



# The Ethiopian Herald

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## Agricultural export hits over 764 USD mln in five-month

• *Ministry develops one bln tree nurseries*

BY TSEGAYE TILAHUN

**ADDIS ABABA** – Ethiopia secured 764.29 million USD from horticulture, coffee, dairy, tea and spice exports to the global market in the past five months of the current fiscal year, the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) revealed.

Briefing the media yesterday, Agriculture Minister Girma Amentie (PhD) said the performance equates to 66 % of the 1.1 billion USD plan that was set for the reported period. Coffee and cut flowers remain Ethiopia’s major export items.

Yet, due to international price fluctuation, Ethiopia’s forex earnings from coffee and horticulture export has shown a 21.24 % decline from last year’s same period, Girma stated. In the reported period, the country harvested some 59.99 million quintals of horticulture products.

“Agriculture is contributing 70 to 80 % of Ethiopia’s export and the country has been putting in place a Ten Years’ plan to increase agricultural productivity by six %.”

*See Agricultural export ... page 3*



Photo: Berihun Tadele

## Lawmakers expected to deepen Ethio- Djibouti economic ties

BY YESUF ENDRIS

**ADDIS ABABA-** Parliamentarians in Ethiopia and Djibouti need to move as fast as the desire and effort of the two governments to further deepen the infrastructural integration and economic cooperation, the Djibouti National Assembly President said.

Addressing members of the House of Peoples Representatives yesterday, Djibouti National Assembly President Dileita Mohamed Dileita stated that parliamentarians in both countries need to

*See Lawmakers expected ... page 3*



## Stakeholders joining forces to successful AU Summit

BY BETELHEM BEDLU

**ADDIS ABABA** - The Ministries of Tourism and Foreign Affairs said the close partnership of federal institutions, utility and service providers and security agents is crucial to the successful conduct of the forthcoming African Union’s 37th Summit.

*See Stakeholders joining... page 3*

## Ethiopia’s pursuit of seaport centers on keeping economic growth

BY BETELHEM BEDLU

**ADDIS ABABA-** Being East Africa’s economic powerhouse and the second most populous country in the continent, Ethiopia needs sovereign port access to sustain its rapid economic progress and large population, a noted political-economy analyst said.

Speaking to local media, a Political-Economic Analyst for Africa Lawrence Freeman stated that

*See Ethiopia’s pursuit ... page 3*





Ahmed Shide

## Creditors grant 2.2 bln USD debt relief for Ethiopia

BY TSEGAYE TILAHUN

**ADDIS ABABA** – The G20 Creditor Committee for Ethiopia has granted the country a 2.2 billion USD debt relief for two years, so said, Finance Minister Ahmed Shide.

Finance Minister Ahmed Shide told the local media that Creditors have agreed with Ethiopia to apply debt service suspension treatment for the coming two years.

He stated that the G20 Creditor Committee for Ethiopia agreed to make debt suspension till the country gets full debt suspension common framework.

As a result, the G20 Creditor Committee agreed with Ethiopia to suspend a 2.2 billion USD debt payment for two years, Ahmed noted.

According to him, China has provided Ethiopia with debt relief or debt payment suspension for some period.

“The debt suspension service agreement gives a substantial relief for us. The country developed a principle of equally treating all creditors according to common framework,” he said.

As to him, the country has been working to improve foreign currency earnings and control sector illegal activities by applying the Second Homegrown Economic Reform.

The country has one billion USD Euro bond and one billion USD commercial debts, he said, adding that bond holder countries have a responsibility to provide the same treatment for Ethiopia.

For him, the amount of Ethiopia’s Euro bond is too low as compared to other countries depending on the country’s economic structure and debt composition so that Ethiopia is capable to pay Euro bond interest.

Ahmed also mentioned that the government has no plan to adjust foreign exchange rate at the present time.

## NDRMC

### to distribute emergency aid to citizens

• *Allocates 8.6 bln Birr, 867,000 quintals of grains*

BY ESSEYE MENGISTE

**ADDIS ABABA** -The National Disaster Risk Management Commission (NDRMC) expressed readiness to distribute third round humanitarian assistance to citizens facing food shortages in northern Ethiopia.

NDRMC Senior Public Relations Expert Atalele Abuhai told the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) that the commission will begin distributing the humanitarian aid including 8.6 billion Birr and 867 thousand quintals of grain to 2.4 million citizens suffering food shortages due to drought and conflict in Tigray, Amhara and Afar states.

He stated that preparations have been made to make the aid accessible to the citizens in the aforementioned states since the local administrations are unable to address the issue.



Atalele Abuhai

The assistance is going to be distributed primarily to citizens affected by drought in Tigray and the other northern parts of the

country, he mentioned, adding the grains will be supplied in the form of oil and nutritious food.

Atalele also indicated that the trucks that contained the aid will be headed to the areas in the next three days.

The lives of the citizens need to be rescued, he said, urging all to be responsible and cooperative to curb security problems on the way the aid transports.

In addition to the food shortage, the citizens may be suffering health problems and lack of clean water, he added.

Atalele said that the federal government is working with states and partners to reduce the risk of disaster.

He recalled that about 200 districts were surveyed to identify the level of vulnerability.

## Ministry says outsourcing forex generation scheme, job creation

• *To generate 50 mln. USD a year*

BY ASHENAFI ANIMUT

**ADDIS ABABA** – Ministry of Labor and Skills (MoLS) has underscored the outsourcing industry potential significance to transform the country’s economies and create quality jobs.

Speaking at a consultative workshop yesterday, MoLS Minister Muferihat Kamil said that following the Digital Ethiopia 2025 strategy, the government has been creating a conducive environment including legal frameworks and tax incentives to support the sector over the last couple of years.

Having said labor costs rise in traditional outsourcing destinations and companies looking for new locations, the minister remarked that the country is well positioned to benefit from our young, skilled talent pool and improving digital infrastructure.

She said: “Our business environment needs further reforms for easy startup, operations and quality infrastructure in urban and rural centers. Universities and TVET institutions need to design curricula to produce more advanced technical and industry-relevant skills to help play their grate role in the industry,” she noted.

As to her, so far, the association created about 15,000 jobs. Besides, the sector is projected to amass about 50 million USD per annum.



Muferihat Kamil

For example, the ICT Park is a highly connected with the private and public data centers to create easy access to information on human resources especially with the Ethiopian Labor Market Information

System operational with several micro services.

As to her, concerted governance efforts and supportive policies are a springboard in unlocking the immense potential of Ethiopia’s outsourcing industry for transformative skills and job-led economic growth.

She called on various stakeholders’ collaboration to address several challenges that currently inhibit the growth of this industry.

The Ethiopian Outsourcing Association General-Manager Tadios Tefera on his part said that business process outsourcing (BPO) is foundational to the international corporations in terms of reducing operational cost and quality promotion among others.

Founded by industrial leaders in the outsourcing sector, as to the manager, the association is working closely with ministries and stakeholders to assist with policy designs, creating jobs to make the country the leading outsourcing destination.

So far, the association has been involved in business-to-business engagements with various countries including Ethiopia, it was learnt.

He said, “Forex generation is expected to be 50 million USD and the sector is anticipated to create 500,000 dignified and well-paying jobs.”

## Ethio-telecom launches Digital Financial Marketplace solution

• *Attracts 40 mln tele Birr mobile service users*

BY MESERET BEHAILU

**ADDIS ABABA** – Ethio-telecom launched Digital Financial Marketplace solution aiming at empowering the financial sector to drive financial inclusion through modernize system.

Speaking at the launching ceremony held yesterday, Ethio-telecom CEO Frehiwot Tamru said that the digital finance marketplace platform has a number of significances to the financial sectors such as banks, micro finance, insurance, and other government institutions by creating enabling environment.

It means that the aforementioned institutions will be benefiting from the platform due to its suitable, fast, and accessibility nature towards their customers.

As to her, Ethio-telecom has been working with 25 banks using telebirr over the past two years. In this regard, some 1.6 trillion Birr transacted through telebirr last year only.

She also remembered that her company with Dashin bank and Commercial bank of Ethiopia (CBE) reached in loan accessibility for over 3.6 million customers



Photo: Gebabo Gebrie

Frehiwot Tamru

and provided some 7.9 billion Birr through digital platform.

Therefore, in connection with using telebirr, over 40 million customers can access the finance sectors via the marketplace platform. The main purpose of the platform is to enable banks to provide short, efficient and reliable services to their customers through optimized digital solution.

“Ethio-telecom discussed a number of

issues with Ahadu bank, Siinqqe, Enat, and Awash banks to exploit the new platform and ensure short, precise, credible, and easy financial service for their customers,” Frehiwot noted.

She further stated that the platform will help succeed digital Ethiopia as the country planned to address 70 % of the population with inclusive financial service. The company also launched digital share sell/buy platform to the licensed business institutions in a bid to realize digital system via selling and purchasing the shares and ensuring cost effective mechanisms.

Moreover, telebirr digital payment is preferable, trustworthy, easy, fast, conducive, ensuring finance inclusion by bridging the service providers and customers’ gap, encouraging jobs and investment pitfalls as well as creating digital system at all levels. Representatives from various finance institutions have been invited and revealed their interest while admiring the Ethio-telecom effort towards realizing digital Ethiopia.

It is to be recalled that Ethio-telecom has over 73 million customers across the nation. Of this total amount, 40 million of them are using tele birr mobile service.

## Stakeholders...

Addressing the discussion that the Ministries held with aforementioned institutions and other stakeholders, Tourism State Minister Seleshi Girma said the deliberation aimed at joining forces to make the upcoming AU summit that will be held here from Feb 14-18, 2024, a success.

Recalling the devastating effect of COVID-19 and Tigray War in Ethiopia’s tourism sector performance, Seleshi emphasized pleaded stakeholder to play a positive role in building the nation’s positive image and reviving the sector.

“Due to a policy shift that was introduced by the current government, tourism has been shifted from social to economic sectors, he noted, adding that the Ministry has been engaged in developing and promoting tourist attraction sites, delivering quality services, and building human and institutional capacities.

Yet, studies have revealed that failing to deliver quality service and charging unreasonable prices in hotels and other service providers are the major challenges of the tourism industry.

Accordingly, Seleshi advised the service sector including hotels to focus on creative and professional service delivery that takes Ethiopia’s well-cherished values and culture into consideration.

For his part, Melaku Bedada, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Director General of Protocol Affairs said that a national committee that comprises relevant stakeholders has been formed to facilitate the activities of each institution and make the forthcoming summit go smoothly. “Ethiopia is the third major diplomatic hub of the world next to New York and Geneva and there are diplomatic pressures that come along with it.”

Mentioning the ongoing diplomatic activities that aim to maintain Ethiopia’s status as Africa’s diplomatic hub, Melaku indicated that the service sector shoulder huge responsibility in casting the country in positive light among the global community.

During the discussion, representatives of ethio telecom, Ministry of Health, Ethiopian Electric Utility, Federal Police and other stakeholders discussed the preparations activities that have been taking place.

Consequently, the representatives stated that sufficient activities have been carried out to tackle power interruption and security problems; further disclosed the preparedness of temporary service centers and medical teams to make the summit successful.

## Agricultural ...

Also, the MoA distributed some 12, 617 water pumps worth 503 million Birr for states to transfer for beneficiaries and the pumps are expected to develop 103, 965 hectares of land and benefit over 415, 860 farmers. According to him, the supply of pumps has become a game changer for farmer’s productivity.

“Apart from satisfying the local demand for wheat, the government has been working triple the supply of improved seeds and inputs as well to boost production and productivity.”

The minister further noted that over the last five months, Ethiopia developed one billion tree nurseries as part of its Green Legacy Initiative and a plan set to plant 50 billion. Till now, the country planted 32 billion tree seedlings and the remaining 18 billion would be planted in the remaining period.

Moreover, Ethiopia allocated 930 million USD to purchase some 19.5 million quintals of fertilizer, of which 25 % of it would be used for irrigation. Currently, some 15.8 million quintals of the fertilizer was purchased, it was learned.

## Lawmakers expected to deepen...

play a role to further consolidate the already strong partnership.

“Ethiopia and Djibouti need development cooperation more than ever and leaders of the two countries inked several agreements that would take the existing partnership into new heights. In this regard, the two countries’ lawmakers need to help governments’ efforts towards strong economic relations.”

Ethiopia and Djibouti have a strong and exemplary infrastructural-driven integration and are connected in electricity, road, railway, fiber optics and others which can be taken as a model to all Africans, Dileita emphasized.

According to him, the Ethio-Djibouti growing economic cooperation needs to be supported by profound people-to- people ties. During the latest ministerial conference of the Horn of African countries, the two countries’ high-level officials agreed to make a nine billion USD worth economic exchange. Consensus was also reached on digital infrastructure integration.

“All these ambitious agreements should be

implemented without hesitation and Djibouti is ready to implement the accords.”

In trade relation, Ethiopia and Djibouti have been in strong trade and investment relation.

“Ethiopia, having 120 million plus population, is important to Djibouti’s development. Moreover, we have intertwined fate and we are two people sharing similar challenges and prospects. Also, our ways to overcome the existing hurdles are similar. Ethiopia’s challenges Ethiopia could not go affected with affecting Djibouti.”

Mentioning the two countries’ similar stance in global politics, Dileita indicated that their principled stand enabled them to be politically aligned and to survive global dynamics. “Of course, we may have some different interests. But, we are sure that possibilities to make exchanges in all development areas are abundant.”

The diplomatic partnership between Ethiopia and Djibouti is also significant to all neighboring countries and it is crucial to enable the involvement of all neighbors for better outcomes,’ the President remarked.

Ethiopia needs access to reliable and cost-effective seaports to sustain its economic progress and ensure the benefits of its large population.

“The Red Sea is amongst the most important trade routes in the world and getting access to ports not only benefits Ethiopia but also contributes to the economic progress of the Horn of Africa.”

Cognizant of this fact, Horn leaders are expected to advocate and support Ethiopia’s aspiration to secure a direct access to seaports, Freeman pleaded.

Ethiopia conducts almost 85 % of its import-export trade via Djibouti ports and due to the latter’s limited storage capacity; cargos are forced to stay for eight to 45 days further intensifying the former’s demand for alternate

ports, he emphasized.

A well-known Historian Ayele Bekerie (PhD) on his part mentioned Ethiopia’s huge population, its rapid economic progress, and vast natural resources are the reasons that propelled its quest for sovereign access to sea ports.

Referring to Freeman’s recent article, the academician indicated that as the biggest

economy in East Africa, Ethiopia’s desire to direct access to seaports that would expedite its international trade is justifiable and admissible.

Getting access to the seaport brings immense economic benefits to countries. To this happen, those countries should come up with a win-win, reliable as well as stable approach that will not bring any political risk to effectively use the port, he remarked.

## Ethiopia’s pursuit of seaport...

# Opinion

## Settling border disputes

BY GETACHEW MINAS

Settling border disputes in the Horn of Africa is a complex process that necessitates a careful consideration of historical, geographical, cultural, and political factors. Border disputes and conflicts may arise due to historical colonial legacies. They may also be caused by ethnic complexities, resource competition, or political issues. Resolving these disputes is a prerequisite for regional political stability.

Preventing social unrest through local conflict resolution approaches is a preferred traditional approach. Conflict resolution may result in economic cooperation among people who have been detracted from their day to day activities. In most cases people living at the borders suffer from loss of lives, properties, and livestock. The fostering of peaceful relations and cooperation among people residing in the bordering countries suffer from the brunt of social disorders and conflict in the neighboring areas. These conflicts at grassroots levels grow to national and regional levels pulling governments into wider skirmishes and war. Below are some general approaches and principles for settling border disputes.

The border dispute settlement approaches consist of the following items. These are: diplomatic negotiations; international mediation; arbitration and legal mechanisms; conflict prevention and management; joint development projects; historical and cultural understanding; people-to-people diplomacy; resource sharing agreements; border demarcation and delimitation; regional cooperation; peace keeping and security cooperation; implementation of agreements and capacity building.

The first approach is diplomatic negotiation to facilitate dialogue between the disputing parties. These parties may be very antagonistic making the process of dialogue difficult. But, through repeated facilitation of the dialogue process, they may be willing to negotiate and reach agreement to the satisfaction of facilitators of negotiations. These facilitators may involve direct talks, mediated discussions, or involvement of technical facilitators. Direct talks are open and free making negotiators feel at ease rather than tense.

Mediation is very critical where negotiation is faced with stumbling blocks. The use of technical facilitators smoothen the due process of interactive communication among negotiators. It is possible to seek mediation from international organizations. Also, the involvement of neighboring countries is useful as they are well informed of the causes and effects of dispute in their regions. It is also possible to engage experienced international mediators.

Organizations such as the AU, UN, or

other regional bodies can play a crucial role in facilitating negotiations among disputing neighboring countries. They also apply arbitration and use legal mechanisms for resolving disputes. This may involve referring the matter to an international court or tribunal that specializes in border disputes. This court passes judgments that appease and pacify the disputants. The court may take time to investigate all relevant evidences presented by countries engaged in border disputes. Once the court passes its decision it may be irreversible, bringing the case to an end.

The best step taken by neighboring countries with all the probability of being engaged in border disputes is conflict prevention and management. Responsible governments protect their people from being engaged in conflicts that affect their lives negatively. These conflicts may cause displacement of people from their place of residence. People may be forced to be out of work and lose their income. They will be forced to be dependents on food aid as in Ethiopia today. They leave their residence and stay in temporary shelters or tents.

It is, therefore, absolutely crucial for concerned African governments, including Ethiopia, and international institutions to implement conflict prevention measures. These measures should be designed in such a manner to address underlying issues. These issues have to be studied carefully by appropriate and experienced professionals who come out with realistic measures to address the escalation of tensions among neighboring countries of the Horn. They devise early warning systems to avoid conflicts. They also come out with mechanisms to preclude strife, rivalry, friction and wars among the neighbors of the Horn.

In settling border disputes in the Horn, it is crucial to take confidence-building measures. These measures should be reliable and acceptable by the disputing parties or countries. It is believed that joint-resource management may contribute to conflict prevention. If bordering countries are engaged in building infrastructures jointly, they may not be inclined to create trouble to their partners. They benefit from joint ventures that contribute to higher levels of output, employment and revenues to neighboring countries, including Ethiopia. They may also engage foreign investors who have the required resources for more investment in various sectors of their economies. Countries in the Horn, such as Ethiopia, may benefit from such undertakings. The most important return in such investments is the peace dividend. More citizens would be engaged in the economic development of the Horn and reap benefits that accrue to the society at large.

With peace reigning in the Horn, Ethiopia is bound to benefit from joint development projects in the country. But, this presupposes

exploring joint development projects along disputed borders. The reign of peace in this part of the Horn is a precondition for economic engagement immediately after civil strife over. Collaborative initiatives, such as shared infrastructure are very important. The creation and development of free economic zones is an important input by the state in attracting foreign direct investment in various sectors. This generates more output for both the domestic and external market. The supply of output to the domestic market may help in satisfying growing demands for goods and services in the local markets. It also caters for external markets with the aim of earning foreign exchange.

Moreover, the effort of the government in environmental protection may contribute to sustainability of sectors. This endeavor of the state fosters cooperation and trust among neighboring countries of the Horn. With its huge natural resources base, Ethiopia has the responsibility of guiding the economic development in the Horn area that guarantee peace, law and order in the area.

The historical and cultural factors that bind the people of the Horn may contribute to the settlement of border disputes. Understanding the historical context and cultural sensitivities can help in finding mutually acceptable solutions. In this regard, the role of historians and sociologists is important in studying and identifying the common historical ties among the people of the Horn, including Ethiopia.

People residing at the borders have close economic and social contact in their day to day lives. Most of them raise cattle, camels, sheep, and goats and engage in border trading. On both sides of the border residents have common history and culture. They share common values and traditions, including language, food, and clothes.

Border crossing is part of the daily routine conduct by the local people peacefully without any conflict. However, there may be communal skirmishes that are common among neighboring people at the border areas. These skirmishes, encounters, clashes and scuffles are only seasonal, occurring due to shortage of water. But, politicians and ringleaders blow up these incidents to attract the attention of the government.

Traditionally, governments promoted people-to-people diplomacy to sponsor and encourage peaceful coexistence in the Horn. This diplomacy entails cultural exchanges between communities on both sides of the border. Building positive relationships at the grassroots level can contribute to lasting peace, law and order. Peace is a critical precondition for economic development and shared use of natural resources.

It is useful to explore cooperation with bordering countries of the Horn to promote

shared use of natural resources. These resources include water bodies, mineral deposits, forests, animals, and agriculture. Fair sharing of these resources enhances productive development in Ethiopia. Planned arrangements may address economic motivations at the grassroots level in the country. As a precondition for economic development, individuals and communities have to be motivated to participate in both rural and urban development at the Ethiopian border areas. This is conditioned on border demarcation and delimitation.

It keeps border disputes at bay if there is a clearly demarcated and delimited border through agreed-upon processes. Technical experts can play a role in ensuring accurate and mutually accepted demarcation. Mutually agreed processes are important ingredients for maintaining peace at the border areas. These events call for regional cooperation among neighboring countries of the Horn, involving Ethiopia. The type of cooperation may take different forms. Depending on the current issues, diplomats of the concerned countries have to meet, consult and agree on maintaining peace, law and order. These are crucial preconditions for growth and development in the Horn area. The consultation and agreement has to be followed up by strategic peacekeeping and security cooperation between the countries of the Horn. Signing of agreements has to be followed by programs of implementation. These programs indicate responsible parties for executing activities at the border areas.

Execution of activities at the border has to be accompanied by periodic assessment, examination and inspection. Assessment reports have to be strictly observed to take corrective measures on blunders and problems related to bordering countries of the Horn. Close examination of reports on border activities is necessary for checking illegal trades. Illegal traders are abusive of border rules and regulations. They have to be checked at critical points along borders.

Illegitimate, unlawful, criminal and dishonest trading activities are very harmful to the revenues collected by the government. They may lead to abuse of power at the border, leading to disputes that may involve state authorities. Any authority devoid of the real capacity to control border trading may lead to disputes that involve governments on both sides of the border. It is, therefore, advisable to conduct capacity building programs to the Ethiopian staff dealing with border trade. Capacity is also developed with the latest and modern technologies in border trade checking and controlling. These measures preclude unnecessary disputes, skirmishes or wars between bordering countries.

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

# Editorial

## Obsolete 'Historical rights'

In what could be said a continuation of its centuries-old madness, Egypt is engaged in manipulative fantasies of the colonial era Nile agreement. Sugarcoated them as historical rights, Cairo is toiling and leaving no stone unturned to keep the obsolete yet unfair colonial accords alive.

Egypt's lopsided position is putting a barrier to regional cooperation in the Nile Rivers. For other Nile riparian countries, Egypt's claims of irrelevant historical rights are nothing but historical injustice. These inappropriate historical rights are contradicting with the values of the 21st-century notion of common resource management and the principle of a win-win approach.

For centuries, Egypt emboldened by its paymasters has been unfairly benefiting from the common resources unchallenged and undisputed. While the country has been using the Nile in monopoly, other member countries including Ethiopia that is origin of the River have been bystanders languishing in darkness.

Setting a practical example, Ethiopia has been leading efforts to ensure fair and equitable utilization of the longest river in the world. In 2011, Ethiopia launched the construction of the Abbay Dam which has a multitude of regional benefits. Side by side, the country also invited downstream countries for negotiation to address any concerns and create mutual understanding. Over the years, there have been headways that can be seen as breakthroughs. The inking of the Declarations of Principles and Memorandum of Understandings are savvy instances.

Though the Abbay Dam is a national and sovereign project solely funded and constructed by Ethiopians, the country has been doing its level best not only to bring the downstream countries on board but also to find a common ground where the three countries would be able to benefit from the colossal dam. In spite of the positive trends, Egypt remained a stumbling block hindering efforts to reach in mutual agreements on outstanding issues over the Abbay Dam.

In contradiction, Egypt has been dragging its feet in terms of setting new initiatives and digging on its heels to maintain the status quo of injustice. The country's acts are a sharp contrast to Ethiopia's amicable and genuine approach. Ethiopia over the years went to Washington, Cairo, and Khartoum to negotiate with the downstream countries, an indication of the country's unshakable stance to resolve disputes or concerns through diplomacy and peaceful means. However, the country's gestures went largely unreciprocated by Egypt. This week, Egypt continued in its usual propaganda and ill-advised acts hindering renewed talks on the Abbay Dam.

Egypt should stop unfounded propaganda and media campaigns as the differences with respect to the dam can only be resolved through negotiation, so said the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) Negotiation Team leader Ambassador Sileshi Bekele (PhD).

The team leader and Ethiopia's Ambassador to the United States briefed the media following the conclusion of the fourth round of negotiations on the GERD. The entire negotiation process has been progressive despite some divergence, Sileshi said. Therefore, the team leader has asked the downstream countries to return to the negotiation table. According to him, the dam is a great blessing for the downstream countries as it releases more water from the reservoir during drought. If there is a drought, it will release some water from the dam reservoir.

Ethiopia has no intention to use Nile water alone as an upstream country, adding "We have pushed for a dream together to bring regional integration."

Ethiopia has not taken a rigid position and the country will reinforce efforts to have development on the Nile River without harming the countries and ensure transparency in the negotiation. Egypt, in contrast, maintained a colonial era mentality and erected roadblocks against efforts toward convergence.

Ethiopia has been willing to enhance confidence and build trust among the three countries from the get-go. But, it should be clear that the country has the right to utilize the waters of the Nile on the principle of no harm. And the last couple of years are solid testimonies in the regard.

# Opinion

## AfCFTA - an opportunity to pursue climate policies

BY STAFF REPORTER

"As we strive to harness the potential of the AfCFTA, it is essential that we do so in a manner that safeguards our natural ecosystem, promotes renewable energy and mitigates the impact of climate change" Mr. Claver Gatete, Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) has said in remarks made on his behalf by Melaku Desta, Coordinator of the ECA's Africa Trade Policy Centre (ATPC) at a COP 28 side event themed: "Africa's Trade and Green Transition: A Continentally Coordinated Approach."

Mr. Desta said ECA and Centre d'Etudes Prospectives et d'Informations Internationales (CEPII) conducted a study - Greening the African Continental Free Trade Area Agreement's Implementation - with a view to shedding light on important findings regarding the implementation of the AfCFTA Agreement and parallel adoption of climate policies. It examines how the implementation of AfCFTA agreement can be aligned with green principles, renewable practices and low carbon strategies.

"The study was conducted against the backdrop of a growing need to consider the impact on the environment as the continent moves towards greater economic integration and take proactive measures to mitigate any negative consequences."

"Africa is being negatively impacted by climate change despite contributing a small amount to greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Currently, Africa accounts for approximately 7% of total global GHG emissions from carbon dioxide and other gasses. GHG emissions in Africa are forecasted to grow faster over the next decades than in other parts of the world, although starting from a relatively low level currently," said Mr. Desta, adding that as per the study, emissions could rise to nearly 12% by 2045 based on current trends. If large emitting countries implement policies to transition to clean energy, Africa's economic costs to export goods to those countries could increase.

The AfCFTA creates opportunities for the continent to industrialize and transform through increased trade and as stressed at the session, the AfCFTA stands as a beacon of hope for fostering intra-African trade, economic integration and shared prosperity."

There are concerns, however, that it could add pressure to climate change through increased manufacturing and transportation use, among others. Analysis shows intra-African trade could be 35% higher in 2045 with AfCFTA agreement in place, as compared to without AfCFTA. About two-thirds of the absolute intra-African trade gains would benefit industrial sectors supporting economic transformation. Supporting this increased trade will require major investments in transportation

infrastructure to meet the AfCFTA needs which would be well over 2 million trucks, 100,000 rail cars, 150 vessels and 250 aircraft.

Presenting the key findings, Simon Mevel, Economic Affairs Office at the ECA said they analyzed the impact of implementing the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) Agreement on Africa's GHG emissions. They also assessed implications of pursuing climate policies like Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and carbon pricing in parallel with AfCFTA Agreement's implementation.

The Key Findings of the study are: Implementing AfCFTA can boost intra-African trade by 35% in 2045 while increasing GHG emissions less than 1%, compared to no AfCFTA or climate policies, AfCFTA and Africa's climate objectives are compatible. Adopting climate policies with AfCFTA could reduce GHG emissions by 25% while still increasing intra-African trade by 31-34% (depending on climate policy considered). Pricing carbon in Africa seems to be an effective and efficient mechanism to help African countries meeting their climate objectives defined under their NDCs, and Climate policies can also help accelerate Africa's renewable energy transition. Pursuing climate policies with AfCFTA could increase Africa's renewable energy use 5-12% in 2045 compared to no AfCFTA or climate policies.

The analysis further showed continental coordination on climate policies through carbon pricing produces better outcomes than uncoordinated approaches like existing NDCs. This suggests African countries can provide an effective African-driven response to address climate change by working together.

The main objective of this research is to help stakeholders - member States and green investors better understand the expected impacts of adopting climate policies in Africa and how those interact with the AfCFTA.

Panelists included Ms. Faten Aggad, Advisor, climate diplomacy and multilateralism, who suggested a phased approach could be considered for carbon pricing in Africa.

Mr. Rashid Kaukab, Senior Specialist, Trade and Sustainable Development, International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) said that the poverty and employment impacts of climate policies shouldn't be overlooked, while Mr. Babajide Sodipo, Senior Manager, Export Development Advisory, Afreximbank, emphasized the need for innovating financing mechanisms for the success if Africa's energy transition.

Participants attending the side event acknowledged the conversation is "a timely reminder of the need to find a balance between trade and climate for the benefit of Africa's future."

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### Advertisement and Dist. Department

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

Editor-in-Chief: Worku Belachew

email- workubelachew@press.et

Address- Nifas Silk Lafto Sub-city

Woreda - 05, House No----

Tel- +251 111 26 41 98

### Managing Editor: Wakuman Kudama

Email: wakuma220@gmail.com

### Deputy Editors-in-Chief:

Alem Hailu  
Elizabeth Mengistu  
Zekarias Woldemariam  
Desta Geberehiwot  
Daniel Beyene

Website: www.press.et

email: ethiopianherald@press.et

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The Ethiopian Herald

# Business & Economy

## Ensuring steady incentives: A call to boost manufacturing enterprises

BY HIZKEL HAILU

Manufacturing enterprises in Ethiopia play a significant role in the country's economic development and job creation. Ethiopia has been actively promoting industrialization as a key strategy for achieving sustainable economic growth and transforming its predominantly agrarian economy. The manufacturing sector is considered a priority area for investment and has received substantial attention and support from the government.

Manufacturing enterprises in Ethiopia cover a wide range of industries, including textiles and apparel, leather and footwear, food and beverages, chemicals, pharmaceuticals, construction materials, electronics, and more. These industries contribute to both domestic consumption and export markets.

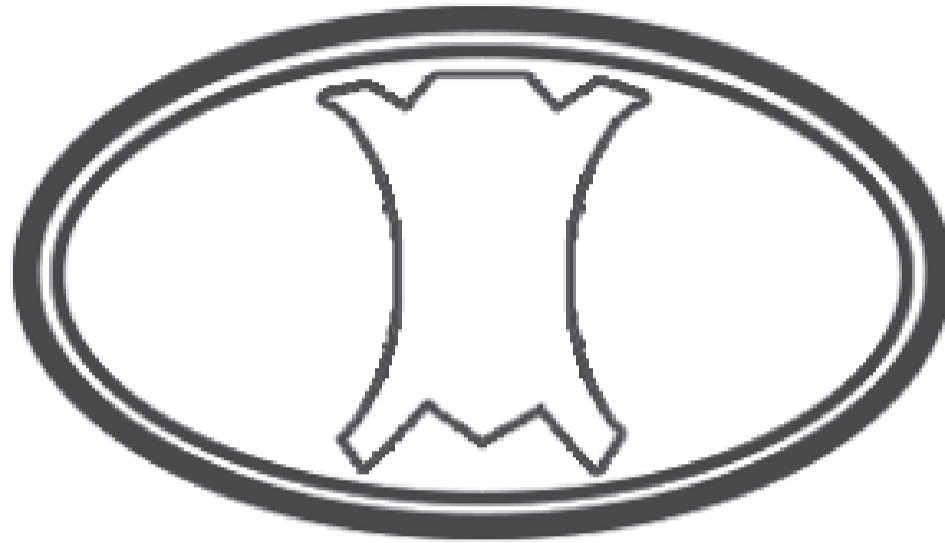
One of the key advantages of manufacturing in Ethiopia is the availability of a large and relatively low-cost labor force. The country's young and growing population provides a significant demographic dividend, making it an attractive destination for labor-intensive industries. Additionally, Ethiopia's strategic location and improving infrastructure offer opportunities for trade both within Africa and with international markets.

According to the documents from Ethiopian Enterprise Development, Ethiopian government has implemented various policies and programs to attract investment and support the growth of manufacturing enterprises. This includes the establishment of industrial parks and special economic zones, providing infrastructure, utilities, and incentives to businesses. The government has also offered investment incentives such as tax exemptions, import duty waivers, and access to finance for manufacturing enterprises.

In recent years, Ethiopia has seen an increase in foreign direct investment (FDI) in the manufacturing sector, particularly in areas such as textiles and garments. The government's focus on export-oriented industrialization has led to the development of manufacturing clusters and export zones, providing opportunities for businesses to tap into global markets.

The Ethiopian government has established several industrial parks across the country to attract manufacturing investments. These parks provide infrastructure, utilities, and various incentives to encourage local and foreign companies to set up manufacturing operations. Besides, the government offers various investment incentives to manufacturing enterprises, such as tax holidays, import duty exemptions on machinery and raw materials, and repatriation of profits.

Ethiopia has also implemented export promotion policies to encourage manufacturing companies to focus on producing goods for export. Export-oriented manufacturing enterprises can benefit from various incentives, including tax exemptions and access to foreign exchange.



Colba Tannery PLC



Alma-Kir Textile Industry

The government has established financial institutions and programs to support manufacturing enterprises in accessing finance and investment capital. These include the Development Bank of Ethiopia and various loan guarantee schemes.

Moreover, the government is working on the Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs). Accordingly, the government actively seeks partnerships with the private sector to develop manufacturing projects. PPPs provide opportunities for collaboration between the government and private enterprises in infrastructure development, industrial parks, and other manufacturing initiatives.

While the manufacturing sector in Ethiopia has experienced notable growth, challenges remain. These challenges include limited access to finance, infrastructure gaps, and among others. However, the government continues to work on addressing these issues and creating an enabling environment for manufacturing enterprises to thrive.

In a bid to improve operational performance and overcome challenges, manufacturing enterprises in Ethiopia are urging for consistent and reliable incentives. On top of that, companies such as Colba Tannery PLC and Alma-Kir Textile Industry have highlighted the importance of government support, particularly in addressing the shortage of foreign currency that is hindering their growth. With a growing demand for their products both domestically and internationally, Habtamu Shiferaw, the Managing Director of Colba Tannery PLC emphasizes the need for sustained assistance to enhance production capacity and take advantage of available opportunities.

Colba Tannery PLC, a prominent player in

manufacturing chemicals.

Nahom Fitsum of Alma-Kir Textile Industry for his part expressed gratitude for the government's initiatives and its assistance in accessing limited amounts of foreign currency. Nevertheless, he emphasized the ever-increasing demand in the market, which necessitates further growth in production capacity. The government's support is crucial in enabling enterprises to meet this demand and capitalize on the opportunities available in the textile sector.

Steady incentives are vital for the long-term growth and sustainability of manufacturing enterprises in Ethiopia. Alebachew Nigussie, the Director General of Ethiopian Enterprise Development (EED), revealed that over 26,000 manufacturing enterprises are currently operating in the country. The government's annual expenditure of six billion Birr to subsidize these enterprises underscores their importance to the national economy.

As to him, steady incentives not only alleviate the challenges faced by businesses but also foster an environment conducive to investment and growth. Reliable access to foreign currency, financial support, and technical assistance enable companies to enhance their operational performance, expand their production capacity, and meet the rising demand in both domestic and international markets.

Mentioning that invigorating the efforts, and supporting the development of manufacturing enterprises is mandate for EED, the director-general reaffirmed the government's commitment in resolving challenges in the manufacturing sector as it is an important sector for social justice and pivotal for job creation

Through ensuring a stable and supportive business environment, the government can stimulate economic growth, create employment opportunities, and attract investment in the manufacturing sector, he noted.

Overall, manufacturing enterprises in Ethiopia are poised to contribute significantly to the country's economic transformation, job creation, and export earnings. With the government's continued support and ongoing reforms, the manufacturing sector is expected to play an increasingly important role in Ethiopia's development trajectory.

The call for steady incentives from manufacturing enterprises in Ethiopia highlights the need for sustained support to address the challenges hindering their growth. The scarcity of foreign currency remains a significant obstacle, impacting their ability to procure essential materials and meet market demands. The government's financial and technical assistance, along with initiatives to facilitate access to foreign currency, are steps in the right direction. However, a continued focus on providing steady incentives is necessary to unlock the full potential of the manufacturing sector, promote job creation, and drive economic growth in Ethiopia.

# Art & Culture



## The two daughters

**CHIMADICKSON (From Nigeria)**

A woman had two daughters of almost the same age. One had a blooming beautiful look with a healthy glowing skin. But the other looked pale and very malnourished. As it happened, she birthed one of the girls but the other was adopted.

Every weekend, the woman would bring the girls to a restaurant to eat. She would order chicken sandwiches and coconut ice cream for the blooming daughter but the ill-looking daughter got only a bottle of water.

At some point, the waiters in the restaurant noticed this and they became concerned. One morning, they discussed the issue.

"She's mean and wicked to that poor girl... What kind of a mother would treat a child so badly?" one of the waiters professed.

"I think the poor girl was adopted unlike the other, which could explain why she treats them differently. So heartbreaking," another waiter chipped in.

"We are the only ones who could save that child from a toxic mother. She really needs our help" the third waiter said.

The waiters then reported the issue to the restaurant manager who was a former 'child protective services' (CPS) worker. He contacted the police immediately. The police decided to wait until the woman's next visit to the restaurant.

The following weekend, the mother

brought her girls to the restaurant as usual. But this time around, she was surprised when some policemen showed up and accused her of child abuse. She was utterly confused.

When the woman understood the situation, she requested the presence of all the waiters. Soon, everyone gathered including the restaurant manager. Then she began to speak.

"All of you have judged me without knowing the whole story... Yes, I have an adopted daughter but you don't even know who among them the adopted one is. Well, I would like to inform you that this sickly-looking girl here is actually the biological daughter. She was born with congenital heart disease, and has been sick all through her life. May I also inform you that she just went through a heart transplant few months ago? Now listen, I usually do not let her eat here because I know how detrimental these fast foods can be to her new heart. Your foods are healthy, but not healthy enough for a young girl with a donor's heart. So, I have taken it upon myself to always make special meals for her. My daughter is bravely fighting her illness and she will come out victorious. So, you all need to know that I love both my daughters so dearly, and I won't treat anyone less favorably".

*Moral:* Don't accuse a person without full understanding of the situation. Sometimes, the people you accuse or judge are the same people who could prove you wrong and teach you a valuable lesson.

## Enemy

**BY SENAIT G/HIWOT**

*She is her own enemy  
She tortures herself constantly  
She doesn't know how to be sane  
Her mind only knows the blame  
When she is with people or alone  
She listens to her brain whisper  
Negativity of the matter  
And it makes her feel bitter  
Her mind assumes the worst  
Panics and worries for the most  
It lives trapped at its own will  
In a selfish world that is ill  
It lives in its ego and pride  
It makes itself hard to find  
Buried in an elusive world  
That is hard to comprehend.*



## A source of pride

**BY ALEM HAILU G/KIRSITOS**

*Darling,  
Your beauty  
Many electrify  
In a way description  
That defy.*

*My gem exquisite  
I experience  
A delight  
Heart that override  
When you walk  
By my side,  
I will not hide  
Owning such a beauty  
Is a source of pride;*

*Specially when  
Know I  
By my desire  
You are willing  
To abide by.*

*Soars up my pride  
Especially when  
I Understand  
Your feelings  
And emotions  
I command;  
Also If  
You are avers  
To possible feeling  
On a spur of  
A moment  
To stoop to a fling.*

# Science & Technology

## A self-made helicopter producer wins National Aviation Innovation Competition

BY DARGIE KAHSAY

Helicopter innovator, Ebe Legesse won the national aviation innovation competition, organized during the first Aviation Innovation Expo-2023 at the Science Museum here in Addis Ababa. He has been producing a helicopter using carton and other used materials since 2000. For the past 23 years now, Ebe has continued to produce better version helicopters. The current helicopter he displayed on the national competition is his sixth product. It is more modified than its predecessors.

Ebe Legesse was born and raised in North Western zone of Tigray Regional State, a remote village from the zonal capital, Shire city. He attended his primary education in Adi Daero and Shire and his secondary education in Mekelle, the capital of Tigray Regional State.

Since his childhood, Ebe's passion was painting, making and fixing different materials, shaping and reshaping different statuettes using cartons even before school days. After he started formal education from scratch, painting, sculpture and other artistic activities attracted his attention. Then, Ebe continued shaping and reshaping, making and producing different simple gadgets using carton, wood and used metals.

As his village was located at the border of Ethiopia and Eritrea, he witnessed the 1999-2000 Ethio-Eritrea war during his childhood. During the war, military helicopters and jets were hovering over Ebe's village. The helicopters and jets that flew over his rural village attracted Ebe's attention and he started to think about the military helicopters. Still, Ebe had never seen the helicopters at a close range. But, he continued to think and started to make a helicopter using a carton and other simple used materials and metals and a dynamo as a motor that year for the first time.

Since then, for the past 23 years, Ebe continued working, modifying and developing his innovational idea to produce a helicopter.

Approached by *The Ethiopian Herald*, Ebe stated that his first product was just a simple sample product, but it lends him hope and energy to continue working. "I learnt from my first simple product that it is possible to produce a helicopter though I didn't have the knowledge before. I continued working on making a helicopter and with better design, my second product was improved from the first one," he stated.

His second product was more near to unmanned aerial vehicle (drone). After he completed the product, he tested it to see it fly. "During the test, the second product floated, but I couldn't control it. While floating, it disappeared. I didn't find it at



*Ebe Legesse during a flight test of his helicopter in Shire*

that time and I started to produce another one for the third time," he reiterated.

Ebe's third trial was more improved than the previous products and during a pilot test; the third product also crashed during take-off and broken after its collision with a wall. "After these continuous efforts of trial and error, I learnt the hardest way that I have the capacity to produce a functional helicopter locally," Ebe stated adding that he then stepped up his efforts. Though he doubled efforts and improved the materials during his fourth trial, the outcome was similar.

During the fifth round, he planned to build an improved and better helicopter that can carry one person to start a normal flight test. As he planned to produce just nearly normal helicopter, Ebe started to search how a helicopter is manufactured and tried to understand the materials used to produce a helicopter by manufacturers. After he identified the materials, he then started to gather aluminum and other basic materials and he used a fiber glass for the body.

His fifth product took four years. "It took me four years to complete the fifth product and it really was of a better quality than the previous ones. I decided to test it in a place open to the public as I was hopeful to make it fly," he stated. Though the fifth version also failed to take-off it showed a significant improvement from the previous ones. It showed a promising progress of taking off, except minor errors.

Through this self-learning process by trial and error, he started again to produce his sixth product, which he showcased at the national aviation innovation competition. "I produced the current one during the Northern Ethiopia war and it was completed during the war," Ebe stated adding that "taking lessons from the previous products, this one is the best model and was completed in 8 months."

"I used fully standard material inputs necessary to produce an airplane and I produced a product that can fly. Yet still it needs some modifications and improvements just to put to use as a full-fledged product," the first national aviation innovation competition winner said. The current product, according to Ebe, can be functional just with some material improvements and few adjustments. Currently, his helicopter can fly and stay in the space for three minutes with a pilot.

As to Ebe all parts, except the engine are produced and assembled by own capacity. "All the process including the structure of the body of the helicopter was assembled by me and the cost for the whole process so far was covered by my own personal income," he stated. From his income, Ebe invested in electronics maintenance for the past over eight years and his innovational ideas are financed by the income he is earning from the electronics maintenance business.

Finally, Ebe's helicopter product was selected and ranked first by judges during the national aviation innovation competition at the recent Aviation Innovation Expo and Ebe won 10,000 ETB as a winner. "The competition was tough as there were a lot of researchers and innovators from different parts of Ethiopia including from higher education institutions," Ebe said adding that "competing with all the innovations in the sector, my product was selected by the judges."

Beyond winning the competition, the experience, the lessons he got, the network with different manufacturers and researchers was very helpful for Ebe. "During the expo, I met different experts, professionals, company owners, manufacturers and other innovators that helped me to get new insights, knowledge and experiences." In addition, Ebe stated that by the organizers of the expo, selected innovators were connected with different

companies and Ebe was connected with Ethiopian Air Force to follow and support his innovation. "The Ethiopian Air Force also promised me to support my effort," he added.

"I was struggling by myself since 2000 without any support, now, I will properly exploit the opportunity following the recent event," he stated and he is seeking financial, material and technical supports to realize his dream.

In his electronics maintenance business, in addition to other electronics materials, Ebe is maintaining gold detector machine. Later, he modified the gold detector machine and produced a better one by his own, still waiting a patent right to produce more for market consumption. In addition, Ebe also produced a stone crushing machine.

Recently, Ebe has come up with a mini-tractor which already was used to plough his family's agricultural field. For next, Ebe plans to modify the tractor to produce it with more functions including crop harvesting.

"The mini tractor provides plowing service using a fuel. For 12 hours, it consumes six liter of gas and in eight hours, it has the capacity of plowing one hectare of land. Still, I am modifying it to develop its capacity," Ebe noted. As to him, within short period of time and collaborating with stakeholders including Tigray Agriculture Bureau, he plans to produce the mini tractor with affordable price for smallholder farmers.

"I have a lot of ideas that can improve the livelihoods of the rural society. If I find technical, material and financial supports, I will realize these innovations including an easy and modern irrigation system to tackle drought affected areas," Ebe wrapped up. Continuous and meaningful support for such innovative, determined and talented youths can transform societies, ensure technology transfer and import substitution.



# Society

## Transforming TVET, improving sector competitiveness

BY TEWODROS KASSA

In Ethiopia, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) has gained momentum in the past few years. The trainees have become more successful in the business sector and more productive in various sectors. TVET provides trainees with the technical skills applicable for the particular trade. In practice, different types of programs are included under the umbrella of TVET.

Also Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) play a crucial role in equipping individuals with practical skills and knowledge necessary for employment and economic development. In Ethiopia, the TVET sector has been recognized as a key driver for enhancing sector competitiveness and addressing unemployment challenges. In doing so, the current state of TVET in Ethiopia needed to highlight the challenges faced by the sector, and propose strategies for transforming and improving TVET to meet the evolving needs of industries. By enhancing curriculum development, strengthening partnerships, improving infrastructure, and focusing on instructor quality, Ethiopia has the potential to create a thriving and competitive workforce capable of driving economic growth and development.

TVET in Ethiopia has a rich history, with its roots dating back to the early 1960s. The Ethiopian government recognized the importance of vocational training in meeting the needs of various industries and established the first TVET institution, the Addis Ababa Technical School. Over the years, the TVET sector has expanded significantly, with the establishment of numerous vocational schools and colleges throughout the country.

While the TVET sector in Ethiopia has made significant progress, it still faces various challenges that hinder its full potential. The sector consists of a diverse range of programs, including engineering, agriculture, health, and business. However, there is a need for further improvement in terms of quality, relevance, and industry integration to ensure the effectiveness of TVET in meeting the demands of the labor market.

Recently, The Ministry of Labor and Skills has launched Ethiopian TVET (Technical Vocational Education and Training) Think Tank with the aim of transforming the sector.

Addressing the launching ceremony today, Labor and Skills Minister, Muferiat Kamil, said the formation of the TVET Think Tank, in collaboration with the Federal Technical and Vocational Training Institute, would enable to realize transformation of the sector.



TVET sector in Ethiopia has made significant progress

According to her, the formation of the think tank will play pivotal role in realizing the reform activities being undertaken by the nation. For the minister, strong TVET institutions are foundations for the overall economic growth of countries as the experience of others show.

Furthermore, Muferiat Kamil said that the formation of Ethiopian TVET Think Tank will play pivotal role in realizing the reform activities being undertaken by the nation, Labor and Skills Minister. According to her, the Ministry has launched Ethiopian TVET (Technical and Vocational Education and Training) Think Tank with the aim of transforming the sector. The formation of the think tank will also play pivotal role in realizing the reform activities being undertaken by the nation.

Highlighting that the Think Tank group will create a platform where ideas are constantly generated, she said it will make a great contribution to filling gaps in policy implementation and sharing experiences.

On his part, Federal Technical and Vocational Training Institute (FTVTI), Director-General, Biruk Kedir pointed out that the formation of the think tank is crucial to accelerate the reform activities of the sector.

Noting that technical and vocational institutions are vital to produce qualified and trained citizens, he said applying the knowledge and experience of experts will help to move the sector forward and solve challenges.

The formation of the think tank comprised scholars from various institutions with extensive experience in policy implementation and research activities, it was indicated.

Accordingly, encouraging collaboration between TVET institutions and industries is crucial. Establishing partnerships can help bridge the gap between education and employment by providing students with access to real-world work experiences, internships, and apprenticeships. Involving

industry stakeholders in the development of TVET curricula is essential to ensure its relevance and responsiveness to evolving industry needs. Regular consultations and feedback from employers can help tailor the programs to meet the current and future demands of the job market.

Investing in modern infrastructure, upgrading facilities, and providing access to advanced technologies is also crucial to enhance the quality of technical and vocational education. Adequate resources and modern equipment enable students to gain practical skills that align with industry standards. In addition to technical skills, it is essential to incorporate entrepreneurship and soft skills development in TVET programs. These skills, including communication, problem-solving, and critical thinking, are highly valued by employers and contribute to the overall employability of TVET graduates.

Transforming the TVET sector in Ethiopia requires addressing the challenges it faces, strengthening industry partnerships, upgrading infrastructure, and enhancing curriculum development and relevance. By doing so, the country can improve the competitiveness of its workforce and drive economic growth.

The government has been working to expand the reach of TVET institutions across the country, making vocational education more accessible to a larger number of students. Efforts have been made to modernize and update the TVET curriculum to align with industry needs and technological advancements, ensuring that graduates are equipped with relevant skills.

Collaborations between TVET institutions and industry partners have been established to provide students with practical training and work experience, enhancing their employability. What is more, there is a focus on providing training that is directly linked to employment opportunities, aiming to address the demand for skilled workers in various sectors.

The TVET sector in Ethiopia is also fostering an entrepreneurial mindset among students, encouraging them to start their own businesses and contribute to the country's economic growth.

The TVET sector in Ethiopia is indeed making significant progress. In recent years, the Ethiopian government has been actively investing in and prioritizing the development of TVET institutions and programs to address the country's skills gap and meet the demands of a growing economy.

Overall, the progress in Ethiopia's TVET sector reflects a commitment to equipping the workforce with relevant skills and knowledge, ultimately contributing to the country's socio-economic development.

**E**thiopia's TVET sector reflects a commitment to equipping the workforce with relevant skills and knowledge, ultimately contributing to the country's socio-economic development



This is  
*Ethiopia*

## Harnessing Addis MICE potentials!

BY TEWODROS KASSA

Addis Ababa, the vibrant capital city of Ethiopia, has emerged as a promising destination for Meetings, Incentives, Conventions, and Exhibitions (MICE). With its rich historical and cultural heritage, strategic geographical location, and a rapidly developing infrastructure, Addis Ababa provides a compelling setting for hosting diverse MICE activities. Tourism experts recommend more efforts to explore the potentials of Addis Ababa as a MICE destination, towards harnessing its infrastructure and facilities, key attractions, prominent events, advantages, challenges, and future prospects. Whether it's a global conference, a government summit, or a trade exhibition, Addis Ababa offers an impressive MICE experience that blends business opportunities with unique cultural experiences.

So far, the city is witnessing emerging trends in the MICE industry, including advancements in technology to enhance event experiences and connectivity. The city is also focusing on sustainability and green initiatives to create eco-friendly events. As the city continues to invest in its MICE infrastructure and promote itself as a destination, it is expected to experience growth in demand and attract more international events, further solidifying its position as a leading MICE hub in Africa. Steeped in rich history and culture, this city offers a unique experience for participants attending Meetings, Incentives, Conventions, and Exhibitions (MICE). From ancient civilizations to modern developments, Addis Ababa is a melting pot of tradition and innovation.

In addition, Addis is home to numerous international organizations, government institutions, and diplomatic missions including the African Union, UNECA, among others. This dynamic atmosphere makes it an ideal destination for business professionals and policymakers looking to connect and collaborate.

Recently, Addis Ababa City Culture, Arts and Tourism Bureau Deputy Head Haftay Gebre-Egzibiher said that Addis Ababa has the potential to become a hub for Meetings, Incentives, Conventions and Exhibitions (MICE).

Speaking at a panel discussion on opportunities and challenges of MICE in the capital city, he said Addis Ababa has the potential to be a hub for meetings, incentives, conventions and exhibitions.

According to him, the strategic location of the city, infrastructures, hotels, cultural and historical attractions as well as availability of event organizer, among others, are the



enabling factors to make Addis Ababa favorable city for MICE.

The deputy head also stressed the need for concerted efforts from all pertinent bodies to address the challenges in the sector.

Panelists said on the occasion that even if Addis Ababa has the capacity to host various meetings, incentives, conventions, and exhibitions, it has not yet benefited from those at the required level.

They noted that stakeholders engaged in the sector should effectively and cooperatively work together in advancing and stepping forward MICE industry for common goals and benefits.

According to the experts, Addis being in a convenient geographical location in the heart of East Africa sought to attract more conference participants. With its Bole International Airport serving as a major transportation hub, participants from all corners of the globe can easily access the city.

More importantly, Addis Ababa embraces state-of-the-art convention centers and exhibition halls that are equipped to host a wide range of events. These facilities are designed to provide a comfortable and conducive environment for productive discussions and memorable experiences.

When it comes to accommodations, Addis Ababa leaves no stone unturned. The city offers a plethora of hotels ranging from luxury establishments to budget-friendly options. Whether you prefer a stylish boutique hotel or a well-known international chain, there is something for everyone. Rest assured, you'll find a cozy place to unwind after a busy day of MICE activities.

Moreover, the city provides various modes of transportation, including taxis, buses, and light rail, making it easy to navigate from one point to another. Additionally, Bole International Airport offers excellent connectivity, ensuring smooth transfers for attendees arriving from different parts of the world.

Accordingly, in between MICE events, participants can explore the cultural and historical sites that Addis Ababa has to offer. From the National Museum, home to the famous fossilized hominid skeleton "Lucy," to the stunning Holy Trinity Cathedral, there is a wealth of knowledge and beauty waiting to be discovered. Immerse yourself in the city's rich heritage and make your stay even more memorable. The city boasts vibrant shopping districts where you can indulge in retail therapy and find unique souvenirs. Head to the bustling Merkato market or explore modern malls for a delightful shopping experience.

When the sun sets, the city offers the vibrant nightlife scene, with restaurants, bars, and live music venues catering to various tastes.

What is more, nature enthusiasts will find solace in Addis Ababa's breathtaking outdoor recreation and natural landmarks. Escape the city buzz by visiting the Entoto Mountains, where you can enjoy panoramic views and invigorating hikes. You can also explore the serene Unity Park, a vast green oasis in the heart of the city. Addis Ababa effortlessly harmonizes urban life with nature, providing a peaceful retreat for MICE participants.

In sum, Addis Ababa has earned its reputation as a sought-after destination for hosting international conferences and summits. The city has been a hub for discussions on various global issues, attracting high-profile participants from around the world. From climate change to economic development, Addis Ababa has played a crucial role in shaping the global agenda. The city stands as a remarkable MICE destination, combining historical significance, modern infrastructure, and a vibrant atmosphere. Whether you're attending a conference, exhibition, or incentive program, the city welcomes you with open arms, and promises an unforgettable experience. Get ready to immerse yourself in the dynamic energy and rich culture of Addis Ababa.