. And when he drove home, he must have been praying to God so that his son sunk in the deepest slumber the time he reach home.

The reason? The kid was fond of asking his father many questions in English and the father felt lost and chose to dismiss the boy with a frown and a loud, “Go to bed right now or else I’ll spank you!” kind of reprimand. As a result of this father and son were said to meet face to face quit rarely. Whenever they met by chance, away from the prying eyes or ears of strangers, the father was said to be praying for his terrible kid to speak in his native tongue.

Be it as it may, the fortunate son of the said businessman had no choice but go to bed after uttering a few strange phrases in English and after making American-style gestures you may watch on Netflix or some other platforms designed for the new-age children like the boy in this story.

The man in our story obviously sent his son to one of the expensive schools in Addis Ababa where foreigners were teaching and speaking Amharic or any other vernacular was discouraged or forbidden. The school authorities in those exclusively elite schools were often quoted as saying that speaking one of the local languages in such a prestigious school could undermine its

credibility and international status and who knows it might also pollute their precious language with words from the vernacular.

The paradox however is that the so-called smart schoolchildren from elite schools are no usually the ones who perform smartly at national examinations or succeed in their professional lives. Going to elite schools is not a sure guarantee that the students will become top spot intellectuals, engineers, astronauts, scientists or statesmen and women.

There is no clear cut rule that equates going to elites schools with success later in life. We often hear or read stories of children from disadvantaged families who made it to the top of the academic and professional ladder both here at home and in the Diaspora. This does not mean however that elite schools are useless or they do not produce top talents provided the children are genuinely talented or smart. Going back to the boy in the above joke, he might presumably end up developing into a brat who might be showing his smartness by equating his fluency in a foreign language. This is only an assumption.

What I have called “New Age” children who are fluent in English or any other foreign language might be missing a vital aspect of their mental development, namely failing to connect with their parents in a loving and respectful manner. The father in the joke is scared of his “terrible kid” and decides not to face him after work. Instead he visits the pub until the times his boy goes to bed. There is a kind of double jeopardy here.

On the one hand, the father is not in touch with the mental development of the child and second he makes unnecessary visits to the pub simply because he does not want to

face his child who speaks English in a way that might be intimidating to his father. How is the father going to read to his son stories from children’s books? He has simply no time to do so.

The “New Age” children might be seen as caricatures of the children they see in American movies like Tom and Jerry or some other stuffs based on lives in American families. Without parental guidance, what children see and feel can sometimes go out of control. A constant and close interaction between parents and children is a must in these days of fast changing events and chaotic environment, overpopulation and rising anxiety and stress that can wreak havoc on the health of many families. Children are particularly vulnerable to rapid changes and they need time and guidance from parents to adjust and even understand the significance of many events that can affect them positively or negatively. It is good to raise intelligent children as far as their level of intelligence is cool for their ages. Too much of anything could be bad for them and may lead to adolescence crisis that may turn out to be challenging time for the children and their parents.

Fathers and sons should not necessarily converse in a foreign language and fathers in particular may not need to stay away in the evening instead of going back home earlier so that they may have time to discuss things with the children and make adjustment if there is any problem. They can talk their common language while interacting because there no shame in fathers using a local language while addressing their children. There is also no shame in not speaking a foreign language unless it is for business or entertainment.

On the other hand child psychology is something that changes in time. Many school age children who look smart while very young may turn out to be not so as their age increases. It is also good to send your parents to so-called elite school if you can because quality of education is a very sensitive issue in this country.

However, language should not be the sole yardstick to measure the children’s smartness or otherwise. If a child is competent in foreign languages, it does not necessary mean that they are so in mathematics or other skills. Parental guidance and communication may be vital to navigate the potentially risky waters of childhood and adolescence which is a time for character formation, and overall physical and mental development of children.

Jokes and humors aside, parents of the so-called smart children should learn English if necessary to enter into conversation with their kids instead of running away from them. Anyway, some children may be smart beyond their age but they cannot be smarter than their parents. What will happen in case the kid wakes up the moment his dad knocks at the door in the wee hours of the night and asks him where he had been all this time? This may be a topic for another joke.

Society

Empowering women via art, creativity

BY BETELHEM BEDLU

Violence against women is incredibly widespread. In 2021, around 45,000 women and girls worldwide were killed by soul mate partners or other family members. This means that on average, more than five women and girls are killed every hour by someone in their own family.

Germany Ambassador to Ethiopia Stephan Auer uttered the above statement during the festival organized by the Embassy of Germany and the Ethiopian Human Rights Defenders Centre as part of the international 16 days of activism recently.

During the event which was held under the theme: “Youth in Art for Women’s Rights” at Goethe-Institute to raise awareness on gender based violence, the Ambassador highlighted that women have less access to labor market, unemployed, or paid less.

He also said that there are still not enough women in management positions and quoted UN Secretary’s Antonio Guterres stating that it would take another 200 years to achieve full gender equality worldwide assuming we can keep the current pace.

Through the voice and works of Ethiopian artists, the Embassy wants to raise the public’s awareness of women human rights defenders’ movement, the Ambassador stressed.

Equality and a commitment to women’s rights are at the heart of Germany’s human right policy, he said adding that his country supports women’s rights organizations in Ethiopia to ensure that women’s rights and gender equality become a reality.

Emphasizing that the event aims at bringing together artists from all arenas to explore together how to artistically approach women’s rights, the he stated that Artists are one of the most vocal groups in society, and “we want to support them to contribute to empowering women and girls in their fight against sexual- and gender-based violence.”

Art provides an unlimited space to share messages of human rights resilience, strength and unity against GBV. In this regard, we are giving the strong artists to talented young Ethiopian artists who will display the strength and resilience of Ethiopian women in the fight against GBV through their works, Ambassador Auer emphasized.

He further mentioned that strong democracies need strong women who participate equally in all areas of society. It is clear that a society can only function if everyone participates. People of all genders, ages, backgrounds and beliefs must be able to meet on an equal footing and make their contribution.

Underlining the need to providing equal opportunities for men and women, the Ambassador added that dialogues and peace process are more effective and sustainable if women are meaningfully included. As to him, women’s participation in conflict



Ethiopian women artists, has a responsibility in serving the voiceless women who are victims of all forms of Gender Base Violence

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prevention and resolution can improve outcomes during, before, and after conflict.

Moreover, he added that economies would be more productive if everyone participates; he said women-led enterprises are among the most vibrant in Ethiopia.

Thus, he expressed his country’s keen interest to support artists to contribute to empowering women and girls in their fight against inequality, especially in their fight against sexual- and gender-based violence (GBV).

Kalkidan Tesfaye, Advocacy and Communication Senior Officer with the Ethiopian Human Rights Defenders Centre mentioned that the event highlights how youth artists portray women’s rights in their works.

The Ethiopian Human Rights Defenders Centre collaborates with musicians, poets, animators, filmmakers, and visual artists to promote the causes of sexually assaulted women and girls as we assist those affected by unrest and other situations.

So far, the center has formulated and provided training for over 12 Human Rights Defenders Centers in 12 universities that are believed to be vulnerable to instability, as to her.

Peace State Minister Taye Denda, said at the event that conveying messages through art is significant as it reaches a vast audience in different forms. Campaigning for the rights of women and children using art is crucial given the fact that they are the major victims of GBV as well as insecurity.

The state minister further noted that women and girls are expected to be in forefront to fight for their rights and take the lion share in sensitizing the society, as they are the most vulnerable groups in the times of unrest and crises. Women’s participation in

conflict prevention and revolution is also improving from time to time.

The government not only formulates and adopts laws but it is fully committed to ensure women’s rights are respected. Human right activists also need to exert their responsibility in advocating women’s rights and holding accountable individuals who commit sexual assaults, Taye pleaded.

Number of musicians, poets, animators, filmmakers, and visual artists promoted the causes of sexually assaulted women and girls through their works at the ‘youth in art for women’s right’ festival.

The role of women artists in advocating for women’s rights is instrumental in raising awareness, promoting empowerment, and challenging societal norms. Women artists often use their creative talents to address issues such as gender equality, representation, and social justice, thereby amplifying the voices of women and highlighting their experiences. Through various art forms, including visual arts, literature, music, and performance, women artists contribute to shaping the narrative around women’s rights, inspiring change, and fostering a more inclusive and equitable society. Their work not only serves as a platform for expression but also as a catalyst for meaningful conversations and action towards achieving gender equality and women’s empowerment.

Art is a powerful weapon to convey all the necessary messages concerning the right of women. In this regard, Ethiopian women artists, has a responsibility in serving the voiceless women who are victims of all forms of Gender Base Violence. Every woman is directly or indirectly the victims of the aforementioned GBV. Every woman is also an artist who knew the power of conveying message through art.

Law & Politics

What is Ethiopia?

BY SOLOMON WASSIHUN

While surfing the Internet recently, I came across a virtual interview that Tibor Nagy, the former US ambassador to Ethiopia, gave to a local TV station. Mr. Nagy may no longer be a diplomat, but he still talks like a diplomat, with carefully measured and deliberately obscured words. The content of the interview is neither interesting nor new, with the exception of two points. One of the two points is relevant to the topic we are dealing with here, while the other is saved for another occasion.

The former ambassador, who described himself as a friend of Ethiopia and spoke as a private citizen, said, "Ethiopia is an empire." He even dared to equate Ethiopia with the long-defunct Austro-Hungarian Empire, which was a military and diplomatic alliance of sovereign states and later disintegrated as a result of the First World War.

It is quite perplexing to hear such kind of comparison from a former diplomat who describes himself as a friend of Ethiopia. What is shocking is that Mr Nagy had been living here in Ethiopia for several years, and had a chance to learn with first-hand experience what Ethiopia really is. What is worrying is the gentleman is a university professor who is in a position to influence the next generation of scholars with his erroneous lectures and academic publications.

Nagy's interpretation of Ethiopia begs at least one question. How many of the foreigners who label themselves "friends" or "specialists" in Ethiopian affairs share this dangerous thought of the former ambassador? From which history book does he derive this narrative?

This narrative is shared by ethnic and religious extremists that have posed an existential threat to the Ethiopian state from the past until now. As infuriating experience as it was listening to that interview as an Ethiopian, it was also funny in that the interviewer was praising and thanking Mr Nagy for his analysis repeatedly.

The truth is that Ethiopia is not an Empire. Rather it is a country that immediately brings into mind the phrase "A rainbow nation". It is a country where peoples of different cultures, languages, and beliefs have been living together for millennia sharing both times of sadness and happiness as well as miseries and victories.

Despite their differences, thousands of years of interaction and coexistence have enabled them to cement their bond with blood, cultural, religious, and language ties. Many Ethiopians speak at least two local languages, interracial marriage is quite common. All in all, Ethiopians of different ethnic origins share common beliefs, outlooks, and identities that entitle them to live in unity as citizens of a country.

So Ethiopia is a united country that respects diversity. Fortunately, this week is a time for people with confused interpretations



It is an opportunity for nations and nationalities to set agendas that would lead to them resolving the bottlenecks to their effort to build a unified strong Ethiopia where all of them live in peace, prosperity and harmony

of Ethiopia and ethiopianess to visit the country. It is the week Ethiopians celebrate their diversity and honor their shared identity as Ethiopians.

This week, the second-largest city in the Far East corner of the country, Jigjiga, has become a microcosm of Ethiopian celebration. Representatives of nationalities and nations from every corner are converging in that city to celebrate this year's Nations and Nationalities Day with a theme: diversity and equality for National unity.

The national event coordinated by the federal House of Federation provides colorful scenery of the ethnographic riches of the country. One could see various traditional costumes, dancing, and their interpretation of life. The event is also a time for the Ethiopian youth to learn the

exciting new things about the culture and way of life of various communities. It is the event that tells us Ethiopia is like a colorful fabric made by the interlaced warp and weft of nations/ nationalities.

One participant of the event explains Ethiopia with a metaphor "when a single wood stands alone, it makes any difference but when the woods are joined together in a balanced and harmonious way. They stand strong making a house that does not let in the wind, the rain, or any of the elements."

Another participant said. "Ethiopia is a nation of several problems, at the same time it has also several solutions too. We have joined hands and sit together like this, to share our wisdom and shape our common destiny as a nation. We all wish to build and develop, a united, prosperous Ethiopia whose people live in peace and harmony."

One of the events in the five-day celebration of Nations and Nationalities Day is a symposium where Ethiopians exchange views and share facts about the present status and the prospect of the implementation of the rights of nations and nationalities as stipulated in the constitution. Representatives of the nations and nationalities also celebrate their common identity, their Ethiopianess.

The last, the fifth day of the event is named Ethiopia Day. They discuss the current situation of their country as a whole and exchange views on ways to circumvent challenges of ethnic extremism and ensure the peaceful coexistence of Ethiopians with moto unity with diversity.

Speaker of the House of Federation, Agegnehu Teshager, attached great importance to the events held in Jigjiga and expected huge outcomes that would facilitate the implementation of the hottest current topic of Ethiopian politics—the national dialogue. "The august gathering of nations and nationalities day in Jigjiga is expected to generate a possible agenda for the national dialogue," he said in a comment he made a day before the event kicked off.

Indeed, Ethiopia is at a historical crossroads that could lead to endless cycle of violence or sustainable peace and prosperity. The choice fully rests on the hands of its nations, and nationalities. The Premier, Abiy Ahmed once said that the upcoming national dialogue is a golden opportunity for Ethiopians not to be missed.

It is an opportunity for nations and nationalities to set agendas that would lead to them resolving the bottlenecks to their effort to build a unified, strong Ethiopia where all of them live in peace, prosperity, and harmony. It is also an opportunity for Ethiopian nations and nationalities to establish shared history based on facts, not on distorted fictitious narratives that are created to promote the politics of ethnic extremists.

If they agree that it is necessary, Ethiopians have the full right to recommend reform and revision of the constitution, the controversial document introduced about three decades ago but which guarantees the exercise of democratic and human rights of nations and nationalities. The Ethiopian government is committed to implementing the recommendations of the Ethiopian people.

The Ethiopian nations and nationalities have been living in coexistence for thousands of years, preserving the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ethiopia by sticking together against all odds. The elders of the nationalities have made their communities live in peace and harmony among themselves and with their neighbors long before the idea of democracy and words like constitution, or Parliament emerged.

They have succeeded because of their unwritten and unpublished, time-tested traditional wisdom. We hope that at the national dialogue, they will bring their respective wisdoms, mix, shake and homogenize them to address the set agenda items and subsequently come up with a home-grown panacea for the current situation in their country, Ethiopia.



Ephrem Endale
Contributor

Between you & me

Wrong Calls, Wrong Attitudes!

BY EPHREM ENDALE

There are those moments in life when you feel fully helpless; helpless to the point that you feel you are the last man standing on Planet Earth. You're helpless not because you don't know what to do about whatever mess you're in, or because your problem is yet without any solution and they are working in multiple labs all over the place to discover some potion or whatever to resolve it. You feel helpless because the problem might seem simple at its onset and yet could turn into one of your most frustrating problems of the last couple of decades. What am I talking about? (Incidentally that question could be legitimate as it could be vicious. I mean it! These days so many of us pour tones of words and we ourselves seem to be out in the cold when asked to elaborate what the hell we're saying. There is nothing to elaborate dummy!) I'm talking the seemingly trivial issue of wrong calls. How we'd have liked for it to be so 'trivial' so that we could save a little quality time of undisturbed tranquility every day. How much we're indeed of that only He knows. These days most wrong calls are anything but trivial. You get the feel of such a scenario when you're the target of barrages of wrong calls from those who don't take "No." for an answer for even the most bizarre reasons and also those who refuse that it is indeed the wrong number. It seems that few of us are ready to take the response, "Sorry, I think you called the wrong number."

"Isn't it number 0911....."

Yes it is. But there is no one by the name you

mentioned in this place."

"How could that happen?" And that goes on until you're forced to hang up. Not very civilized! Yes hanging on someone is nowhere near to civilization and also unfair. But then these days acting civilized and fairness are subjective. Who said so! Well I didn't attribute that to any particular source, did I? But even say that these were the words of a researcher at some big institution and "Someone once said..." you surely wouldn't have asked me the source's real identity. "Who is this someone you just quoted?" (It isn't about the source; it is about the quote itself, buddy! That would be Plan B of the escape route.) Such a 'cornering' question would be much uncivilized and a couple of centuries late.

We're so much submerged in this sea of distrust and never-ending suspicions making people believe what you tell them is a daunting task these days. In fact that would be mark the heavy line between the smart and the not smart. "How the hell does he manage to make so many people listen to what he says! I nearly have to chart out an operational plan of sorts before I try to make people believe that 'how tall' I was what they actually see and there was no AI interference at all! Hmm.... And this guy does it at the blink of an eye. Whoever says this world or nature is fair should grill themselves what actually they mean by that! Speaking of wrong calls I had this experience, the kind of experience you'd have liked to completely erase from your mind's warehouse but still crops up in the most unexpected of times; like now when I'm scribbling this piece.

It was evening and to the best of my recollection I was either reading something or watching the Segall guy punch and kick the hell out of the whole town without a single fist coming close to anywhere close to his jaw! That guy's films never stop amazing me!

My phone rings and it was a number I didn't recognize; but then when you're in the writing business there is nothing as 'a number you don't know. When the calls come in most are not known to you. In fact many of the numbers are unknown to you and there's no story material about anything like 'numbers you don't know.'

"Hello!" I must have sounded the second nicest person on this side of Planet Earth. Thanks for the thumbs up! But then whether you sound nice or not you expect an equally nice and musical "Hello!" or something like that from the other side. That never came! An angry woman's ballistic voice hit my ears with force hard to imagine. She directly descended into abusive language, none of which I'm afraid I could mention here and went on calling me all kinds of not-so-nice names I already knew and also never heard until that time. (Poor me never knew such words existed in the Amharic language!)

She accused me of betraying her and doing all kinds of evil things towards her with the infidelity thing taking center stage. The next day too she called and continued her abusive rants from where she left off. This time I muted the phone and waited until she had enough and hang up. The next couple of days she called

umpteenth times every each night but I knew much better than answering those calls. Days the calls became very I tried hard to interrupt her and tell her she has the wrong number but she refused to give me any opportunity to do so.

A few days later one of those calls from a 'number I didn't know' comes and I picked it up. To my surprise and perhaps utter shock it was the same woman. Before I decided to do whatever she practically begs me not to hang up. Now this must be a changed woman?

She says it was later that she learned she called the wrong person and hips on me apology after apology making me feels somewhat embarrassed. Finally she actually wept and I had real hard time trying to cool her down and do things not very gentlemanly like proposing, "Look, how about meeting for tea and we can talk about it!" Never did that! I said things like "You don't have to worry; such things happen," sort of a dozen-a-dime 'diplomatic' approach.

A friend who recently got a call from a person he didn't know wasn't that lucky. The person he doesn't know calls and threatens to beat him up unless he stopped what he was doing. Now the problem was that this was the type of guy who looks to the for the zebra crossing to cross to the other side even if there wasn't any car in sight as far as he can see. Him doing things which drive others to threaten to beat him up! No way! He says he is drawing nearer to identifying the person and would confront him in person him as soon as he does. God help him!

Craving for Real Small Talk!

Still talking about our social engagements with others. One thing difficult these days is getting the right persons to talk to. Believe me those small talks with friends and pole you knew near far don't seem to be what they usually were and are supposed to be. You know small talks adding some flair to otherwise drab and uninteresting mid-mornings and late afternoons. We're perhaps in the most unpredictable, and unrecognizably messy and uninteresting times where what you see is seldom what you get and what you hear is much of the time not the real story, and not in fat half of the real story.

We're a little early to put all the blame on the AI thing, wouldn't you say?

Ever since he has been threatening to put your small intestine into your hands whenever he has too many to drink you can't help harboring some misgivings, though harmless, about him. What if one bad day he actually tries to do what he says? You know, the 'your small your hands' talk! You never know. However as a normal person he's the most sociable with a smile that seem to have been boosted up by other smiles, even the hugs which are so passionate at times that you wonder if the same guy goes berserk every time he drinks over his limits, limits only he knows. Yes under normal circumstances you could real serious matter with such people. Because they practically replace their normal skin when they're drunk that doesn't make them heir to some high position in hell.

But then what happens whenever they are drunk could highly dent whatever close

friendships you have with them. Just like that it would be one of those cases of 'one moment here and nowhere the next!'

"Look whatever I said last night I didn't mean it. I hope you're not angry with me. (What! Did he say angry? To tell the truth the only thing I wanted to do at that moment was rip out his serpent-like tongue and throw it to my cat which for some reason is losing weight fast!) Of course you wouldn't tell him that in his face. But then there was this group when it all happened and he was babbling things about you only he and you knew about. Now that's neither friendly nor an innocent thing to do. A couple of days after such an incident all the 'secret' about your fiancé telling you she's living you for another man or then boss who threatened you to snatch you out of the department head chair and make you a gardener would make the rounds of the town's watering holes.

As I say repeatedly I'm not your man-of-the party type. In fact say you take me to some really boisterous places and perhaps half of the celebrations would be dimmed.

"Listen, who's that guy over there!"

"Which one?"

"That one who probably thinks he is a couple of centimes taller than the Napoleon fellow."

"Oh, him; he came with so and so. I think he's an old friend of his."

"I've been watching him. I haven't yet heard him say a single word or talk to anyone. Is anything wrong with him?"

"Maybe he might be mentally unstable and so and so brought him to cheer him up."

"Or maybe he might be spying on us for our girlfriends!" Ha!

In our society being as silent as possible despite how others behave themselves used to get you the loudest applause. Yes, that is that kind of society most of us have been brought up in. "You wouldn't believe how quite that guy is. He's the nicest person in our village." yes, being silent and being very much reserved in making comments and even during greetings exchange would make you some sort of a four-star hero. If your other half is the quite one believe me and you're a hero and parents tell all sorts of stories to their children about you two. "Haven't you seen how quite they are! In fact even when they walk they don't look people in the eye; they always look at the ground. You should be like them."

But that was then and now is now. Things have changed beyond your wildest expectations. If you're looking at the ground when you move around it is not some sign of high level innocence; such behaviors could be interpreted as signs some mental problem maybe with some screws upstairs missing or being damaged beyond repair.

Say someone whom you know not very well tells you "I wanted to talk to you."

Now such kind of talk coming from persons with whom you aren't closely acquainted dent a nerve or two.

"Talk with me?"

"Yes with you. When will you be free for a couple of hours?" hey! Hey! Just take it say and higher gear driving here! Now as of late you find yourself in deep trouble talking to even to your best of friends and colleagues and this guy you barely know says he wants to talk to you. And 'for a couple of hours' too! No, you are not the lamb to be driven to the slaughter that easily. Better own the discussion.

"About what do you want to talk to me?" This might not be a very common question in such situations. In fact some might take it as being disrespectful towards the person. Well, aren't we hearing the 'no pain, no gain,' thing over and again! So the accusation of being disrespectful might be a better option than facing someone whose demeanor has nothing to attract you to sit at the same table with him let alone talk for a couple of hours. What's more, as far as you're concerned there is nothing that could be an agenda item between you two and as we said you barely know the fellow.

I can tell you what the most probable answer would be. "I'll see when I'll be free and give you a call." The guy is glad and leaves with some "See you around." stuff. Of cures you'd never call. The comic part here is you don't know his number as you've never phoned each other and the guy didn't have the bile to ask "Do you have my number?"

By the time he realizes yours would be the call that never comes you'd probably be out of the woods!

In Pictures

Ethiopia marks 18th nations and nationalities day in Jigjiga

BY DARGIE KAHSAY



President Sahle-Work Zewdie attends the celebration

The 18th nations, nationalities and people's day was marked yesterday, Decemeber 9 in Jigjiga city, Somali Regional State. President Sahle-work Zewde, head of state of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, arrived in Jigjiga yesterday early in the morning to attend the event.

Up on her arrival at Jigjiga Airport, House of Federation Speaker, Agegnehu Teshager and President of Somali Regional State, Mustafe Mohammed welcomed the president.



Heads of regional states attends 18th nations and nationalities day

Presidents of different regional states and mayors of the two city administrations had also attended the 18th nations and nationalities celebration in Jigjiga. Presidents of Benishangul Gumuz, Amhara, Oromia, Sidama, Central Ethiopia, South Western Ethiopia, Gambella and Southern Ethiopia and mayors of Addis Ababa and Dire Dawa city administrations are seen above attending the event.



Representatives of nations and nationalities presents cultural shows

Representatives of all nations and nationalities from across all corners of Ethiopia had attended the 18th nations and nationalities day in Jigjiga. Representing their respective nations, the representatives presented cultural shows during the event. The program organized at Jigjiga stadium was colorful as it was foregrounded by the different cultural dressings and dances of the peoples of Ethiopia.



UNESCO inscribes Shuwalid Festival

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has inscribed Shuwalid Festival, an annual three-day festival celebrated by the Harari people of Ethiopia, as an Intangible World Cultural Heritage.

The inscription was announced at the eighteenth session of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage held from December 4 to 9 December 2023 at the Cresta Mowana Resort in Kasane, Republic of Botswana.

Shuwalid festival marks the end of six days of fasting to compensate omissions during Ramadan. Harar city becomes the first city in Ethiopia to be home to two UNESCO heritages: the historic Jugol and Shuwalid festival.

