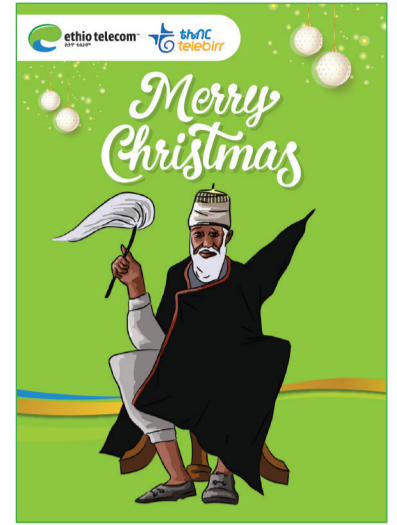




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Chief Negotiator slams Egypt's possessive stance for dam talks' glitch

• Ethiopia pursues accommodative resolution

BY YESUF ENDRIS

ADDIS ABABA-The 4th round of the tripartite talks on Abbay Dam ended without consent due to Egypt's reliance on the colonial-era pact that did not concern Ethiopia, Ethiopia's Abbay Dam Chief Negotiator said.

Briefing journalists yesterday, the Chief Negotiator Seleshi Bekele (PhD) also stated that Egypt's failure to accommodate Ethiopian's inalienable right to utilize the Abbay River is the reason for the negotiations which was held in Addis Ababa for the past three days concluded without agreement.

"The two negotiating teams agreed on several points which were sources of disagreements during earlier negotiation seasons. But, it was unable to reach consensus on Article Six that concerns water discharge and the Egyptian side rejects Ethiopia's right to use the river during the times of drought."



The Ethiopian and Egyptian leaders agreed to resume negotiations on the Abbay Dam and to reach final agreement within four months and in light of this, the negotiating team from both

sides held four rounds of talks. But the intended agreement has not been reached owing to the Egyptian negotiator's nonnegotiable stance, the

See Chief Negotiator.. Page 3

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Stakeholders value CSO's role in Ethiopia's Foreign Policy

BY MESERET BEHAILU

ADDIS ABABA – Cognizant of their due role in Ethiopia's Foreign Policy, the Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)

See Stakeholders .. Page 3



Fmr. president praises Ethio-China all-weather partnership

BY MESERET BEHAILU

ADDIS ABABA—The all-weather comprehensive strategic partnership between Ethiopia and China has brought significant outcome, so stated Ethiopian Former President.

Speaking to CGTN, Ethiopia's ex-president Mulatu Teshome

See Fmr. president .. Page 3

President Sahlework convey condolences over passing of Kuwaiti Emir

BY STAFF REPORTER

ADDIS ABABA- President Sahlework Zewde expressed her condolences over the death of Kuwaiti Emir Sheikh Nawaf al-Ahmad al-Sabah to his successor Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah in a ceremony held yesterday in Kuwait City.

The President expressed her deep sorrow to the new Emir, the Royal Family, and people of Kuwait over the late Emir's death, and wished them consolation.

During her stay, Sahlework also visited the Ethiopian Embassy in Kuwait.

The relationship between Ethiopia and Kuwait has been strong since the reign of Emperor Haileselassie I.

It is known that the Kuwait's funding to Ethiopia's social and economic development is significant.

During the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, Ethiopia officially opposed the invasion.



Factory set to produce 150,000 tons of pulp, paper

• Demands forex subsidization to restore machineries

BY YESUF ENDRIS

ADDIS ABABA- Wonji Pulp and Paper Factory SC announced preparation to manufacture 150,000 tons of pulp and paper products this budget year.

Speaking to the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA), Factory Acting Deputy Chief Executive Officer Tilahun Mengesha said that the factory is supplying Kraft papers, packaging papers, book covers, and other papers to the local market.

The factory is now manufacturing stationery items with better performance as it has planned manufacturing 150,000 tons of product this year, he indicated.

He, however, stated that the paper mill can manufacture more than the planned volume of products if all machines were maintained. Therefore, the factory has requested the government for foreign currency subsidization so as to maintain machineries and procure spare parts, Tilahun expressed.

“We request for support to procure machines to be imported from abroad. So, the government should help us with foreign



currency, and then we could make the mill fully operational,” he said.

According to the CEO, almost all inputs which were imported from abroad have already been substituted as the factory uses recycled papers as an input.

Wonji Pulp and Paper Factory SC has value chain linkage with Berhanena Selam

Printing Enterprise and Wonji Shoa Sugar Factory, he mentioned.

The factory which established 60 years ago with a capacity of manufacturing 50 tons of pulp and paper per day was the only Ethiopian paper mill until some other factories built few years ago, he said.

State eyeing to utilize home building technologies

• Sets to transfer 30,000 houses

BY TSEGAYE TILAHUN

ADDIS ABABA – Amhara State Urban and Infrastructure Development Bureau said it is working to utilize and expand latest house building technologies to address the growing housing demand.

Approached by *The Ethiopian Herald*, Bureau Head Ahmedin Mohammed (PhD) said that addressing the growing housing demand requires utilizing and expanding instant and sustainable modern housing construction technologies.

The sector requires developing strategy and proclamation so as to applying modern construction technologies to finalize housing projects shortly, he added.

According to the Head, the State has been working to transfer over 30,000 houses built in different modalities to individuals in affordable price this Ethiopian fiscal year.

However, he said, the aforesaid number of houses is not sufficient compared to the high housing demand at state and national level that’s why it requires utilizing the latest technologies.

Ahmedin expressed manufacturing industries are under establishment aimed at producing construction inputs.

There are fasthousing construction technology trials in Bahir Dar, Gondar, Debre Birhan and other cities, he added.

“The dire housing need requires speedy response. There are three schemes to respond citizens’ high housing demand. Transferring land for citizens, forming housing development association, real estate development and as well as government intervention,” he said.

Furthermore, the State government forwards the necessary support to modernize infrastructure, facilitate digitization, improving service delivery as well as to realize smart city plan, Ahmedin noted.

Infrastructural development especially road construction has been widely ongoing in urban areas, he said, adding such intervention contributes to overcome social, economic and political problems.

SAA launches evidence-based regenerative agriculture project

• Plans to benefit 100,000 citizens

BY TSEGAYE TILAHUN

ADDIS ABABA—Sasakawa Africa Association (SAA) has launched regenerative agriculture project to benefit 100,000 Ethiopians and address the impact of climate change.

Speaking at the launching ceremony, SAA Ethiopia Country Director Fentahun Mengesha (PhD) said that the SAA project brings together the expertise and technologies to implement regenerative agriculture at grassroots level for soil regeneration, increased agro-biodiversity, and productivity.

“It also brings a new agricultural future by regenerating and improving soil health, biodiversity and ecosystems, increasing productivity, improving resilience and reduces carbon emissions.”

A million USD project is targeted at benefiting 100,000 smallholder farmers directly and 250,000 citizens indirectly. It would be implemented in two Kebeles of Oromia state such as Buyo-Kechema and Shashemene, he indicated.

The regenerative agriculture can help mitigate climate change by restoring soil carbon stocks through carbon sequestration and reducing nitrous oxide emissions on farmland. It also drives climate adaptation and resilience through



Fentahun Mengesha (PhD)

climate-smart agriculture practices.

Moreover, the project targets at increasing priority commodities productivity by 40 to 60% and improving livelihood by 30%. It will also open up new incentive for farmers practicing regenerative agriculture to be compensated for increasing soil carbon stocks in their farmland, he stated.

“As transforming agriculture sector to increase productivity should not be based only utilization of inputs, it should be backed by soil treatment mechanisms as increasing the productivity of agriculture without restoring the depleted soil is difficult,” he said.

SAA Nigeria Country Director Godin L. Aster (PhD) on his part said that the



Charles Murekezi (PhD)

climate change and other challenges of Africa need to build resilience so as to mitigate it. In Nigeria, the project focuses on rice while in Ethiopia; the emphasis is on wheat and maize crops.

He said: “We hope to increase the productivity of these crops by at least 40% in the target areas. More importantly, we want to build resilience of our food system. In the next three years, the project would bring shared prosperity to people.”

Technologies for African Agricultural Transformation (TAAT) Engagement and Partnerships Coordinator, Charles Murekezi (PhD) said increasing agricultural productivity requires expanding and accessing high promising agricultural technologies in the hands of millions of farmers across Africa.

Tsedey Bank commences mobile banking service

• Asset surpasses 55 bln. Birr

BY ASHENAFI ANIMUT

ADDIS ABABA –Tsedey Bank SChas officially commenced mobile banking service to create a cashless society.

At the launching ceremony yesterday, Bank President Mekonnen Yelewumwossen said that the bank has been undertaking various transformative activities and applying various state-of-the-art digital technologies to be a competent and trusted firm with a view of creating cashless societies.

The President further remarked that it is highly significant to deploy high technologies to expedite the transaction flow and mitigate the occurring risks.

“It is therefore important to deploy mobile banking platforms which help promote banks and users profitability and efficiency. Besides, it contributes a lot to the banking industry and the nation’s economic development,” the president remarked.

He said, “Among the technologies, the firm has also installed a core banking system to make the transactions more accurate and convenient.” Also, it also helps the beneficiaries to offer fast and easy services in addition to easing the burdens.

Although the bank joined the industry lately, the President elucidated that it has installed its own high-tech data center



among other technologies to become the most influential bank in the sector thereby registering remarkable achievement.

At the occasion, it was stated that everyone is able to access the service using *616# without any internet connection. The bank is also on the way to install internet banking in an individual platform and corporate to the market.

The mobile banking is equipped with many features including face detection, biometrics among other features, according to the Bank.

Bank Corporate Marketing and

Communication Director, Birara Bezie (PhD), on his part stated that the corporate has been providing loans to the customers exceeding 1.1 million thereby realizing their dreams since its establishment.

As to him, Tsedey is the only bank to receive the African banker’s award and other five international prizes for its proficiency.

It is also constructing a 37 floor building around Senga Tera in which the construction reaches 90% completion, he added.

As to the director, the bank currently has over 13 million customers and 18,000 workers while its total asset hits 55.7 billion Birr with 12.8 billion Birr capital.

Fmr. president ...

said that the two countries relationship started in 1970s and has been rising in 1990s through trade, investment, government to government, party to party, and the likes and has created conditions conducive to understand each other. He further stated that Chinese investors become visible in Ethiopia after 2010s and the country is becoming a big trade partner of Ethiopia. For instance, a number of Chinese restaurants and medical facilities were opened in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, and the political and diplomat relationship of the two countries has become excellent, and this situation is given heavy weight to increase the holistic relationship of the two countries.

“Ethiopia has enormous potentials such as humans and natural resources to help development flourish. However, due to limitations regarding connectivity with one another the country has not been benefiting out of the resources. Therefore, Ethiopia needs investment and technology connectivity and technical cooperation, as well. Currently, Ethiopia and China’s relationship has brought big changes in various fields,” Mulatu noted.

He said: “Addis Ababa –Djibouti railway will help realize modernization and export agriculture products. Not only does China intervene in other countries internal affairs but it also all the time appreciates a win-win style to grow together. Similarly, Ethiopia will assure significant benefit from BRICS cooperation through gaining trade opportunity, scientific support and related issues thereby meeting prosperity.”

Stakeholders value CSO’s role...

should utilize different channels to build its positive image and defend national interest, actors in the area said.

Though some CSOs have done commendable jobs in communicating Ethiopia’s reality to the rest of the world, a lot remains to be done in promoting the country’s Foreign Policy, Political Science Expert Yechale Degu (PhD) told the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA). “CSO actors should realize that promoting Ethiopia’s Foreign Policy should not be left to diplomats and understand their big responsibility in the area.”

As to him, Western diplomats and other high-level officials who come to Ethiopia tend to confer with the CSOs heads to understand the objective reality of the country which is also the testament to the latter’s noble place in diplomacy.

“Western diplomats usually shape and plan their countries’ future relationship with Ethiopia based on the information and resources they get from CSOs. Therefore, the government should create a conducive environment to the CSOs to promote the country’s Foreign Policy among global actors.”

The CSOs should know that democracy and human rights are inseparable with Ethiopia’s Foreign Policy and to ensure this, policy makers and law enforcement bodies should closely work with the former. By doing this, it is possible for CSOs to play a significant role in protecting the country’s national interest, the

expert remarked.

Action Aid Ethiopia Director and CSOs Council Deputy President Tinbebe Birhane on her part said, “As we have a large number of development partners and our work is connecting with different countries and organizations, we align our activities with Ethiopia’s Foreign Policy. The main aim of various donor groups which come from various directions is to balance their Foreign Policy with Ethiopia’s one.”

She added that the CSOs are working tirelessly to foster development and protect human and democratic rights across the nation. Therefore, the CSOs would work in unison with concerned bodies for the promotion of Ethiopia’s Foreign Policy.

“Of course, CSOs have a big role in acting as public diplomacy agents in the Developed World,” she noted, adding that the proper understanding of Ethiopia’s Foreign Policy is the prerequisite to local CSOs to play a similar role.

Addressing a forum that was jointly by Institute of Foreign Affairs and Ethiopian Civil Society Organizations Authority recently, Foreign Affairs State Minister Ambassador Misganu Arega stated that CSOs have a big responsibility in bringing the Foreign Policy to international recognition and establishing the positive image of the country, promising government’s backing to CSO’s engagement to defend the national interest.

Chief Negotiator...

Chief Negotiator elaborated.

“The Ethiopian team has received several points over the past rounds. But, there is no negotiation over the past rounds. But, there is no negotiation over issues that would threaten Ethiopia’s future development.”

Seleshi, who expressed Ethiopia’s readiness to release a significant amount of water from the Abay Dam even during the times of drought, stressed that it would be impossible for the country to satisfy Egypt’s water demand as the drought reduces the water level.

“There was some advancement on some points during the first three rounds. But, the Egyptian side finally failed to accommodate Ethiopia’s right of future development. Ethiopia is pursuing a very accommodative, transparent and cooperative resolution. It is visible to everyone who can judge based on empirical evidence. Our draft document also shows nothing except equitable reasons.”

The Chief Negotiator, who is also Ethiopia’s Ambassador to the U.S., further noted that the Egyptian government’s recent announcement on the issue is synonymous with aggression and violates international law too. “The dispute can be resolved only through the Principle of Declaration which both countries signed in 2017 and are not deviating from that declaration.”

Negotiation that undermines Ethiopia’s right to equitable share of Nile water would never be right. We think we all are people living alongside the same river. Mutual development is the only solution we should be cooperating for.”

In this regard, the diplomat expressed the Ethiopian government’s belief that the African Union will reinstate the negotiation. “The tripartite negotiation should be continued until final agreement is reached.

About the current status of the Abbay Dam, Seleshi indicated some 94% of the construction is completed, adding the project is expected to be completed in June 2024. Five turbines will also start generating electricity and the water will continue flowing to downstream countries through two bottom outlets and operational turbines and there will be no dam overflow.

“Abbay Dam has caused no damage on downstream countries so far and it will also cause no harm in the future. If it was harm, it would happen during the dam’s filling. Yet, we are always ready to discuss if concerns rise over the dam from the Nile riparian,” the Chief Negotiator remarked.

Opinion

Some measures to stabilize the economy, politics

BY GETACHEW MINAS

Measures that ensure economic stabilization are crucial for dealing with challenges that affect the attainment of stability in the economy of a country. Currently, Ethiopia has faced various economic issues, including external debt problems, inflation, and the effect of conflicts on economic activities. There are some general economic stabilization actions that countries, including Ethiopia, may consider. These are: macroeconomic policy, debt management, external trade and investment, agricultural development, inflation control, social safety nets, infrastructure investment, public financial management, human capital development, private sector development, conflict resolution, international cooperation, energy sector reform, technology and innovation, transparent governance, and monitoring and evaluation.

Macroeconomic policy focuses mainly on a realistic fiscal policy. It is absolutely crucial to develop a policy based on the need of Ethiopia. This requires implementing sound policies to manage government spending, revenue, and deficits. Revenue generation is very critical that should be collected without any leakages. Revenues may not be collected as planned due to corruption or understatement of income by businesses. Taxpayers have to collaborate with the authorities without any leakages.

Similarly, spending of government revenues should be expended on planned programs and projects with appropriate strategies for creating more output and employment. Excess spending leads to budgetary deficits. Deficit financing is a practice in which government spends more money than it receives as revenues. The difference is being made up by borrowing or printing new money. When public saving is negative, the government is said to be running a budget deficit. To spend more than tax revenues allow, government borrows money and run budgetary deficits. The amount borrowed is added to the Ethiopia's national debt.

The government has to strive for a balanced budget to avoid unsustainable debt accumulation. It should adopt a monetary policy to control inflation and maintain price stability. The Central Bank of Ethiopia is responsible in playing a crucial role to manage interest rates and money supply. This deters a galloping inflationary tendency in the economy. Of course, this must be supplemented by production of goods and services to meet market demands by consumers.

The fast growing population leads to high demand in a shortage economy. This shortage is caused by disruption of the production process in various sectors of the economy due to lack of stability and war in the country. Added to this are social disruptions and dislocations that

hamper proper economic development. To fill gaps in economic shortages, government develops and implements a comprehensive debt management strategy to address external debt challenges. Authorities negotiate for favorable terms with creditors and explore debt restructuring options. This requires positive attitude on the part of creditors toward the efforts of the government to alleviate poverty in Ethiopia.

The efforts of the government to balance its budget may be supported by earnings from external trade. One strategy for enhancing earnings from export is to reduce dependence on a limited number of exports. This may be possible through diversification of the export destinations. To achieve this, planners and economists have to explore new markets for exports. These exports may be generated from different sectors of the Ethiopian economy.

New and appropriate technologies have to be applied for creating values by modernizing existing and traditional products. Such domestic efforts have to be assisted by external investors. A strategy has to be developed to attract foreign direct investments (FDI) that add values to exports through using modern tech. However, attraction of FDI requires the creation of an environment that is conducive to investors by improving infrastructure, streamlining regulations, and addressing investor concerns. Infrastructure development

is critical for enhancing exchange of goods and services for both domestic and external markets.

Streamlining of regulations that do not respond to the timely needs of investors is critical for both production and marketing at home and abroad. Regulations that served specific interests for a given period of time have to be revised and adjusted to the current economic requirements of the Ethiopian economy. If there are rules and regulations that proved to be impeding local and external investment within the country, they have to be revised sooner than later.

Special attention has to be given to those sectors that contribute to the export sector. Agricultural development, for example, has to be boosted with new investment as it is a significant contributor to Ethiopia's export. FDI has to be promoted in the sector as a major player in modern farming techniques. It also contributes to infrastructure and value chains. In so doing, it boosts output, employment, income and foreign exchange. It also helps in controlling inflation.

In controlling inflation, the government

See Some measures... Page 12

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

Editorial

Ethiopia's tried and true stance reigns regardless of Egypt's flip-flop!

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia (MoFA) has disclosed in a statement that the fourth round tripartite talks on Abbay Dam that took place in Cairo from 17 to 19 December 2023 has ended without agreement as Egypt has taken a stance that prevents the talks from reaching convergence.

The statement indicated that the main reason for the failure of the talks to reach agreement is that Egypt has kept road blocks that hamper the efforts to convergence. The objective of the negotiations was to finalize the rules and guidelines on the first filling and annual operation of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) as per the understanding reached between the leaders of the two countries on July 2023.

It should be clear for everyone that Ethiopia, like any other country in the world, has every right to use its resources for its development. By constructing the Abbay Dam, Ethiopia is exercising its legal rights. It has carried out the construction of the dam with due respect to relevant international laws that govern transboundary rivers and without causing any or significant harm to the interests or share of the other riparian countries or lower basin states. Despite all the challenges, it has managed to carry on the grand project to more than 80% with only some portion of construction and major works of water filling remaining.

The project has reached to irreversible level and Ethiopia is determined to keep on the project while also maintaining smooth relations with the lower riparian countries. The only thing that could be done at this stage is to come to terms on the final feeling and operation of the dam as per the Declaration of Principles (DoP) agreement which Ethiopia, Sudan and Egypt signed in Khartoum in April 2023.

As a result, Ethiopia always keeps itself open for dialogues so as to reach a negotiated and amicable agreement on the fair utilization of the river. The country has passed through a number of protracted process or series of dialogues with the lower riparian countries i.e. Sudan and Egypt.

The repeated dialogues have not resulted in any tangible outcomes to the intended negotiated and amicable agreement. Unfortunately, the dialogues that resumed for four rounds have been wrapped up with no deal as usual. According to the statement from the Ethiopian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Egypt has taken a stance that causes the negotiations to stall.

"During these four rounds, Ethiopia endeavored and keenly engaged with the two lower riparian countries to address the major issues of difference and reach an amicable agreement. Egypt, in contrast, maintained colonial era mentality and erected roadblocks against efforts toward convergence" reads the statement by MoFA.

If the whole progress of the negotiations has to revert to the situation that it was in the past it is clear that there would be no need for these countries have to sit on the negotiation table. Since the beginning of the construction of the dam, Ethiopia has made it clear that Abbay Dam is a vital project for the country and will never interrupt the construction. At the same time, it has shown its firm stance that it will conduct the construction with due respect to the relevant international laws, without affecting the water share of the lower riparian.

However, Egypt issuance of a statement that violates the UN Charter and the Constitutive Act of the African Union will not have any positive contribution to bringing about amicable solution for the utilization of the Nile.

As the statement of MoFA indicated Ethiopia remains committed to reach an amicable and negotiated settlement that addresses the interests of the three countries and looks forward the resumption of the negotiation. In order to make this a reality Egypt should stop reverting to the colonial period mentality of maintaining its unfair interest and prepare to reach an agreement that allows the fair and equitable utilization.

Opinion

The need to enhance the role of CSOs in ensuring effective transitional justice

BY STAFF REPORTER

Recently the International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ) and the Consortium of Ethiopian Human Rights Organizations (CEHRO) had held a national event to increase victims' and civil society's meaningful participation in Ethiopia's transitional justice process. The event brings together Ethiopian government officials and policymakers, civil society representatives, members of the media, and international stakeholders to discuss strategies to ensure victims and gender-related concerns remain at the center of the efforts underway in the country to deal with recent and past violence and its consequences.

"Transitional justice requires people coming together to address the legacies of cycles of violence, putting victims at the center and their dignity first," explained ICTJ's Deputy Executive Director and Director of Programs Anna Myriam Roccatello.

The event concludes a two-year project entitled "Strengthening Civil Societies' Capacities to Contribute to the Transitional Justice Process in Ethiopia." Funded by the European Union (EU), the project aimed to equip civil society groups in Oromia and Somali regions with the knowledge and tools to advance victim-centered strategies for redressing past human rights violations and preventing a recurrence of violence.

"The success of the transitional justice process in Ethiopia, however, will depend on the commitment of all stakeholders, from state institutions to victims, civil society groups, and ordinary citizens," noted CEHRO's Executive Director Mesud Gebeyehu.

Governmental efforts to set in motion various transitional justice initiatives almost always come in response to vocal and persistent claims from civil society and its allies. Civil society is here understood broadly to encompass a diverse range of actors at the national and local levels, such as national human rights groups, other civil society organizations, victims' organizations, churches, mass publics, community-level traditional sources of authority and organization, community organizations, indigenous or ethnic groups, ordinary citizens. Civil society are not the only actors interested in transitional justice. There is also a myriad of other actors who either have an interest in transitional justice to happen, or alternatively, have strong reasons to work against transitional justice. Domestic-level CSO litigation has been varied and, as one might expect, context specific. For example, in Ethiopia following the overthrow of the Mengistu regime and

the adoption of the prosecution model in 1992, domestic CSOs were weak and contributed very little in terms of providing information to the State Prosecutor.

On a similar note, Paul Gready has stated that prior to the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, domestic CSOs had no experience in influencing policy (Gready 2010). The post-genocide Gacaca trials created a window of opportunity for CSOs to carry out new tasks and "forge unfamiliar relationships" with the government.

It should be noted that in those societies where there were prosecutions, concerns were raised about the trials' flaws, including the weakness of the judiciary and the failure of those trials to act in accordance with human rights norms. Also of note is that "situations of overthrow" similar to the case of post-Mengistu Ethiopia where there was a clear break with the past, are rare in Africa. In most cases, transitional justice in Africa is implemented in the context of negotiated transitions or ongoing conflicts.

As in the cases of Zimbabwe and Uganda, civil society transitional justice advocacy occurs where there is no transition that constitutes regime change. Also, existing regimes had previously, in various epochs, adopted some form of transitional measures aimed at addressing specific conflicts. Furthermore, some of the issues which transitional justice must address relate to colonial injustices and the artificial nature and arbitrary borders of the postcolonial state.

In Zimbabwe, even though the country is yet to experience a clear break with the past, the Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum (a coalition of 22 Zimbabwean NGOs) has been litigating cases of state-orchestrated systematic violence and torture in both domestic and international courts for more than a decade. Domestic civil lawsuits have been seeking compensation on behalf of the victims. In so doing, the organisation has challenged impunity and ensured that the government accounts for its human rights abuses. In fact, in a record number of cases which have been litigated on in domestic courts, the state has conceded liability in the judge's chambers. This means that additional transitional justice purposes such as acknowledgement, apologies and guarantees of non-repetition have not been met. In addition, there have been problems with enforcement and in cases where there was compensation, the awards were too insignificant for victims to gain satisfaction.

CSOs at home should also revamp their efforts and collaboration with relevant authorities to effectively carry out the ongoing process of Transitional Justice in Ethiopia.

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Business & Economy

Global integration, economic power: What Africa should work on?

BY DANIEL ALEMAYEHU

Economic and political integration, now a day, has become the powerhouse of nations across the globe. Nations would get the power in the eyes of the world if they have either economic power or cooperate with other nations so that they can be as big as they want. Those nations have been building their economic strength and integration with other countries so that they can put their influences on other nations to maintain their advantages.

In good truth, nations in different continents have also established some huge organizations under the notion of building unified and holistic economic, political, and social integration among the member states.

The United Nations, European Union, and African Union are some of the common blocs that foster togetherness. Such blocs have been established to foster unity and work for the set objectives of ensuring the wellbeing of the peoples and nations of the blocs.

On the other hand, though the sole objective of establishing such blocs is to become prominent in the world's power struggle and have the chance to express ones interest coupled with getting the share from every benefit; implementing such plans also needs much effort to achieve the objective.

In the past few years, Africans and their continental union have been working on changing their stance from just being a bloc to become one of the powerful unifications that can be competitive in power and economic strength. To this end, those member states and officials of the African union must take a number of steps to reach to the highest power.

It was not long ago, when African nations raised their voices to solve African problems with African solutions which directly indicate the idea of self-administration and determination. Even before that, the bloc has set both long and short term objectives to realize the idea of 'Africa We Want'.

In addition to what has been said so far, Africans have called upon the major international organization, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) to reconsider the idea of adding Africa in to the bloc with permanent seat. Such queries are logical as other continents and continental organizations have their own representatives so that they can



assure their advantages. Avoiding Africa from such organization is like holding over 1.3 billion people at bay.

One of the important steps to be taken is to create more and continuous partnership with other powerful nations and regional blocs coupled with representing Africa in the major international organizations and blocs.

As the famous Helen Keller said; "Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much." Accordingly, in order to achieve something bigger, blocs like the African Union should create more rooms for regional, continental and cross boundary integrations with those stable and emerging blocs from different parts of the world.

In the similar vein, African Union should also build its economic muscle so that the continent will acquire the sought after objective of becoming prominent. Again, Africans should also work on their benefits whenever they sit with other powerful nations to discuss on the matter.

Recently, the Office of the Prime Minister held its first "Perspectives" - PMO Occasional Lecture Series by featuring the world renowned development economist Professor Jeffrey Sachs. The professor has raised some prominent points regarding steps should be taken by Africans. As to Professor Jeffrey Sachs, Africa as a whole needs strong relations with other countries across the globe to register huge economic development.

In his lecture, the professor said that Africa as a whole needs strong relations with the Gulf countries, Turkey, Russia, China, Japan, Korea, the United States,

the European Union and others. All of this is possible right now, he stressed, adding that he is a huge fan of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). "It is just wonderfully made for Africa's needs, because it's about connectivity and about basic infrastructure." Professor Sachs, who underscored the need for global cooperation, stated that peace on the planet would be the first most important thing for economic development.

He further pointed out; "One of my fervent hopes that I worked on for a number of years was to help the African Union to become the G-21 member institution." The AU has now joined the G-21, and "don't ever call it the G-20 again, please. It has the African Union. (Therefore) it's now the G-21. We also have to get the message right," he stressed.

Membership of the G-21 gives Africa the chance to negotiate a new global financial architecture; to negotiate a new debt sustainability framework of the IMF and the World Bank and to capitalize on the regional institutions, the professor noted. According to him, the African Development Bank should, for instance, be about 20 times larger than it is.

"Do you know the total lending of the African Development Bank is about 5 billion USD a year for 1.4 billion people?" he asked rhetorically. To make the bank 20 times larger, a major capitalization of the African Development Bank is required; and that should be central to the international agenda.

Comparing Africa with China, the professor stated his belief that it is possible for Africa to also develop like China in the coming four decades.

That should be the aim, Professor Sachs underlined, noting that China's development was not a miracle. It was very good economic planning combined with good market forces and a very strong focus on education over a period of 40 years. In terms of infrastructure, the country also built tens of thousands of kilometers of fast railway, power grid that connected it into a single power pool.

"I believe Africa can stretch forward to achieve what it has intended to attain," the professor said. Africa will be solidly a middle income region of the world, and become competent in many economic sectors of the world by 2063, the economist argued.

By the same token, Ethiopia can replicate China's miracle effectively, according to Professor Sachs. "I do believe that Ethiopia has special strength because of the fact that large economies do have an intrinsic advantage. So as long as Ethiopia is peaceful internally and connected internally, it is going to have the advantage of the market of over 120 million people and that will continue to grow."

Moreover, there are vast opportunities for agriculture, mining, manufacturing, tourism, and diversified culture of the nations and nationalities to contribute to the nation's GDP growth. Everything is here, he said, adding that this is the most magnificent and beautiful country.

"It has got nature and every kind of ecosystem; it has got ancient history that goes back 3000 years; it has got modern development; it has got tourism, and you name it. What you find in this country, you never miss," the professor elaborated.

Art & Culture

Addis Ababa's potentials as the future capital of Ethiopian cinema

BY MULUGETA GUDETA

Hollywood for America, Bollywood for India and Nollywood for Nigeria. What future name for Ethiopian hub of cinema? Will 'Addiwood' fit into this? Forget it for the time being as Ethiopian cinema is still miles behind those celebrated American, Indian and Nigerian names and places. However, Addis Ababa is also evolving in that direction starting with its status as a huge and still growing modern metropolis. A thriving film industry cannot obviously be built in shantytowns or around ramshackle buildings.

No doubt that Addis Ababa is now one of the most modern, beautiful, cosmopolitan and multiethnic capitals in Africa if not in the world. Ethiopia has more than 80 ethnic groups and all of them are demographically represented in Addis Ababa more or less depending on the growth of the capital and the development of its economy. Addis Ababa is big in two ways-in its size and dynamism as well as in its population composition.

Addis is also a melting pot of diverse cultures ranging from the music and dances originating in the north and south, costumes invented by the Dorze and other southern ethnic groups, food cultures, ritual practices, faiths, Christianity, Islam and other monotheist and polytheist denominations... etc. the Ethiopian capital has experienced communism in the 1970s, state capitalism in the 1980s and 1990s. It has wrestled with democracy, military rule and nationalism but remains unaffected by none of them. Addis is rather successful or adept at keeping the past and suspicious of modernizing theories. Addis is a real melting pot of spiritualities and philosophies if not ideologies. It is certainly the heartbeat of the entire nation and that of Africa too.

As a blooming African capital, Addis is also the center of the entertainment business and the city that is open to new ideas and new cultures, the melting pot of not only African but also global cultures and new technologies. The entertainment business is still recovering from the hit it has sustained during the COVID pandemic a couple of years ago and is now diversifying and trying to cope with the challenges.

New cinema halls have been built over the last couple of decades and movie fans have grown by leaps and bounds particularly after locally made films replaced imported ones. As foreign films became expensive to import, Ethiopian filmmakers stood to the challenge and produced hundreds of movies that created a strong basis for the growth of the local film industry. Technological advancement in this area has played a defining role in creating opportunities for aspiring young movie makers who used their passions to produce some remarkable movies that have won awards at international film festivals.

It may be useful here to trace the growth of

Ethiopian cinema from the point of view of the emergence of new movie halls during and right after the end of Italian occupation of Ethiopia more than 80 years ago. Most of the old cinemas in Addis date back to the Italian occupation and the post-occupation period when foreign businessmen tried to introduce this potentially lucrative entertainment sector.

The growth of interest in cinema among the public has led to the production of the first Ethiopian black and white feature film back in 1961 when most African countries were under colonial rule. The first movie house was inaugurated under emperor Menelik and was known as "Seitan bet" or the 'abode of the devil', located on Churchill Road. That was the time when the French Lumière Brothers invented cinema.

There is always some paradox in Ethiopia's development in many areas. Ethiopians are pioneers in many cultural and knowledge areas but are left behind by those who started after them. Ethiopia is the first African country to have started, what many intellectuals believe, is a modern African philosophy of man. At the same time, French philosopher Rene Descartes was developing his rationalism which is now considered the pioneer of modern European philosophy. Zara Yacob, the pioneer of the "philosophy of man" is now almost forgotten while the Frenchman is still shining.

Ethiopians invented a new architecture in Axum and Gondar that are still the wonders of the world while Europeans who started building design after them are now the leading inventors in architecture. The pioneers are left behind. Ethiopians are first to invent new things and last to benefit from them simply because they lack the spirit and tradition of continuity. One generation invents or introduces something new and the next generation ignores or undermines what has been built before it. This has become a long-established paradigm.

The same goes with the development of the film industry that was started by foreigners with the spirit of private enterprise until the military Derg regime came and nationalized all cinema houses under the banner of socialism which was in fact a step towards mind control and state ownership of culture. What was more absurd at that time was that the Derg apparatchiks did not have the slightest notion about the movies and what purpose they served. They were rather regarded as propaganda tools or imperialist inventions that should be put under control by the state. The result was a return to cultural stagnation and regression.

In Addis Ababa, the first public experience with the movies, started at the defunct Cinema Addis Ketema which was established in the heart of Mercato, then dubbed as the biggest open-air market in Africa. I am not sure whether Mercato has preserved its much advertised open air nature; since it has changed from a horizontally expanding

market to a vertically growing one in the last couple of decades or so. The open air markets within Mercato are largely disappearing leaving room to the modern malls with high rise buildings and Western-style or fashionable shops.

Cinema Addis Ketema was at that time one of the most frequented movie halls in Addis together with Ras Hailu Cinema which was named after a member of the nobility during the reign of Emperor Haile Selassie. The other movie theatres were located in Piazza close to one another. The first was Cinema Ethiopia that belonged to a Lebanese businessman and was later confiscated after the revolution while it is still keeping its original name. Cinema Adwa was located a little farther from cinema Ethiopia, at the place later known as Arada commercial centre which is now being pulled down to give way to the view of newly built Adwa memorial.

Cinema Empire is also located a little farther from Cinema Ethiopia on the way to Arat Kilo, in one of the busiest areas which is surrounded by boutiques, shops and banks. Cinema Empire was built the Italian fascist during the occupation and was known as "Cinema Imperio" in Italian. The three cinema halls were serving their audiences for more than eight decades and some of them are still operating although very much weakened and neglected.

The two decades after the new millennium witnessed the resurrection of Ethiopian cinema. Those were the two decades of economic boom, cultural blossoming and creative explosion. New cinema halls were built by enlightened entrepreneurs who saw in the sector a huge potential for growth as a large audience of youthful cinemagoers hungering for local movies exploded on the entertainment stage. That was the golden age of Ethiopian cinema that has now turned from a roar into a whisper. The same logic is at work here too. A new generation does something new and the following generation turns the wheels back and this has become a long-established paradigm.

It is necessary to look back at the old days in the development of cinema and how the short boom turned into a long bust if one interested in knowing the drawbacks and ensure continuity in the future. The problem however is that even when we know the challenges we are reluctant to adopt the solutions and go forward. The problems of Ethiopian cinema are at the same time economic, political, cultural and technological. Economically speaking private entrepreneurs at one time came forwards in droves in order to invest in the sector when returns were high but withdraw in panic when the tides were low and profits sagged.

The newly-rich investors are not only well versed in the basic principles of capitalism such as perseverance, flexibility and patience are the basic ingredient of market principles. Bill Gates did not build his Microsoft empire

in two or three years. He devoted his entire life to his ideas and went through periods of frustrations when the whole world could not see the potentials in computers and allied inventions two or three decades ago. It was through hard work and a long and sustained engagement that Microsoft is now what it is.

The principles of capitalism are everywhere true. There is no gain without pain. Here in this country, most inventors are passionate about the gains but shy away when the going gets tough. They change gear or withdraw with their initial capital with some minor gains. There is no continuity in what they do or lack a culture of perseverance or resilience. There is no learning from past mistakes or past experiences. Those investors who withdrew from the film industry must regret their decisions at some point along the way when technology made it easier to produce films and talented actors appeared on the scene and new cinema halls were built.

It is sad that the national cultural institution such as the Ministry of Culture have always failed to provide financial, training, advisory or training and other forms of support to the industry operators. In other African countries like Egypt and Nigeria the film industry developed with heavy financial support from the state or the private sector such as banks. In Nigeria, the state banks played a huge role in developing the Nigerian Film industry and bring it up to international standards, which has no become the third biggest industry in the world after Hollywood and Bollywood.

The cultural and technological challenges facing the film industry are obvious. Both the filmmakers and the audience are addicted to a certain genre of cinema such as tragic performances or comic ones that are boringly repetitive or hardly creative and devoid of serious social themes that could entertain as well as educate the public. The old Charlie Chaplin movies are comic but they are not comic for the sake of comedy. They had also deeper and lasting messages, serious stories that captured the imagination of the audiences. Those movies were funny but also critical and satirical and sometimes infuriated the authorities who called Chaplin a "communist agent" during the McCarthy witch-hunt era. Ethiopian movies are dominated by Western clichés or stereotypes as well as boring repetitions.

The technological challenge is that Ethiopian movie makers are quick learners of movie technology but they use to produce mostly sub-standard or bad movies, therefore missing the point of adopting a new technology, which is to make better films. Last and not least, the absence of film criticism has turned a bad situation worse by allowing actors, scriptwriters and producers to repeat and reinvent their mistakes in the belief that they are doing great when in fact they are not. A future boom in the industry should therefore take these factors into consideration and listen to critical voices instead of repeating old mistakes in new guises.

Indepth

COP28: An Ethiopian perspective

BY SOLOMON WASSIHUN

It's funny, isn't it? Sultan Al-Jaber is not only the UAE's Minister of Industry and Advanced Technologies but also the CEO of the state oil company ADNOC. With this portfolio, he was the man at the helm of COP28, the 28th UN Climate Change Conference, which gathered about 100,000 participants from nearly 200 countries and ran for almost two weeks. This is tantamount to appointing a leader of a major terrorist group to chair a peace conference. Everyone knows that oil companies are one of the main culprits, bearing the lion's share of the responsibility for making the climate situation worse and dragging the political commitment to strong and swift action to combat climate change.

Surely the organizers of the global conference, which ended last week and is considered the biggest climate conference ever, did not arrange this irony just to create a media spectacle, but they expected an unprecedented and groundbreaking outcome when deciding to experiment with such an out-of-the-box thinking. Back in our school days, we remember desperate teachers who appointed the most troublesome students to be the monitor for a chaotic classroom.

The COP28 was held at a desperate time when many weather records that stayed on for several decades had been smashed. Frequent and widening occurrences of severe droughts, untimely rain, record temperatures, record incidents of Wildfire, intense flooding, the rise of ocean levels, and so on. "We are way off track. The world is playing catch up when it comes to the key Paris Agreement goal of holding the rise of global temperature down to 1.5 degrees. And the hard reality is to achieve this goal, global emissions must fall to 43% by 2030. To add to that challenge we must decrease emissions at a time of continued economic uncertainty, heightened geopolitical tensions, and increasing pressure on energy security," said al-Jaber

So, the struggle in the fight against climate change would remain an uphill task and complicated involving conflict of interests. However, it appears that the COP28 organizers' intentions to make the conference historic and special from the previous UN climate conferences delivered fruits. For the first time in almost three decades of international climate negotiations, both the rich and the poor, or as they say it, the north and the south, have reached a consensus "to transition away from fossil fuels in energy systems."

What is more, it is for the first time that the very word 'fossil fuel' is mentioned in the resolution of a UN climate conference. Previously the focus was only limited to coal. Now with the mention of fossil fuels, the world governments have agreed to

move away from not only coal as an energy source but also oil and gas.

As big stride as the COP28 agreement may sound to the developed world, for the majority of nations of the developing world it has indeed missed the mark.

The developing world's economy is highly vulnerable and dependent on the climate. Besides it does not have the technological advancements to counter and mitigate the climatic influences. It is therefore obvious that the developing world is the immediate and the main victim of the consequences of climate change which is now unfolding on an emergency scale.

For one thing, the COP28 agreement sounds less resolute, specific, and more cautious to call urgent action, which makes it a weak response in the face of the reality on the ground where the troubles of climate change are going from bad to worse with frightening pace.

The developing world was expecting a stronger and time-bounded agreement that provided for the phasing out of fossil fuels from both energy and non-energy systems.

The other thing is the developing countries were expecting the COP28 agreement to make a strong push forward for a workable mechanism by which they will be compensated by the developed world for the loss they are suffering due to climate change which is mainly green gas emissions by the advanced economies. There is reportedly no concrete statement on the COP28 on the progress of practical implementation of 'the Loss and damage fund' that was agreed upon at the previous summit COP27 agreement. The fund requires developed countries, the main contributors of greenhouse gas to provide financial support to projects responding to the climate change.

"The lack of explicit financial support for developing countries in the agreement is a particularly hard blow for African countries, many of which were in favor of a fossil fuel phase-out but can't get there without significant upfront investment," says an American anti-fossil fuel campaigner, who was a participant at COP28.

Disappointments and expectations aside, however, Ethiopia successfully participated in the conference, where Premier Abiy Ahmed, as head of the Ethiopian delegation, delivered an important speech at the august assembly. He reported on his country's impressive achievements in the fight against climate change by developing its own solutions to reduce emissions and build resilience, including the Green Legacy Initiative and the development of the renewable energy resources that the country has in abundance. He also appealed to the international community

to turn their pledges into action and work with developing countries to find holistic and sustainable responses to the negative impacts of climate change.

"Success can only be measured by the action we take...I call upon collective global action for a stepped-up climate agenda. The major challenge in providing solutions is the cost of capital and how international financing is structured. No country can effectively tackle the climate challenge if debt is a burden. This is why, the G-20 must work to implement bolder and more timely debt relief plans to enable the most affected countries to overcome debt stress, address climate challenges, and pursue more equitable and sustainable economic growth objectives. At the same time, pledged funds must be disbursed." said the Premier at COP28.

As al-Jaber said, the world as a whole may be far behind schedule in implementing the Paris Climate Agreement. But as the Ethiopian pavilion at COP28 proves and the Prime Minister's speech confirms, against all odds, Ethiopia is on track and on schedule to fulfill the commitment it made as a party in the Paris agreement.

Ethiopia has been conducting a nationwide reforestation campaign since 2019. By 2030, the country will triple its power generation capacity and double the efficiency of its energy use by harnessing its green energy resources such as water, wind and geothermal energy. Soon, such green mega power projects as the GERD will be completed. With such surplus production of green energy, it would be easy for Ethiopian industry and transportation to achieve emission ranges that fall below the maximum allowable limit of environmental safety standard parameters.

It is only a matter of a few years before Ethiopia declares itself as Africa's clean energy hub. It is safe to say that Ethiopia is at the forefront of nations leading the race against climate change.

At this year's summit, Ethiopia was represented by a magnificent pavilion that presented a miniature version of the country and was well received by conference participants and the media. The next step should be to bring the COP participants to Ethiopia. Given its past and current achievements and its future ambitions as an emerging climate-resilient economy, it is time for Ethiopia to consider hosting the COP. The COP has been held in Africa once in five years since 2006, most recently at COP27 in Egypt. One can therefore predict that COP32 in 2027 could be the next opportunity for Africa. The African country that deserves to host is certainly Ethiopia.

Given its past and current achievements and its future ambitions as an emerging climate-resilient economy, it is time for Ethiopia to consider hosting the COP

Law & Politics



So-called historical rights are relegated to the dustbin of history

BY STAFF REPORTER

Ethiopia has been spearheading trilateral negotiations since the commencement of the construction of the colossal Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) in 2011 over Abbay River.

Having failed to produce a tangible outcome regarding some major technical issues of the dam, Ethiopia, Egypt and Sudan have been holding negotiations to date. Throughout the years, Ethiopia has been playing a significant role in the signing of the Declaration of Principles, Memorandum of Understanding linked between the three countries. Contrary to the progress made, Egypt has been digging its feet on the obsolete colonial era agreement. The self-serving agreements only benefit Cairo as they granted monopoly over the shared resources.

Against the backdrop of the historical injustice, Ethiopia has been sticking to the principle of win-win approach on the bases of genuine friendship. The country has been going to the end of the earth to bring Egypt on board and create consensus. In what could be said a shameful, desperate act, Egypt has been trying to give life to the old and injustice treaties thrown into the dustbin of history.

Egypt's insincere and wrong position has been stumbling block and stymied efforts in resulting in agreed terms among the countries. And, the recent act by Cairo is nothing but continuation of its centuries-old manipulative actions. Even after years of negotiation, Egypt is trying to keep the old narrative alive.

Despite Egypt's repeated wrongdoings, Ethiopia has been willing to find a common ground to disputed issues surrounding the sovereign dam. And following the joint

statement by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed of Ethiopia, and President Abdel Fatah el-Sisi of Egypt, on 13 July 2023, to initiate expedited negotiation to finalize the guidelines and rules on the first filling and annual operation of the GERD, the three countries have been holding negotiation in different venues.

The three parties held the 4th round of trilateral negotiation in Addis Ababa as the host country reiterated its commitment in reaching an amicable and negotiated settlement that addresses the interests of the three countries.

In an official press statement, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs indicated that Ethiopia looks forward the resumption of the trilateral negotiation on GERD.

The ministerial meeting was conducted on 17-19 December 2023 in Addis Ababa, the statement reminded.

The Ministry reminded that these four rounds of negotiations have been conducted following the understanding reached between Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (Ph.D.) of Ethiopia, and President Abdel Fatah el Sisi of Egypt on 13 July 2023.

"The two leaders guided their respective officials, among other things, to do all the necessary efforts to finalize the rules and guidelines on the first filling and annual operation of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD). The negotiations have helped the three countries to have an in-depth discussion on the major issues of difference.

During these four rounds, Ethiopia endeavored and keenly engaged with the two lower riparian countries to address the major issues of difference and reach an amicable agreement. Egypt, in contrast, maintained the colonial era mentality and erected roadblocks

against efforts toward convergence.

The negotiations on the guidelines and rules on the first filling and annual operation of the GERD is meant to enhance confidence and build trust among the three countries. It is not meant to foreclose Ethiopia's rights on the utilization of the waters of the Nile. Ethiopia would, thus, like to make it abundantly clear that it will continue to utilize its water resources to meet the needs of the present and future generations based on the principle of equitable and reasonable utilization.

The Agreement on the Declaration of Principles of 2015 signed by the three countries provides the basis for this negotiation.

Moreover, the African Union, which remains seized of the matter since 2020, facilitated a platform that provides the three countries an opportunity to exchange views in order to reach an amicable solution.

After the conclusion of the fourth round of the negotiation, Egypt has issued a statement that violates the UN Charter and the Constitutive Act of the African Union. Ethiopia also rejects the misrepresentation of its positions by Egypt," the statement underscored.

The Ministry's statement emphasized that Ethiopia remains committed to reach an amicable and negotiated settlement that addresses the interests of the three countries and looks forward the resumption of the negotiation.

GERD is a flagship national project creating national consensus without a difference because the dam has reached all the way from its inception to the completion of the fourth filling with the concerted support of all Ethiopians. So it is our fingerprint of unity and it is beyond just filling the water to the

reservoir. The premier noted through our collaborative efforts, God has helped us. He congratulated all those who have participated in the overall activities of the project by contributing money, time, labor and prayers.

"There were a lot of challenges. We had been dragged backwards. We had encountered internal challenges and external pressures. We have overcome all these and able to arrive at this stage. However, we have not yet completed climbing the uphill though we have just arrived at the tip of the hill, he wrote on his social medium account urging Ethiopians to continue their support until the completion of the dam, said Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed in connection with the announcement of the successful 4th filling of the dam.

More importantly, the GERD has proved Ethiopia's firm position that the country doesn't pursue any development at the expense of the brothers in Egypt and Sudan. Ethiopia always aspires to achieve mutual development by strengthening relations with all countries in the region.

Egypt and Sudan should also share the joy with Ethiopia over the success of the fourth filling the GERD since it has not brought any significant harms so far, He added that the fourth filling process confirms Ethiopia's developmental determination and that the Renaissance Dam project is a development project not only for Ethiopia but for all neighboring countries that would promote benefits for everyone. As the GERD is a development gift to all countries, we should stop politicizing it. Rather countries should be optimistic about the Renaissance Dam because it enhances development, investment and creates job opportunities in Ethiopia and beyond.

Women in Focus

‘A woman must not accept, she must challenge’

BY BETELHEM BEDLU

It was in 1990’s where radio stations had number of listeners that the name of ‘Marta Dejene from Arat Killo’, the woman with soft voice became famous as it appeared on most radio stations at the time. She used to be the first person that would appear in Q&A programs which she believes allowed her to stay in most listeners’ mind.

Marta Dejene was born and raised around Arat Killo, Addis Ababa. Both of her parents were health professionals. Though a silly decision made by her mother destined Marta to encounter a challenge that she could not recover from. Her mother decided not to take Marta for polio vaccination again thinking that it won’t be good for her child. Unfortunately, her legs become disabled when she was only two years old.

Regretting their decision, her parents spent almost their entire lives to find her better treatment so that she can walk again. Following the wrong societal perception wards disability, there was no place that one can imagine be it hospital to religious places, where they failed to visit; however, there was nothing they could do.

As time flies, her condition remained the same. Even the youngest children started going to school while she was staying at home. That’s when Marta started questioning her parents why she won’t go to school.

When recounting how she was introduced to education, she said, “My older and younger brothers used to go to formal school. I asked my father about it, and he discussed the issue with our neighbors. Together, they built a small house that allowed me to have my first experience with alphabets and words, under the guidance of religious teacher. A few children in the area, including myself, started learning, and to my amazement, I was able to cover a huge portion within one week.”

Unfortunately, after about one week, another teacher (religious father) came to the class and unexpected incident occurred. Since she started learning, it was her father who used to take her from school. One day, when class was dismissed, her classmates ran out of the classroom, but she remained seated. The teacher told her to leave, not realizing that she couldn’t walk. He got offended that she didn’t obey his order and decided to forcefully make her stand. However, instead of helping her up, he harshly pulled her hair, causing her to scream loudly. Her father, who was on his way to her school heard her scream and rushed inside, witnessing the incident.

Her father became furious and started fighting with the teacher since he did not

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*Women
could take multiple
responsibilities,
so they need to be
strong enough to face
difficulties*

treat his disabled daughter the right way. That incident was the last time she went to school. After that, Marta began reading her siblings’ books and slowly taught herself.

The habit she developed made her stand out even from her siblings who are actually following education. Her parents decided to bring lots of books. The fact that her parents become hopeless on finding way to return her health condition, they decided to send her school.

Marta learned her primary school in Naod Primary school and went to Menelik II Secondary School. Though she was not able to play as her mates, she was highly attached with books.

In addition to her reading habits, she was actively engaged in Radio Q&A sessions which finally led the Editors from Radio and TV station program to wonder who Marta really is. She then was invited to compete in Q&A more than once and was awarded.



Marta Dejene

After taking her entrance exam, she decided to start publishing private newspaper. She took credit from microfinance association coupled with the computer she was awarded from the competition and published her first Newspaper named ‘Ewin’.

She contacted her friends that were fond of art and literature to contribute to her newspaper. Unfortunately, the paper could not go further and stopped publishing immediately after the debt she took run out.

Later on, she joined Addis Ababa University’s Department of Language and Literature. As her love for journalism never fades away, while she was second year student, she started working in 90.7FM radio station and stayed there for about four years.

After she earned her BA degree, Marta was able to establish Ewin Advertising, Printing and Promotion Company in 2000E.C and began weekly TV program called ‘Maedot’ that focused on persons with disability for five years. Besides the weekly program, she used to host entertainment programs that aimed at sensitizing the society about the challenges of PWDs on different holidays.

In addition, she was publishing magazine named ‘Temsalet’ and ‘Tebeta’ that used to be freely distributed to readers. Through Temsalet magazine, she came up with locally or internationally known individuals with disability that could inspire others to reach their dreams despite their challenges.

Tebeta on the other hand was an annual magazine that used to showcase *Ewin’s*

charitable association. The magazine was published in align with the international PWDs day annually.

Her association manufactures wheelchairs locally for PWDs so as to allow them get the wheelchair easily. The association has made a great contribution in saving huge amount of foreign currency.

Besides the challenge that comes along with disability, women have double burden when they have disabilities. They are exposed to several challenges including reproduction health issues. Most of infrastructures (Roads, schools, health institutions and recreation areas) are built also without taking PWDs in to consideration.

Starting a family is unthinkable when you have disability for most people. But she is married and is a mother of four children. Her spouse is very understanding and supportive, as to her.

Marta has faced several challenges which most of it originates from wrong societal perception. People used to doubt her ability to perform her works as well as lead her marriage life. However, she did not give up and let her situation define her.

That is why she always say don’t lose hope no matter the circumstance you are in. we must not accept every difficult situation and do nothing but we have to face the challenge. “Women could take multiple responsibilities, so they need to be strong enough to face difficulties. Imagine if I was a normal healthy child who could go to school just like her peers, I wouldn’t be the woman who is as attached to books this much as I am today.”

Society

Investing in generation is pushing the nation step forward

BY MENGESHA AMARE

No doubt, education is a fundamental human right, and it is human beings collective responsibility to ensure that all learners have access to high-quality education that prepares them for success in a swiftly changing world. By implementing a number of strategies and continuing to innovate and improve the education systems, citizens can build a brighter future, no doubt. Ethiopia has been capitalizing on access to education for all and quality to some extent, and has successfully been championing regarding the former as well as ardently working to meet the latter too. Yes, the remaining assignment has entirely been lying on quality matters.

Cognizant of the fact viable suggestions and professional comments have all the time been secured from expert in the area. *The Ethiopian Herald* approached Mulumebet Balcha, who graduated in Educational Planning and Management and Leadership Bahir Dar University, to solicit some sorts of expertise and recommendable notions in that regard.

She said “Having a well-designed curriculum, competent and motivated educators, tempting learning environment, responsible and patriotic educational administrators and the like have to be well taken into account as they are key elements to achieve quality education. However, quality education is not just about these and the not yet cited elements since it incorporate quite many elements.” As to Mulumebet, improving education quality is essential for ensuring that all students have access to high quality education and are equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary to succeed in today’s hurriedly varying realm. There are also a number of strategies that have to be well focused on to improve education quality like investing in teaching and professional development, promoting innovation and technology integration in the classroom as much as possible and enhancing students engagement and motivation.

She said, needless to state, education is a crucial component of building a better society. Nonetheless, in many parts of the world, students face various challenges when it comes to accessing quality education. Since a lack of resources, poorly trained teachers, inadequate infrastructure, and other related factors are seriously compromising the quality of education, which students receive; Ethiopia is working hard to overcome all these pitfalls. As a result, improving education quality has become a top priority for policymakers, educators, and parents alike.

Improving education quality is not just about academic success, but it is also about shaping future generations of responsible, competent, ethical, civic-minded and informed individuals who can contribute positively to their country and society from



Quality education requires a multi-faceted approach

where they have been grown and nurtured. Yes, improving education quality shouldn’t be left only to a sole party as it requires the combined effort of all, she added.

In due course of bringing about quality education, teachers can play an irreplaceable role, she said. Teachers also play a vital role in shaping the minds of the next generation. Not only are teachers responsible for imparting knowledge but they are guiding and inspiring students to become lifelong learners. Therefore, it is crucial that teachers receive the necessary training and professional development to enhance their teaching skills and knowledge, she opined. In so doing, ensuring quality education would become simple though it demands a number of inputs ranging from material aspect to human element.

Technology is highly needed, too. As technology continues to evolve and new research emerges, teachers need to adapt and incorporate these advancements into their teaching methods. Professional development programs can provide teachers with the tools and resources needed to stay current and improve their teaching techniques.

“Most importantly, by providing teachers with the necessary tools and resources, they can create engaging and effective learning experiences that inspire students to become lifelong learners,” she added.

Access to high-quality teaching materials and resources is too essential for improving the quality of education. Teachers require access to resources that align with the curriculum, are relevant, engaging, and provide opportunities for learning beyond the classroom, she said.

One effective strategy for providing access to high-quality teaching materials and resources is to encourage collaboration between teachers and curriculum specialists. This collaboration can ensure that teaching materials and resources are aligned with the curriculum and are tailored to meet the needs of the students.

One way to create a positive and inclusive learning environment is also to promote diversity and inclusivity in the classroom. Educators can celebrate and recognize the different cultures and backgrounds of their students and encourage them to learn from each other’s experiences.

“Another way to foster a positive learning environment is to establish clear expectations and routines in the classroom, she said. This includes setting expectations for behavior, participation, and academic performance. By establishing a clear set of guidelines, students understand what is expected of them and feel more comfortable in their learning environment.”

Besides, creating a positive and inclusive learning environment requires effort and commitment from educators and administrators. However, the benefits of such an environment are invaluable, as students are more likely to feel engaged, motivated, and successful in their academic pursuits.

Equally, student-centered learning approaches can also help personalize learning experiences. This approach involves giving students more control over their learning, allowing them to explore topics that interest them, and providing opportunities for student-led discussions and activities. By focusing on the student’s needs and interests, teachers can create a more engaging and

effective learning experience.

She said implementing technology in the classroom can also offer several benefits. Moreover, it is essential to ensure that technology does not replace traditional teaching methods entirely. Instead, technology should be used to complement and enhance teaching, making it more engaging and effective. Teachers must also ensure that the technology they use is accessible and inclusive, taking into account the different learning styles and abilities of their students.

“Encouraging parental involvement and engagement is crucial for improving education quality. Parents play a vital role in their child’s education and can greatly contribute to their success. When parents are involved in their child’s education, it not only benefits the student but also the school and community as a whole. By encouraging parental involvement and engagement, schools can create a collaborative and supportive learning environment that benefits students, parents, and the community as a whole,” she added.

Adjusting open communication channels, providing opportunities for involvement, offering resources and support, recognizing and appreciate parents as well as emphasizing the importance of education would undoubtedly contribute a lot to the effort geared towards ensuring quality education, said Mulumebet.

Mulumebet further stated that improving assessment and evaluation processes is of paramount importance in enhancing education quality. This could be dealt with via coming up with clearly define learning objectives, utilizing a variety of assessment methods, using formative assessments, providing students with timely and actionable feedback, involving students in the evaluation process, and so on.

In sum, improving education quality requires a multi-faceted approach that addresses various aspects of the learning process. From teacher training and professional development to prioritizing mental health and well-being, each strategy plays a vital role in providing students with the best possible education. Pro-poor education policies that promote equal access to basic education, such as cash transfers to encourage attendance or spending on public education that benefits the poor, can reduce inequality by helping build human capital and making educational opportunities less dependent on socioeconomic circumstances. Equitable access, quality learning, and education in emergencies are crucial components that need to be addressed to ensure access to quality education for all regardless of socioeconomic status.

Additionally, education policies need to be inclusive, with the principle of equity being fundamental to all education sector plans and policies. In so doing, quality education can be ensured.

Some measures to stabilize...

adopts prudent monetary policies, programs and measures. It develops a strategy of managing money supply with the objective of addressing price rises. However, it is absolutely necessary to conduct research on the actual price hikes to address the structural issues that contribute to price increases or inflation. Price rises negatively affect those who are poor, unemployed and dependent. To minimize its effects, it is useful to establish or strengthen social safety-net programs to protect the vulnerable Ethiopian populations from inflation.

The poor may also suffer from other negative impacts of economic challenges facing the country. This may include temporary cash transfer programs, food assistance and job creation initiatives. The possibility of cash transfer may not be sustainable depending on the whims of donors. Similarly temporary food assistance may be subjected to disruptions which seriously affect those aid dependents in the country. Also, the job creation initiatives by donors may be disrupted or discontinued for any reason.

To face these challenges, infrastructure investments are given priority. Infrastructure development is crucial for enhancing economic development with productivity. It includes investments in transportation, energy, and communication networks. Transportation is a key factor for import and export of inputs and outputs into and out of Ethiopia. It facilitates local marketing of domestic produces. It also promotes the export of goods to new external markets.

The energy sector is also very critical for the Ethiopian economy. The country is endowed with a variety of renewable energy sources. This enormous potential, however, remains largely unexploited. Energy poverty, inefficiency, and insecurity are still major challenges. The country's communication network is also critical for promoting economic development in the country. The Ethiopian Telecom is an efficient main and largest telecom operator in the country. It provides mobile, fixed line, and internet services, covering major cities, towns, and some rural areas. Other sectors have also the potential to enhance economic growth and development.

All the economic sectors of the country require modern public financial management system. They have to be modernized and strengthened to enhance transparency, accountability, and efficient use of public resources. Modern management systems have to be accompanied by transparency without which abuse of financial resources may not be detected and corrected. Hidden operation may lead to corruption and abuse of authority.

Periodic auditing of financial operations in line with government plan and program is of the essence. Once misuse of resources are audited and reported, appropriate and corrective actions have to be taken to preclude further misuse of public budget. Accountability for success as well as failure has to be established by internal and external auditors. Those responsible for abuse of state resources have to be suspended until proven guilty. Once abuse of power is established

immediate actions have to be taken against those who committed state financial crime.

For managing the resources of the country properly and efficiently, it is a precondition to develop its human capital. This demands investment in education and healthcare. It is also necessary to train and develop skilled and healthy workforce. Training of workers in various skills raises the productivity of labor in various sectors of the economy.

Enhanced productivity contributes to high growth of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in the country, thereby generating more output and income for the workforce. This leads to demand for more consumer goods and services in the domestic market. This is possible only if capital investment takes place in different sectors that produce for the market. As a result, employment is generated to engage skilled workers and graduates. This process contributes to long-term economic growth and development in Ethiopia.

It is necessary to create an enabling environment for the private sector to thrive. This involves reducing bureaucratic hurdles, improving access to credit, and promoting entrepreneurship. It also requires addressing conflicts and security challenges that may impede economic activities in the private sector. Not only economic, but also political stability is essential for attracting investment and promoting economic growth. To attract foreign direct investments there may be a need to collaborate with international organizations and partners to access financial

support, technical expertise, and development assistance to all sectors of the Ethiopian economy.

Also, sector reforms are helpful to ensure reliability for investment in any sector, including the energy sector. Developing and implementing reforms in the energy sector, for example, guarantees reliable and affordable energy supply, crucial for industrial development. This has to be accompanied by technology and innovation to enhance productivity across sectors.

All citizens and investors rely on transparent and accountable governance to build trust among citizens, investors, and international partners. This has to be verified through establishing mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of economic policy, programs and stabilization measures. Based on periodic assessment, policies have to be adjusted to address current issues.

A successful implementation of economic stabilization measures requires a comprehensive and coordinated approach. Given the evolving nature of economic challenges, it is necessary for policymakers to remain flexible, responsive, and adaptive in their strategies. Moreover, engaging with stakeholders, including the private sector and civil society, can contribute to the success of economic development and stabilization efforts.

For accessing latest and accurate information on the economic performance of Ethiopia and on the policy measures taken, it is advisable to consult government officials and experts dealing with macroeconomic stabilization and development in the country.

International News

Namibia to host inaugural Global African Hydrogen Summit 2024

Dubai — As part of Namibia's COP28 programme, the Namibia Investment Promotion and Development Board (NIPDB), the Environmental Investment Fund of Namibia (EIF), DMG events and Vasco Da Gama Energy on 06 November 2023 officially launched the inaugural Global African Hydrogen Summit (GAh2S), to be hosted in Windhoek on 03 – 05 September 2024.

Themed "From Ambition to Action: Fuelling Africa's Green Industrial Revolution", the three-day Summit will convene heads of state, government agencies, industry business leaders, project developers, investors, thought leaders and technologists from across Africa and around the globe to drive critical investments and financing into bankable green energy projects. Project and investment showcases will span the hydrogen, renewables, power, infrastructure, transportation and mobility sectors.

The launch was officiated by the Minister of Mines and Energy, Honorable Tom Alweendo who emphasized that the world is facing an unprecedented climate crisis and that the urgency to transition to clean and sustainable energy sources has never been more apparent. Alweendo added that this has become a global imperative that demands collaborative efforts and innovative solutions, and Namibia is poised to play a pivotal role in this global transition agenda.

Said Alweendo: "Africa's energy position is changing and it is against this backdrop that as a country we are positioning ourselves as the sustainable energy capital of Africa. This will not only be achieved through the sustainable beneficiation of our primary energy resources,



but also through the development of green and blue economic growth and energies, investing in platforms that facilitate dialogue and partnerships, skills and technology transfers, as well as trade between Africa and the rest of the world".

He continued "the Global African Hydrogen Summit will be the first platform of its kind to be leveraged by African governments, investors, financiers, scholars and the public in order to unlock additional opportunities for our continent and its partners. It will also provide a platform for the global players in the hydrogen value chain to showcase their projects, plans and technologies to the African continent", said Alweendo.

GAh2S will focus on the global role that Africa expects to play in the hydrogen market and will facilitate collaboration and advance dialogue across policy, investment and the emerging hydrogen value chain. The continent has the potential to harmonize its own industrialization to become a global powerhouse of green manufactured products, whilst applying a localized multiplier effect, stimulating in-continent value including employment creation, ancillary industries,

light manufacturing and natural resource refining – uplifting economies across Africa, whilst sustainably bringing an end to energy poverty.

Clean hydrogen can cover a significant portion of the global energy transition needs, especially in hard-to-abate sectors and industries such as steel manufacturing and aviation. Several African countries—most notably Egypt, Kenya, Mauritania, Morocco, Namibia and South Africa—are actively pursuing clean hydrogen production. These countries formed the collective Africa Green Hydrogen Alliance in May 2023 to collaborate on capacity creation, financing, certification, and regulatory and policy agendas of green hydrogen development in Africa. A McKinsey & Company report projects that by 2050, the annual investment required will more than double to US\$160 billion, with the focus of investment likely shifting to an expected 43% of capital expenditure spent on hydrogen.

With an abundance of solar and wind energy resources as well as the availability of unpopulated land, Namibia has a unique potential to enable low-cost green hydrogen production. The country is currently investing

in the research and development of green hydrogen technologies, through engagement of, and support from, foreign institutions and partner countries like Germany. In May 2023, the government of Namibia and Hyphen Hydrogen Energy announced a deal for the next phase of a US\$10 billion green hydrogen project that will export green molecules to Europe once complete. Long-term offtake agreements are expected in this case. The development of a stable green hydrogen market has the potential to facilitate investment in skills for the domestic workforce, enhance local jobs creation and thus uplift livelihoods.

Convening the Global Hydrogen Industry in Namibia

In its inaugural edition hosted in Namibia, the three-day Global African Hydrogen Summit will convene heads of state, government agencies, industry business leaders, project developers, investors, thought leaders and technologists from across Africa and around the globe to drive critical investments and financing into bankable green energy projects of strategic and national importance across Africa, spanning hydrogen, renewables, power, infrastructure, transportation and mobility.

As a dynamic and innovative investment platform, the Global African Hydrogen Summit will provide a variety of engagement opportunities including an educative masterclass, high level leadership dialogues, a strategic conference, project investment boardroom roundtables, and a technology and innovation hub.

Source: allafrica.com



Published Weekly in Collaboration with Haramaya University

HU calls on local community to preserve, protect Lake Haramaya

BY EPHREM ANDARGACHEW

Haramaya University (HU) issued a plea to the local community to fulfill their responsibilities in maintaining and protecting Lake Haramaya's biodiversity.

HU has provided waste management and disposal training to sixty farmers, youths, and agricultural professionals who live in the Haramaya Lake region.

Lake Haramaya is a beautiful and well-known lake in Ethiopia's eastern highlands. It provides food and shelter to a wide range of birds in the country's eastern area. Locals also host recreational activities and weddings, as well as public holidays and other events at the lake. For people of Haramaya and adjacent towns, primarily Aweday and Harar, the lake was their only supply of drinking water.

Nonetheless, it dried and turned into land due to excessive lake and groundwater pumping, environmental degradation, and climate changes. Hence, residents had to dig 20-meter-deep holes to get water once it dried, since life had become tough without it. Taking these problems into account, HU implemented a project to restore the Lake.



To restore the lake, HU divided the catchment area into upper, medium, and lower riparian zones. Along with soil conservation initiatives, HU was able to plant over 400,000 fruit and forest seedlings in the upper basin each year. Each year, more than 300 cubic meters of gabions are created to restore and rehabilitate the soil on damaged and hollowed-out sections in the basin's center.

HU Integrated Lake Haramaya Watershed Development Project Coordinator Dine Rashid said that the university has given the training to preserve and protect the Lake. The training is imperative in waste management and disposal and the way to convert waste into something useful.

Training has been given on how to prevent solid

waste from areas in the lake basin, especially plastic products, from entering the lake and endangering the lake and its biodiversity due to floods and other conditions.

Haramaya Lake is presently in good condition, and the local youth have benefitted from being organized and involved in fishing and boating activities. To safeguard the lake from rubbish and pollution and to provide greater services than it already does, it is vital to prevent garbage from entering the lake during floods.

As environmental preservation, development, and protection in the Haramaya Lake basin expand, so does the lake's volume of water. Consequently, the quality of the services is enhanced. As a result, the residents in the basin ought to safeguard the lake and take preventa-

tive measures, he urged.

He confirmed that the University's Haramaya Lake Basin Development Project Office will also continue to educate communities and give material assistance to alleviate pressure on the lake basin.

Haramaya University's College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences Soil Chemistry lecturer, researcher, and trainer Dr. Lemma Wogi stated that numerous trainings, including this one, have been provided to farmers in the lake basin on how to create compost at home and utilize it as soil fertilizer. This will prevent the use of chemical soil fertilizers from entering the lake through floods and damaging the lake's biodiversity.

Besides, solid waste, especially plastics, can be processed at home and turned into something useful. Through this, HU has been providing awareness creation training that can be used as a source of income.

Indeed, the waste management and disposal training helped the participants to preserve the biodiversity of the lake. Solid waste can pollute and affect not only the lake but also the community health that has close contact with the lake. Therefore, the city administration, the government, and partners should support HU and discharge their responsibility for the lake's existence and cleanliness.