



# The Ethiopian Herald

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## Premier touts Koysha Hydroelectric Power Project Progress

**ADDIS ABABA (ENA)** Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) reviewed the progress of the Koysha Hydroelectric project, the second largest hydropower plant next to the

Ethiopian Grand Renaissance Dam (GERD) with installed capacity of 1800MW.

The prime minister wrote on his Facebook

“My 12th review of the Koysha hydroelectric power project since 2020, I’m pleased to witness the stage of construction which has reached 62

*See Premier touts ... Page 3*

## Gov’t refutes rumors of inability to Eurobond repayment

BY MENGESHA AMARE

**ADDIS ABABA-** The Ministry of Planning and Development (MoPD) has refuted rumors about Ethiopia’s inability to make a 33 million USD repayment on its one billion Eurobond due to a forex shortage, calling the interest “affordable.”

Approached by local media, MoPD Minister Fitsum Assefa (PhD) said that rumors disseminated by some parties about Ethiopia’s inability to make a Eurobond debt repayment this month are far from reality as the interest is very minimal.

“This year, Ethiopia spent close to one billion USD to import fertilizers and another four billion for fuel and

*See Gov’t refutes rumors ... Page 3*



Lawrence Freeman

## ‘Historic right over Nile’ doesn’t hold water: Freeman

BY STAFF REPORTER

**ADDIS ABABA –** Egypt needs to focus on utilizing the development potentials of Abbay Dam rather than stubbornly claiming unsound historic right of water share, to reach common understanding on the issue, so said Analyst.

*See ‘Historic right ... Page 3*

## Corporation in heightened readiness to lure businesses to IP

BY ESSEYE MENGISTE

**ADDIS ABABA-** The Industrial Parks Development Corporation (IDPC) expressed heightened readiness to address investors’ complaints and to create a favorable business climate for local and multinational companies.

The IDPC held a stakeholders’ forum yesterday that aims to address the concerns of investors in the industrial parks and to stimulate the flow of businesses to the facilities.

In his opening remark, IPDC CEO Akililu Tadesse said that the government has been partnering with relevant stakeholders to create a favorable business climate to both domestic and international businesses.

In order to unlock Ethiopia’s economic



Akililu Tadesse

potential, the government has introduced key macroeconomic reforms in the finance, industry, agriculture, tourism and so forth. Among the notable efforts the government has introduced to leap frog Ethiopia’s Industrial base is establishing Industrial Parks across the country, the CEO



Lelise Nemi, Commissioner of Ethiopian Investment Commission

elaborated.

Akililu further noted that a number of reform initiatives have been introduced in the past one year to broaden the gains and enhance investors’ experience with the corporation.

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**Energy diplomacy: The road to a cleaner world**

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**The colonial mentality has to give way to the mandate for development**

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# News



Tibebe Tadesse

## ENDC to commence agenda setting in various areas

BY BETELHEM BEDLU

**ADDIS ABABA** - Ethiopian National Dialogue Commission (ENDC) said it is preparing to begin setting agendas in areas that have already identified their representatives who take part in the National Dialogue.

In a presser held yesterday, ENDC Media Communication Partnership Coordinator and Spokesperson Tibebe Tadesse noted that the commission has been undertaking participant identification in various areas of the nation and has finalized preparation to move to the next level, which is gathering agenda.

Mentioning that participant selection will proceed in areas that have not yet accomplished, he said that the commission will engage in agenda gathering in different areas.

As to the Spokesperson, the commission is identifying participants in over 700 districts across the country, in which 327 districts have so far represented individuals that will take part in agenda setting.

Participant identification is being undertaken in all states and city administration except for Amhara and Tigray states, where the commission is preparing to select participants despite challenges, he expressed.

Tibebe further stated that the commission is facilitating conditions to engage the Diaspora community in the agenda setting as well as participating in the national dialogue.

Moreover, he noted agenda setting would be carried out at State, city administration, federal as well as with the Diaspora where participants who participate in the National Dialogue would be appointed.

He added that the agenda setting will be carried out under critical caution in which representatives would make themselves ready by gathering agenda from the societies that have represented them.

Individuals and institutions who aspires to provide their agenda for the commission could appear in person or use various platforms such as telephone, social media or postal service to offer their agendas, he suggested.

Currently, the commission is getting agenda from individuals and institutions through the aforementioned platforms, he added.

The commission has also been executing several awareness creation activities. The role of media in sensitizing the society and participant identification was worth mentioning, as to the Spokesperson.

To this end, media institutions need to continue exerting their meaningful participation in agenda setting activities, he stressed.

## Kenyan delegation lauds Ethiopia's dev't efforts

BY MESERET BEHAILU

**ADDIS ABABA** – The Kenyan Defense College delegation has lauded Ethiopia's development activities and expressed ambition to replicate the success in the neighboring country.

The delegation visited Livestock Development Center of Excellence and other development projects in Addis Ababa.

During the visit, College Deputy Commandant and leader of the delegation, Ambassador Simon Nabukwesi said that his delegation has visited the livestock and other development activities including water resources development, energy and road projects in which his country can draw lessons.

"I observed several development works at the center that turned into action beyond words; this good practice needs to be implemented in Kenya," he noted.

Ministry of Agriculture Senior Advisor Alemayehu Mekonen (PhD) on his part said that the delegations incorporated from Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, and other African countries have visited Ethiopia's development projects.

The main objective of the visit is to share experience about development successes in water resource, energy, road, agriculture, and other areas, he indicated.

Ethiopia has been working to bring



significant improvement in ten agricultural products as per the ten year agriculture development strategic plan, he mentioned.

Besides, Alemayehu said, the government has given priority to produce export items by utilizing the abundant resources the nation endowed.

He added that producing sufficient products, stabilizing the local market, reducing foreign currency crunch, and substituting import goods is the main purpose of the strategic plan which also designed to apply modern technologies.

The government has given due attention to wheat, oil seeds, cereals, avocado, milk, and livestock production, he stated.

Livestock Development and Excellence Center Head, Tadesse Tesfaye said over 500 farmers organized into 106 associations are engaged in poultry, cattle breeding, and other activities.

Accordingly, Addis Ababa Farmers and Urban Agriculture Development Commission has been established to supporting the farmers, expanding and encouraging urban agriculture.

## Service endeavors to minify blindness impact

### • Collects 100 corneas in five-month

BY ASHENAFI ANIMUT

**ADDIS ABABA** – The Ethiopian Blood and Tissue Bank Service disclosed that it has been extending awareness creation and extension activities among the society to address blindness casualties.

Service Deputy Director-General Habtamu Taye told the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) that they have been carrying out extensive activities to restore the sights of many citizens, which are caused especially by blind spots causing blindness.

Planning to collect about 108 corneas, Habtamu stated that the bank managed to collect 100 corneas and distributed to health centers.

Mentioning the previous year's pledge which was merely 190, he remarked that about 181 people have extended their willingness to donate their cornea in just five months. So, it means that the service is registering a remarkable improvement as compared to the same last fiscal year.

He said: "It's high time for us to make



Habtamu Taye

donation a culture, a core task because it gives greater satisfaction to the donor. Here, awareness creation is critical to beef up the donor's figure."

As to him, taking the limited trend of cornea donation into account, extension activities are currently undertaken to cascade to the regional levels.

By the same token, training has been

given to regional representatives to enable them to disseminate the right information about cornea and other donation schemes in their respective areas, he stressed.

"Following the limited service access and lower numbers of surgeons in the towns such as Addis Ababa, Gondar, Mekelle, Jimma and Hawassa, he said that it is posing serious impacts to the transplantation process and its accessibility nationwide."

To date, he disclosed that over 300,000 people who are at risk of blindness in both eyes due to eye scars and related causes are on the list at the national level.

Among the various activities prepared to promote the volume of donation in various centers, he elucidated that beneficiaries of the service, pledged people, teachers, and religious institutions have made pledges to facilitate awareness creation activities.

He called on the community and other stakeholders to draw much emphasis to the situation.

# News



## Ethiopia to establish about 150,000 biogas plants: MoWE

• Over 48,000 biogas generators start rendering service

BY MENGESAH MARE

**ADDIS ABABA** - Ethiopia has planned to construct 150,000 biogas plants to provide rural community with clean energy, disclosed the Ministry of Water and Energy (MoWE).

MoWE Rural Energy Technology Development Transfer Chief Executive Berhanu Woldu told the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) that the government has incorporated the construction of close to 150,000 biogas factories in the ten year national plan devising rural technology alternative policies and directions.

He said the ministry is working to provide the rural community with clean energy out of biogas as it has built over 48,000 biogas generators over the past ten years.

The government has been expanding the biogas technology utilization designing the proper way to run it by consulting stakeholders, he noted.

Berhanu ministry has also been working with EU funded SNV for the last ten years and the former built close to 25 biogas factories during the stated time.

Apart from providing users with light and means of cooking food, the byproduct of

biogas is being used as a fertilizer to the extent of substituting chemical fertilizers, according to the Chief Executive.

He said, "The ministry is helping the rural community collect energy from sun light, solar energy, and utilize improved cooking technologies."

Berhanu said that his ministry is adjusting situations by which new technologies can be imported and introduced to the society.

He said, "The existing technology in effect right now is the prefabricated biogas plant and it is suitable for the environment, cost effective and can be built easily without utilizing cement and sand, and even transformed from time to time."

Since prefabricated biogas factory is assembled directly coming from industries, it is highly presumed that the technology is suitable for areas over 23 degree Celsius, he stated.

So long as the technology is a recent one, surveillance and research undertakings are done hand in hand, he added.

According to Berhanu, other related tasks would be carried out upon technology suitability confirmation thereby expanding the technology locally and saving foreign currency.

## Gov't refutes rumors...

other related expenditures and this showcases the country's ability to allot hefty of foreign currency to import strategic commodities. Hence, the information is mere propaganda, and Ethiopia is known for its diligence in debt repayments despite internal challenges."

According to the Minister, the Eurobond interest was not paid as there is a debt extension and other close discussions along that line. Besides, there are principles for debt transfer not only for Ethiopia but there are several countries in the framework.

"We planned to secure 1.3 billion USD during the first quarter of the current fiscal year and secured 1.1 billion USD. Furthermore, these days the country does have good relations with the EU, and foreign currency flow has shown growth compared to last year's same period."

Fitsum further noted that the government plans to broaden the source of foreign currency earnings, but the information disseminated about the plan to adjust the value of the USD in official and parallel



Fitsum Assefa (PhD)

markets is not true. The government is also taking bold steps to stabilize the market and devising a lot of mechanisms as the problem is deep-rooted and seriously affects citizens' livelihoods.

Import substitutions and tourism destinations expansions are areas among the incumbent have given due attention to stimulate the economic progress thereby arresting the rampant soaring of cost of living, she remarked.

## Corporation in heightened...

"Among those reform initiatives: we have introduced a clear investor's selection criteria, targeted overseas investment promotion schemes, studied and implemented new structure, and initiated the digitalization of IPDC work flow. The initiative to make IPDC an institution with a dynamic work force and investor friendly environment will also continue."

Ethiopian Investment Commissioner Lelise Nemi on her part said that they have jointly formed a system with the

IDPC to facilitate common services that would be provided to domestic and foreign investors who are interested in entering into industrial parks.

Lelise highlighted that the commission has carried out consolidated efforts to enhance the provision of seamless service to investors. "The government of Ethiopia has issued a set of directives to address bureaucratic and infrastructural setbacks and encourage the flow of investments to priority sectors."

## 'Historic right over...

Political Economic Analyst for Africa, Lawrence Freeman old *The Ethiopian Herald* that Egypt is motivated by type of ideology dependent of on what it claims historical right than of understanding the implication of the Abbay Dam.

He said that nobody could have a historical right since the dam is on Blue Nile (Abbay River).

"There is no real argument there. I think the Egyptians want a guaranteed amount of water that will flow to the Aswan dam and that cannot be delivered and the Ethiopians would be remiss and wrong in my view if they guaranteed it, because they can't," he said.

But they can be joined collaboration and Egyptians for the moment are rejecting it, he commented.

According to Freeman, Abbay Dam is a dam for producing hydropower for development

in which the electricity is ready to be exported to Djibouti, Kenya and Sudan.

It needs to look at the potential of this increase injection of 5150 megawatts as a potential to develop nations in the Blue Nile and the White Nile, he added.

He also noted that Egypt doesn't want to see Ethiopia as a major economic competitor, which is a false way of looking at the potential rather than countries uniting together for economic development.

"Ethiopia is claiming the right of sovereignty over its river systems and energy production. And I don't think much is going to change from that. And I don't think there's anything the Egyptians are going to do that's going to change it. And the Egyptians have maintained that they must have so much water guaranteed for them every year, which is impossible for Ethiopia to do," he elaborated.

The Reserved water the Dam will go down as it's filled up to 74 billion cubic meters from the rain. And this will produce electricity, which can be used for the development of the nations of the Nile Basin, he opined.

To him, Egypt's claim is not going to work because the dam has already been built so that it is difficult to understand all the political motivations for Egypt.

To reach an agreement, the analyst believed that Egypt should change the subject topic of providing a guaranteed amount of water to the Aswan Dam each year as it is a dead issue.

It needs to leave that subject and to go to a substantial discussion on the usage of the dam potentially to other developments of more dams in the Blue Nile Basin for the benefit of all of the downstream nations, he suggested.

## Premier touts...

percent."

The construction of this mega hydropower project has reached 62 percent through our reformed project management and follow up processes, Abiy said.

"Our national clean energy endeavor is unparalleled as we possess the first and third largest hydroelectric dams in Africa, [the Abbay Dam] and Koysa respectively," the premier elaborated.

"As we are going to inaugurate the nearby Chebera Elephant Paw Lodge within the Chebera Churchura National Park today, the Koysa Dam and its vicinity will also contribute to the tourism potential of the area," he underlined.

The project is located in South West of Ethiopia and 560 km from Addis Ababa.

# Opinion

## Egypt's sticking on colonial-era pact clashes with Ethiopia's fair stance

BY HIZKEL HAILU

The recent failure of the tripartite talks on the Abbay Dam, involving Ethiopia, Egypt, and Sudan, has once again highlighted Egypt's hegemonic possessive stance and its unwillingness to pursue peaceful negotiations to resolve disputes. Despite Ethiopia's pursuit of an accommodative resolution and its commitment to equitable and transparent negotiations, Egypt's sticking on the colonial-era pact and its refusal to acknowledge Ethiopia's right to utilize the Abbay River have hindered the progress towards a mutually beneficial agreement.

Central to the current impasse is Egypt's insistence on relying on a colonial-era pact that did not take into account Ethiopia's legitimate interests and development aspirations. The Nile Waters Agreements of 1929 and 1959, which Egypt has continued to invoke, were concluded without the participation or consent of Ethiopia, the primary source of the Nile River which contributes over 80% of the water. These agreements, which allocate the majority of the Nile's waters to Egypt and Sudan, disregarded the needs and rights of Ethiopia and other riparian states.

Ethiopia's Chief Negotiator, Ambassador Seleshi Bekele (PhD), recently emphasized that the negotiations have failed to reach consensus due to Egypt's rejection of Ethiopia's inalienable right to use the Abbay River during times of drought. Ethiopia, a landlocked country with a burgeoning population and growing energy needs, seeks to harness the hydropower potential of the Abbay Dam to support its socio-economic development. Ethiopia's pursuit of a fair and cooperative resolution, as demonstrated by its readiness to release water even during drought periods, highlights its commitment to responsible water resource management.

Despite the agreement reached by Egyptian and Ethiopian leaders to come to the final agreement on the Dam issue within four months, Egypt's negotiators have exhibited an unyielding stance, impeding progress in the talks. Egypt's refusal to negotiate over issues that could threaten Ethiopia's future development raises concerns about its commitment to peaceful resolution and regional stability. Moreover, Egypt's recent announcement, which can be characterized as aggressive, not only undermines Ethiopia's rights but also violates international laws.

It is crucial to recognize that the Nile water is a shared resource, and the collective responsibility of all riparian states is to seek equitable solutions that promote mutual development and cooperation. Ethiopia's efforts to engage in transparent negotiations and its adherence to the Declaration of Principles signed by both countries in 2017

demonstrate its commitment to resolving disputes through peaceful means. Egypt, on the other hand, must recognize the imperative of negotiating in good faith and relinquishing outdated agreements that perpetuate an inequitable distribution of the resource.

Egypt's intransigence and its unwillingness to sustain peace through negotiation pose a significant threat to regional security. By perpetuating a confrontational approach, Egypt undermines trust and cooperation among riparian states, potentially leading to heightened tensions and even conflict. In an era where water resources are becoming increasingly scarce and competition for them intensifies, it is essential for all countries to embrace diplomatic channels and dialogue to resolve disputes.

Given the failure of the recent tripartite talks, it is crucial that the African Union (AU) takes a role in reinitiating negotiations and facilitating a fair and lasting agreement. The AU, as a neutral mediator, can help bridge the gaps between Egypt, Ethiopia, and Sudan, ensuring that the negotiations continue until a final agreement is reached taking African solutions for African problems as a pretext. The AU's involvement is particularly important in preventing the escalation of tensions and fostering a cooperative spirit among the riparian states.

Ethiopia's stance and commitment to peace regarding the construction of the Abbay Dam have been evident throughout the negotiation process. Despite having full rights over the utilization of its own water resources, Ethiopia has consistently demonstrated a willingness to engage in peaceful discussions and reach a mutually beneficial agreement with Egypt and Sudan.

Firstly, Ethiopia's pursuit of an accommodative resolution showcases its commitment to finding a balance between its own development needs and the concerns of downstream countries. Ethiopia recognizes the importance of cooperative water resource management and has expressed its readiness to release a significant amount of water from the Dam, even during times of drought. This gesture highlights Ethiopia's commitment to addressing the water needs of downstream countries and mitigating any potential negative impacts.

Secondly, Ethiopia's transparency and willingness to engage in negotiations demonstrate its commitment to resolving the issue diplomatically. Throughout the negotiation process, Ethiopia has actively participated in multiple rounds of talks, engaging in discussions and attempting to find common ground. Ethiopia's Chief Negotiator, Ambassador Seleshi Bekele, has consistently emphasized the country's pursuit of an equitable and cooperative resolution, based on empirical evidence

and the principles enshrined in the 2017 Declaration of Principles.

Moreover, Ethiopia's commitment to respecting international law and engaging with international mediators, such as the African Union, further underscores its commitment to peace. Ethiopia recognizes the importance of involving neutral parties to facilitate negotiations and ensure a fair outcome.

It is important to note that Ethiopia's construction of the Abbay Dam is primarily driven by its developmental aspirations, aimed at addressing the energy needs of its growing population and supporting economic growth. As a landlocked country, Ethiopia sees hydropower development as a crucial component of its long-term sustainable development strategy. The construction of the Dam is not intended to harm downstream countries but rather to leverage its own resources for the benefit of its people.

It is to be recalled that the 4th round of the tripartite talks on Abbay Dam held here in Addis ended without consent due to Egypt's stuck on the colonial-era pact that did not concern Ethiopia. Thereupon, Western countries and the international community shall take several actions in order to push Egypt to engage in peaceful negotiations regarding the Abbay Dam and promote a cooperative approach.

For instance; Western countries and international institutions, such as the United Nations and the African Union, can play a crucial role in mediating and facilitating negotiations between Egypt, Ethiopia, and Sudan. A neutral mediator can help bridge the gaps, foster dialogue, and encourage constructive discussions towards a mutually acceptable agreement.

Additionally, Western countries shall apply diplomatic pressure on Egypt to emphasize the importance of peaceful negotiations and the need to find a fair and equitable solution. They can encourage Egypt to adopt a more flexible and cooperative stance that takes into account the legitimate development aspirations and rights of Ethiopia, while also addressing Egypt's concerns.

Moreover, western countries can emphasize the importance of adhering to international law, particularly the principles of equitable and reasonable utilization of trans-boundary water resources. They can encourage Egypt to recognize the rights of Ethiopia as an upper riparian state that contributes large amount of water and engage in negotiations based on international legal frameworks and principles.

Raising public awareness about the importance of peaceful negotiations and the potential benefits of cooperation can also create pressure on Egypt to embrace a cooperative approach. Western countries

and international organizations can support public awareness campaigns, promote dialogue between civil society organizations, and encourage people-to-people exchanges to foster understanding and build trust among the riparian states.

It is also seemingly important for providing technical assistance and capacity building support to all riparian states, including Egypt, Ethiopia, and Sudan, can help build expertise in water resource management, infrastructure development, and environmental impact assessment. Enhancing technical capabilities can facilitate informed decision-making and foster cooperation in finding sustainable solutions.

All in all, it is crystal clear that Ethiopia's stance and commitment to peace regarding construction of the Abbay Dam are evident through its willingness to engage in negotiations, its transparency, and its adherence to international law. Ethiopia has consistently demonstrated a desire to find a mutually beneficial solution that takes into account the concerns of all parties involved. While asserting its full right over the utilization of its water resources, Ethiopia has emphasized cooperation and the pursuit of equitable development for the region.

However, Egypt's possessive stance and its unwillingness to sustain peace and resolve disputes through dialogue and negotiation undermine regional security and perpetuate an inequitable distribution of resources. It is imperative for Egypt to acknowledge Ethiopia's legitimate rights and aspirations and engage in constructive negotiations that foster mutual development and cooperation.

The international community, particularly the African Union, should play an active role in facilitating a fair and lasting agreement, ensuring a sustainable future development for all riparian states. Only through dialogue, cooperation, and respect for each other's concerns can a mutually beneficial resolution be achieved, promoting regional stability and prosperity.

It is, therefore, of paramount importance for Western countries and the international community to approach the situation with neutrality, understanding the concerns and interests of all parties involved. By encouraging Egypt to embrace peaceful negotiations and facilitating a fair and equitable resolution, they can contribute to regional stability, cooperation, and sustainable development in the Nile basin.

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

# Editorial

## A remarkable achievement!

Ethiopia boasts a rich agricultural heritage that dates back thousands of years. The agriculture sector plays a vital role in the country's economy, providing livelihoods for a substantial portion of the population and contributing significantly to its GDP. Despite the challenges faced by this sector, Ethiopia has made remarkable progress in recent years, implementing various strategies to address issues related to productivity, sustainability and food security.

In his recent media briefing, Girma Amente, the Minister of Agriculture, disclosed that the sector's export performance hit over 764 million USD in five months of the current fiscal year. Such amount of hard currency could be secured from the exportation of horticulture, coffee, dairy, tea and spice to the global market.

Indeed, though the sector is mostly underway traditionally on small plots of lands, the country is striving to transform the sector. The national plan that was set for the reported period is to earn 1.1 billion USD and the performance during the first five years equates to 66% of it. Coffee and cut flowers remain Ethiopia's major export items.

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

It is a big portion that 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 6%.

Government's effort to the result gained in distributing water pumps is remarkable. 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.

The role of agriculture in the nation's economy is immense as it is the backbone of the Ethiopian economy, accounting for about 40% of GDP and employing over 80% of the population. The sector is dominated by smallholder farmers, who produce a wide range of crops, including cereals, pulses, oilseeds, fruits, and vegetables. Livestock is also an important part of the agricultural sector, and Ethiopia is a major producer of cattle, sheep, goats, and camels. Ethiopia is also the birthplace of coffee, which is one of the country's most important exports.

This reality testifies that it is for good reason that the government is exerting its maximum effort to modernize the agriculture sector. To this end, apart from satisfying the local demand for wheat, the government has been working to triple the supply of improved seeds and inputs as well to boost production and productivity.

In so doing, on top of substituting import agricultural products, the country can secure its food self-sufficiency and even increase its product volume from the sector that resulted in extended and diversified export products. The next step needs to be focused by the entities in the sector, which must be linking agriculture with the manufacturing industry that enables exporting value added products which in turn uplifts foreign currency earnings.

Holistic benefit has to be achieved from the agriculture sector in which the farmers reap fruits that fit their effort and serve the nation by garnering more hard currency. Maximizing the crops production can be achievable as already seen in wheat production via replicating the wheat experience in other crops.

This move gives the nation an opportunity to be competent in the global market by providing diverse products beyond lowering the price of basic commodities in local markets thereby relieving citizens' burden of price hike. Benchmarking the performance registered so far, intensifying the recently launched initiatives like "Yelemat Tirufat" which helps households make the dining table full with diverse dishes has to be the major issue of the day.



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# Opinion

## The significance of involving diaspora community in national dialogue, transitional justice

BY STAFF REPORTER

The number of Ethiopian diaspora community in various parts of the world is estimated at more than 5 million people. This number exceeds the population of many sovereign countries in the world. It is a large number enough to build a prosperous nation economically, socially and politically.

Despite some challenges Ethiopia has also actively involved its diaspora community in the overall national activities. Many developing countries receive a large amount of foreign currency, knowledge and skills, as well as direct foreign investment from their citizens in developed countries. It is true that if countries with a large number of diaspora communities in these developed countries implement a system that can increase their benefits, their benefits can also increase.

In this regard, India, China, Egypt and Nigeria are the countries that can be mentioned with their high benefits. Ethiopia also has a large number of diaspora communities in various developed countries. It has been less than two decades since she started making a concerted effort to harness the potential of the diaspora.

In the 10 years before the policy was issued, diaspora affairs were managed at the directorate level under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. But in the last four years, an independent institution has been established and is working for it.

After the establishment of the Ethiopian Diaspora Service and the implementation of the Diaspora Policy, the participation of the Diaspora community in the country's domestic economy has grown significantly.

For example, the amount of dollars sent home legally by the diaspora increased from 3.6 billion dollars in 2013 to 4.2 billion dollars in 2021/21. The capital of recruited investment projects increased from 37.8 billion birr in 2020/21 to 99.6 billion birr in 2020/21. The support collected from the Diaspora community for the reconstruction of the dam was 4.7 million dollars in 2020/21 and 2.5 million dollars in 2021/22. The resources collected from Ethiopians and descendants of Ethiopians in 2019/20 to prevent the spread of the Corona virus (Covid-19) worldwide was 305.5 million dollars. 282.8 million Birr in 2022 and 4.7 million Birr in 2022. The resources collected for the national defense forces, displaced citizens, humanitarian aid and

good works increased by more than 704 million birr in 2013 and 109 million birr in 2021/22.

In addition to this, thousands of members of the diaspora community have opened accounts through the opportunity given to open diaspora accounts in the country and have made many contributions in the transfer of knowledge, skills and technology.

The Ethiopian diaspora residing in various parts of the world have also been active participants in the day to day activities of their nation. For instance, they have been struggling duly through meetings and conferences, opposition rallies and demonstrations, when their homeland was facing pressure from the western countries due to its local political affairs.

Now that the country is moving towards a historical chapter of conducting national dialogue and transitional justice, the government is taking important steps towards involving these citizens. This will ensure that the diaspora community will continue to be important part and parcel of the political and economic development of their land of ongoing.

National dialogue and transitional justice actually require the active and in depth involvement of citizens in the process. They should take the chance to clear up grievances created in the past and figure out the way forward.

In this regard, involving the more than 5 million diaspora community is a wise decision as they should not be cut off from the big national affair in which they have been active participants while being far away from home.

TH diaspora community will be both beneficiary from their participation in the national dialogue and transitional justice process as well as they can provide vital input for the success of the process. Their participation in any mode possible will help to address their concerns, needs and share their experiences. As they hail from different countries that have passed through similar process they can help shape and direct the process.

Furthermore, they will be motivated to resume their active participation in the overall activities of their nation even after the processes.

Therefore, all concerned bodies, embassies and consular offices should uphold their ongoing efforts to attract and involve more diaspora community members for the best conclusion of the two historical national feats.

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

# Art & Culture

## My first encounter in China

BY YOHANES JEMANEH

We are ahead of a few days to ring out the old 2023 and ring in 2024 in good spirit. The outgoing year was unique for me as I experienced joyful memories traveling abroad for the first time to the historic land of Confucius.

I do not know why it took me too long to jot down the reminiscences that have been flitting around my head for the past two or three months. It could be because of the mundane activities that did not give me a break or my own tendency to be inactive. Whatever the case, here I am to relate to you every feeling, memory and experience I had in my campus life while I pursued my study at Beijing, China.

When I arrived in Beijing in December 2022, the city was pretty cold. My professor forewarned me to take care of myself implying the weather, yet I didn't expect Beijing to greet us with biting cold. My clothes couldn't spare me from shivering. My frigid hands were also unable to firmly grab my old luggage bag.

A black automobile transported me to CUC Convention Center for ten-day quarantine period. The center was like a guesthouse and it had the necessary accommodations including two bedrooms, boiler, cups, brush and toothpastes. During my stay in the center, I uploaded some important Chinese words from Bai Xing, a people person who welcomed me at the front desk of the center. She taught me words like *laotie*, *zaofan*, *wufan* and *wanfan* which carry the meaning of pal, breakfast, lunch and dinner respectively. Knowing these words was lifesaving by the time. Although I had a Chinese language class once a week, I learned a lot from natives in an effortless way.

After a ten-day stay in the center, Eric, a person whom I knew on WeChat, while facilitating my travel from Shanghai to Beijing, took me to another hotel where I spent almost two months together with my classmates until the university gave us a green light "now you can communicate and mix with the community". The most challenging thing in Beijing next to the harsh weather then was the total and lately partial lockdown for COVID-19.

For safety reason, there were tiresome and hectic checkups everyday wherever we went. I was still wondering how China achieved even the three percent economic growth in 2022 while every movement was under contentious surveillance. By the time when China was under lockdown for zero COVID policy, every restriction was removed in my country-Ethiopia where even wearing face masks was not compulsory unless in some peculiar areas like health institutions. I was telling this to Mr. Eric in our way to the hotel, while trying to keep the balance of my luggage bag on the rear rack of his bicycle. He told me China had also a plan to lift the lockdown shortly.

Fortunately, the lockdown was lifted within two months and I began my Campus Life at the Communication University of China (CUC) which is the most prestigious communication school in the country situated



in the east of the capital city.

Life in campus was not boring thanks to my classmates and teachers. I was surrounded by three fellow Ethiopians and other students from different corners of the world. Most of my classmates were very funny and humorous. They knew that life is flimsy and the only way to make it not boring was through cracking jokes and enjoying moments. Every time we met, they had something to joke on, to mock or to tease and to create some easy but funny games. It is possible to say we had created our own ideal gathering somewhere in a friendly country.

Since we were from different nations, we had different cultures, languages and lifestyles that gave us a feature of harmony in diverse minds. Our music, dance, cuisine tastes and even our reactions for the same thing were dissimilar. Especially during the first two months, we were frequently gathering in one of our classmates' rooms and exchanging views on various issues.

I still remember the night we gathered in one room to watch the 2022 world cup final match. I was the fan of Argentina national team and the rest were supporting the French national team. It was a very delightful night for me as the team which I support won the cup.

During the day time, in our lecture rooms we attended our classes most of which we finalized during the first semester. The rest were intercultural communication skills and Chinese language classes. Both subjects were memorable as each class was full of activities and participations. Both teachers were diligent and well versed in the 3Ps of teaching— plan, prepare and present. Especially my Chinese teacher Julia Chen was the most hardworking and lovable person who tried her best to enable us know and practice Chinese language though we didn't perform as she wished due to our own weakness and the short-term design of the scholarship program. Anyways, thanks to Julia, we managed to greet people and buy some goods from market communicating in Chinese (Zhongwen).

During the first months, had it not been for the technology, generosity and sincerity of the Chinese people we could have perished from famishment due to language barrier. Luckily, Chinese people (Zhongguoren) are mostly empathetic and supportive. They easily guess the meaning of the words we utter to express what we want. They positively respond to our interests.

Fortunately, when the year began to roll up, we became capable to articulate what we want to buy, where we want to go or what we would like to eat since we had learned these expressions in class thanks to the language course we took. We began like "wo xiang" to say I would like to and then add verbs like *mai*, *qu* or *chi* that carry the meaning to buy, to go to or to eat respectively.

Following the conclusion of our study, we enjoyed various trips organized by the university. We had visited Shanghai, Datong and other Chinese cities. These cities showcase the staggering economic development and cultural richness of China.

Not only the trips, we, the students, had also organized our own programs and enjoyed the remaining period of our stay in the university. The get together in front of our dormitory building and the food fair are the most unforgettable ones. In the cultural dishes introducing program, every student cooked and brought one or two of his/her country's food. Then s/he gave explanation about the ingredients, the preparation of the food and how it must be served. We, the Ethiopian team, brought *doro wot* (Ethiopian traditional chicken soup made with red pepper and butter), *enjera* (flat bread made up of *teff* flour) and *shiro wot*, a stew made of bean flour.

The picnic on the other hand was colorful for the active participation of almost all of my classmates bringing cookies, hot and soft drinks. Our intercultural communication lecturer Nina Wang was also there with us contributing Chinese tea (*cha*). Next to her, our Ethiopian student named Wubalem was making Ethiopian coffee with all its ceremonies. She came decorated with folk

costumes and sat behind the traditional coffee making instruments including the *Rekebot* (a small coffee table), the *Sini* (small cups), the *Jebena*, (coffee pot) and the *Etan* (frankincense). Another Ethiopian student named Gebreyesus explained about the coffee ceremony, the traditional instruments and how Ethiopians serve coffee.

All the students and our lecturer were amazed by the colorful ceremony of Ethiopia's coffee making tradition. The students were mainly impressed by the strong taste of the coffee, the color and design of the cups and the *Rekebot*. In fact, these two traditional tools were carved in the fashion of the historic architectural symbols and cultural heritages of Axum and Lalibela.

The love and support the Chinese people showered us with was a salient reason for me and my classmates to complete the study successfully. They were cheerful for standing beside us in every situation. I am thankful for all Chinese people who helped me to have a memorable experience and successful academic life.

I am such a kind of a nostalgic person who evokes and enjoys good memories. I still remember the joyful times I had in my campus life when I was an undergraduate student. And now, I got another lovely experience from China which boosts my joy whenever I think about it. I am grateful to everyone who put me through this including the people and government of China, CUC and my organization-the Ethiopian Press Agency. I thank them for facilitating the scholarship opportunity and making possible the unforgettable memories I had experienced during my stay in Beijing, while conducting my MA studies. What all I think today while saying adieu to 2023 is to continue serving my country that embraced an all-out growth by employing the knowledge I gained from CUC. I know everything will go smooth in life if we manage our emotions and focus on what we can do. I hope 2024 will bring joy and success to everyone.

# Law & Politics



## Energy diplomacy: The road to a cleaner world

BY DESTA GEBREHWIOT

The world has paid dearly due to its inaction in curbing climate change and moving to clean energy. And, today, the climate crisis has reached a fever pitch as the world drags its feet to respond to the elephant in the room timely and proper. Mankind faces an existential threat, and there is a growing feeling of impending doom in the four corners of the world. With the planet Earth continuing to live under uncertainties of man-inflicted natural disasters, recent phenomena have already sent a warning that the world can no longer afford to buy time and sit idle.

Over the years, some of the world's human-friendly places have somehow turned out to be a living hell with volcanoes erupting, storms engulfing cities, floods washing towns; and earthquakes rocking countries, the repercussions of climate change have posed an unprecedented threat to mankind.

In the year 2023 only, from record-breaking heat to freezing and bone-chilling weather, dire outcomes of climate change have been making headlines in global media outlets. The daily incidents of natural disasters have already made the threat a growing concern that the world can no longer turn a blind eye to. Unfortunately, only courageous leaders, politicians, and experts are heeding the warning. To this very day, the world failed to respond to the irresponsible acts of human beings. It has been years since the world brought the issue of energy transition to the front burner, but world leaders have failed to walk the talks.

The grave ramifications of climate change are being felt in the nooks and crannies of the world and the woe is indiscriminately impacting planet Earth. Ironically, while the problem sounds like the death knells on the entire mankind; the world has fallen short of taking concrete and unified measures to cut emissions. People around the globe

have been suffering from a self-inflicted wound. The reckless actions of human beings are also causing excruciating pain to all including the precious animals in land. Animals have been losing their habitats and losing their lives for crimes they have never committed. Curtailing climate change is proving a more daunting task in the absence of world leaders' unflinching resolve. And, the problems are getting only worse at an alarming rate. With the globe moving to uncharted waters at alarming speed, the world is too slow to respond to the challenge. And, as witnessed over the years, the transition to clean energy has mainly received more rhetoric and less action.

Climate change continues to wreak unprecedented havoc on the planet, and the global phenomenon shows no signs of abating. The serious consequences of this increasingly alarming problem are becoming more severe over time. Over the past decade, the world has experienced severe weather and extreme temperatures.

Natural disasters continue to occur around the world, affecting countries equally but with varying degrees of serious threat to humanity. Droughts, flash floods, and other threats have claimed millions of lives, displaced millions, and created an alarming humanitarian crisis. However, the effects of climate change are especially felt in developing countries, where early warning systems and prevention methods are weak. Resources are scarce and some countries are struggling to cope with the serious humanitarian crisis they face.

In the Horn of Africa, where Ethiopia is located, situations such as drought and famine frequently occur, requiring large amounts of funds from developing countries. Given the scale of the problem, we need constant and unwavering commitment from the international community. Currently, Ethiopia and other countries are doing their best to deal with serious challenges

mainly triggered by countries on the other hemisphere of the globe.

Developing countries like Ethiopia are working to combat climate change through large-scale tree planting and green space projects. And international support remains low, with funding for climate action still on hold. Despite having the lowest carbon emissions, African countries are the most vulnerable to the myriad impacts of climate change. And developed countries, which achieved economic growth at the expense of environmental pollution, were unable to provide compensation.

In fact, this year saw a promising breakthrough as leaders have agreed to transition away from fossil fuels at the COP28 climate talks in Dubai. The summit ended in a historic deal that committed the world to a transition away from all fossil fuels for the first time. The president of this year's U.N.-sponsored summit, the UAE's Sultan Al Jaber, brokered an agreement, a promising gesture to curtail the impacts of climate change and create a cleaner world with clean energy. Under the deal, countries also are called to contribute to a global transition effort—rather than being outright compelled to make that shift on their own.

In this regard, Ethiopia over the years has been employing green diplomacy distributing seedlings to neighboring nations. The country has been planting millions of trees for years now and there remains a big appetite from the country to push for more greenery works. Ethiopia has been coming up with green initiative projects and striving to increase its renewable energy by investing in wind and geothermal projects. Recently, Addis Ababa and Dubai inked deals to develop renewable energy in the former.

Dubai-based Amea Power has signed two agreements at the COP28 climate conference to develop renewable energy projects in

Africa. The company plans to construct a USD 600 million wind farm in Ethiopia, capable of producing 300 megawatts of energy. Africa requires USD 2.8 trillion between 2020 and 2030 to implement its climate commitments. The International Solar Alliance is also seeking to raise USD 100 million for decentralized solar projects in Africa. This is a solid instance of energy cooperation and paves the way for achieving a cleaner world.

As the adage goes divided we perish united we stand, climate change is a global problem that requires global intervention. Unless nations can work collectively, climate change will make the world a very dangerous planet to live in.

As much as the gloomy trends, there are solid indicators that there could be tangible change if all stakeholders walk their talks and discharge their mandates. According to the IEA's new World Energy Outlook 2023, the global energy system will be transformed by the end of this decade due to the major changes currently taking place. The incredible rise of clean energy technologies such as solar, wind, electric vehicles, and heat pumps is changing the way we power everything from factories and vehicles to home appliances and heating systems.

Curbing climate change requires continued dedication, practical measures, and innovative solutions. In this regard, stakeholders should find common ground and room where they can put in place proper and timely remedies. It is through coordinated effort the world would be well placed to achieve Sustainable Development Goals 7. In this regard, consistent dialogue and discussions are needed to explore the best policy prescriptions and interventions. The political will of leaders, the recommendations of policymakers, and innovative technologies are the must-have ingredients that would expedite the transition to clean energy.

# The colonial mentality has to give way to the mandate for development

Laurence Freeman

BY ZEKARIAS WOLDEMARIAM

*"I didn't expect that these discussions would lead to anything because you have to change the topic of the discussion" says Laurence Freeman, American Political Economic Analyst for Africa ([www.lawrencefreemanafricaandtheworld.com](http://www.lawrencefreemanafricaandtheworld.com)), asked about the outcome of the 4<sup>th</sup> round of the latest series of tripartite talks on the first filling and operation of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD).*

*The negotiation which took place from 17-19 December 2023 in Cairo, Egypt was held to deal on the final rules and regulations for the filling and operation of the dam. Unfortunately, the talks ended up with no deal concluded following which Ethiopia and Egypt issued statements expressing their stance during the negotiations and why they blame the other side for the failure to reach agreement.*

*Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia says that Egypt's efforts to maintain its historical rights based on the colonial period agreements were the impediments to reach agreement. "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." The statement read.*

*Freeman on his part argues that the topic of dialogue among the riparian countries, i.e. Ethiopia, Sudan and Egypt should not be to maintain historical rights, but to plan future cooperation on how to use the water together. "It should not be how do we guarantee so much water which the Ethiopians can't do. But how do we proceed on a development program that would advance the standard of living of all the people living in and now basic. If there's going to be another round of discussion that should be the main topic."*

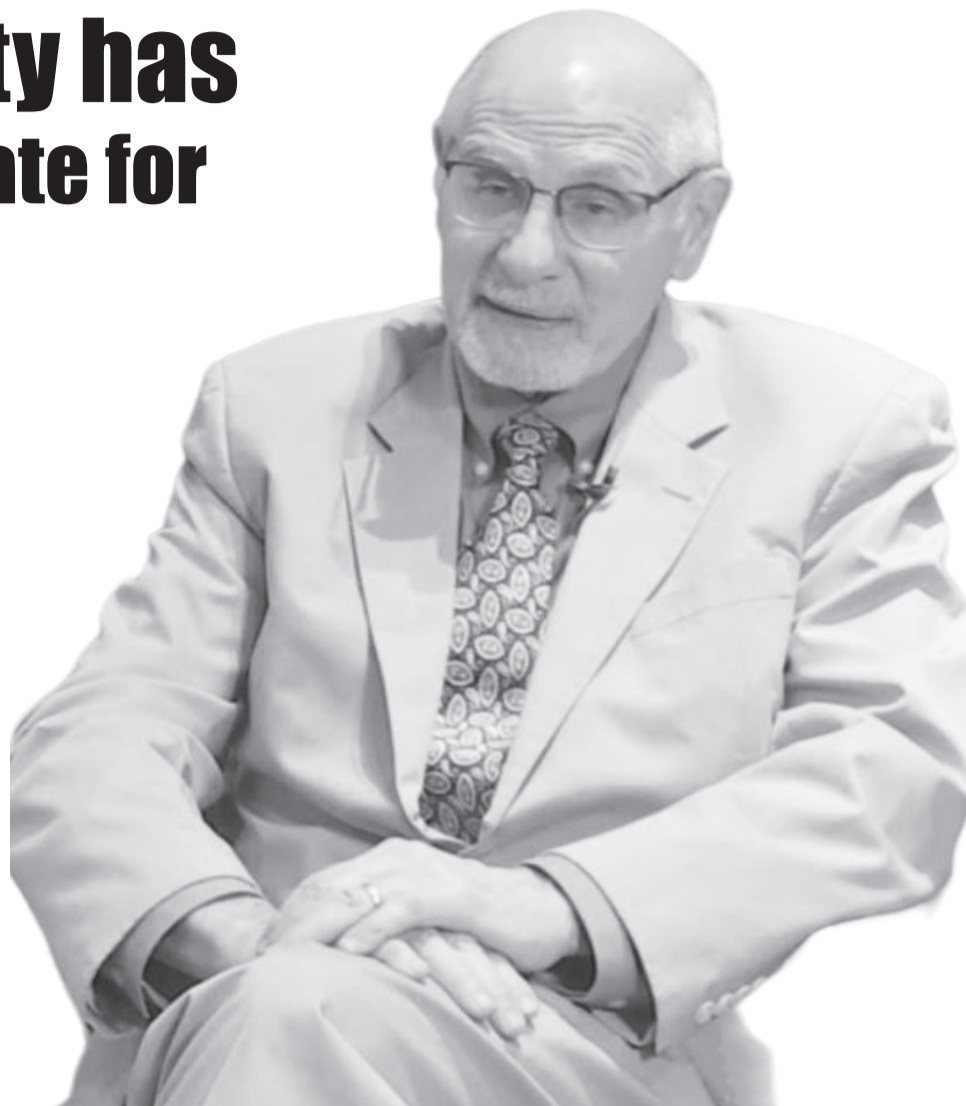
*Here is the detail of the brief interview with Lawrence Freeman on the latest development around the GERD talks. Enjoy reading!*

**Could you tell me your reflection on the 4<sup>th</sup> round of GERD dam talks which took place recently in Cairo?**

When Prime Minister Abiy was in Egypt in July, he suggested to President El Sisi, that they continue the discussion was another round of talks on the implications of the GERD, which just occurred last week was the fourth round of these talks, which, from what I read in the media, nothing really happened that changed the position of either country. And I didn't really expect that it would. I think that both countries now have made very clear what their positions are. Ethiopia claiming the right of sovereignty over its river systems and energy production. And I don't think much is going to change from that. And I don't think there's anything Egypt is going to do that's going to change it. And the Egyptians have maintained that they must have so much water guaranteed for them every year, which is impossible for Ethiopia to do. I don't think anything more is going to happen. Hopefully, there is no political or other escalation in this disagreement.

**After the conclusion of the talks with no deal Ethiopia and Egypt are trading blames for failing to reach agreement. How do you see the stance of the two sides in this regard?**

I think the Egyptians are motivated by a type of ideology, rather than an understanding of the implications of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam, the GERD is a dam for producing hydropower for development. I mean, electricity is ready to be exported to Djibouti, Kenya and Sudan. And we should look at the potential of this increase injection of 5150 megawatts as a potential to develop nations in the Blue Nile and the White Nile. Well, now basically, the Egyptians do not want to have I believe in Ethiopia as a major economic competitor or see Ethiopia as a major economic competitor, which is a false way of looking at the potential rather than countries uniting together for economic development. I think Egypt was caught up in trying to suppress economic progress in Ethiopia. And of course, the Egyptians claim that the



the Ethiopians would be remiss and wrong in my view if they guaranteed it, because they can't. But there can be joint collaboration and Egyptians for the moment are rejecting it.

**This tripartite talk on GERD has failed after progressing for four rounds starting from August 2023. Do you think it is being influenced by internal and external factors, or Egypt is intentionally changing its stance every time?**

I don't think the Egyptians have changed their stance at all; this has been their policy going back to 2015. I think the Egyptians have to accept the fact that this, as we say, is a fait accompli. This has occurred, the dam is at approximately 41 billion cubic meters of water filled. I think it'll go up to 47 or so around there. And then that's the level of which we'll be operating on. Each year, it will go down to that level as it's filled up to 74 billion cubic meters from the rain. And this will produce electricity, which can be used for the development of the nations of the Nile Basin; the Egyptians have a different view. But it's not going to happen; it is not going to work. There's no way of Egypt, challenging a dam for energy development. And it's already been built. So it can't be unbuilt. So I don't really understand all the political motivations for Egypt. Except what I said earlier, I think they want to maintain the dominant position and retard Ethiopia's economic development

**We have to change the subject. The topic of providing a guaranteed amount of water to the Aswan Dam each year is a dead issue. That cannot happen. It's over**

historical rights now and they don't have historical rights, nobody has historical rights. Plus the fact that the dam is on the Blue Nile, not on the White Nile, so there's no real argument there. I think the Egyptians want a guaranteed amount of water that will flow to the Aswan dam and that cannot be delivered and

*Continued to Page 9*





## The colonial mentality...

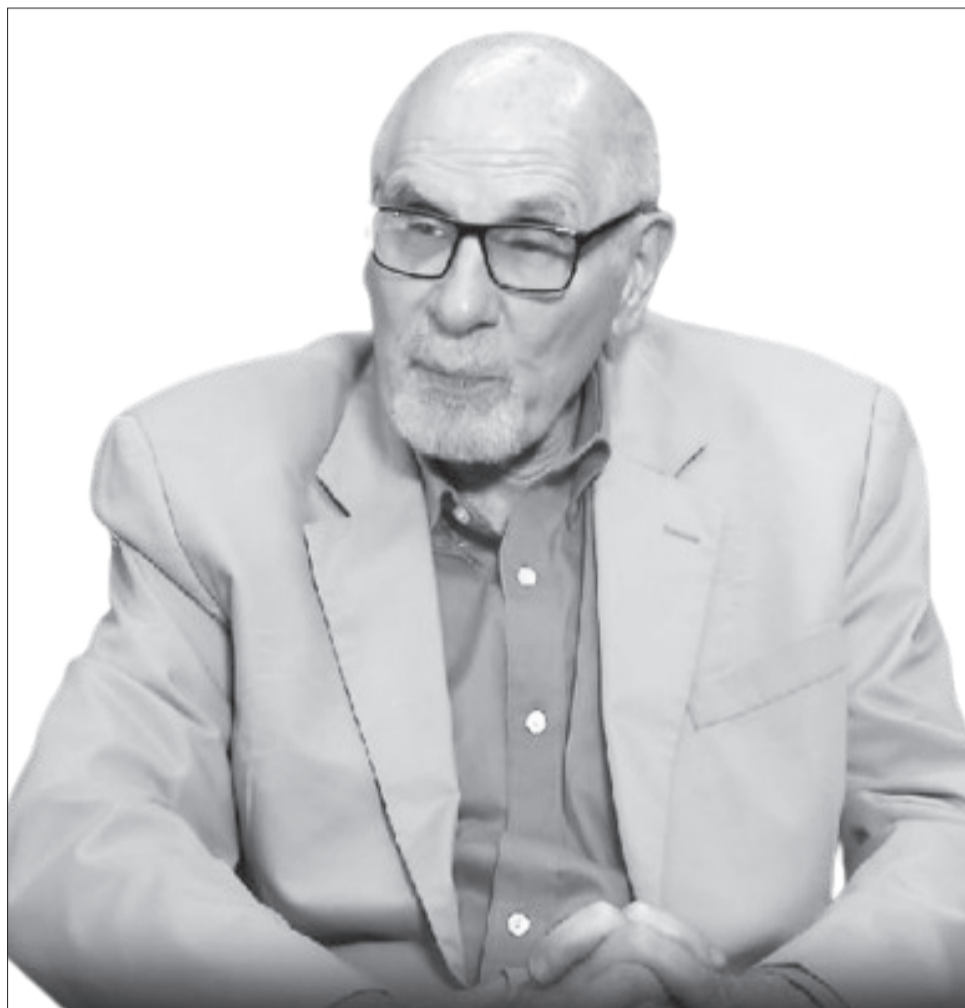
*Continued from Page 8*

potential. I didn't expect that these discussions would lead to anything because you have to change the topic of the discussion. It should not be how do we guarantee so much water which the Ethiopians can do? But how do we proceed on a development programme that would advance the standard of living of all the people living in and now basic, if there's going to be another round of discussion that should be the main topic.

**Egypt has insisted on safeguarding its interest which is a vestige of colonial period agreements. Do you see any possibility of coming to terms with a negotiated deal where one of the sides is insisting on colonial era agreement?**

Well, if you look at the reality of this of the situation, one is Sudan, only gains from the GERD and I think the Sudanese before the crisis that began several years ago, and I believe even now, they've made statements to the effect that they're not suffering at all from reduction of the flow of the Nile through the country in Khartoum. I don't think Sudan is part of this at all at this point. I think that they were early on, I think they were pressured by the Egyptians. The problem that the Egyptians have and people who support their position is that the water that flows into the White Nile, I mean, 80% of it comes from three rivers in Ethiopia, the largest Blue Nile but then you also have two other rivers that contribute to the White Nile. And the power plant; The hydroelectric power plant is on an Ethiopian soil and Ethiopian rivers I visited myself I also visited Blue Nile falls, I'm very familiar with it. And fact of the matter is there is more potential. A designated site is three mores sites for dams that have been revealed in a survey done many years ago, that could be also hydroelectric dam.

So there's a potential in the Blue Nile Basin for more power beyond the 5150 megawatts that the GERD is producing. It would be in Egypt interest to let's discuss this type of potential for the future. The problem is colonial rights. The Egyptians believe that the British gave them control of the Nile. Because in the history, the British controlled Egypt and Sudan under the 1899 agreement, the Anglo Egyptian condominium, and they think that they have this right. No, they don't have a right to other people's waters, especially since the headwaters for both the White Nile and the Blue Nile do not originate in Egypt. Now, Egypt built the Aswan Dam, which was their right to provide electricity for their population. But they can't demand



**We have to leave that subject and we have to go to a higher plan; we have to go to a different thinking; a different manifold no longer discussing water guarantee to the Aswan Dam, but discussing how do we use the GERD and potentially other developments of more dams in the Blue Nile Basin for the benefit of all of the downstream nations in the Nile basin**

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that other countries cannot build on the Blue Nile, what is that lead into the white Nile and that's the problem is you had a colonial agreement in 19, it was 1929 with British and the Egyptians and the Sudanese that's, that stipulated no blockage of the water could be no blockage of the water was permitted to the white Nile. Now, Ethiopia wasn't at that discussion, even though it was an independent country in 1959. If the Sudan and Egypt became independent, they had another water agreement. And this water agreement, we affirmed the 1929 agreement. And again, Ethiopia was not at that discussion. So the Egyptians really don't have any legitimate basis, despite claiming colonial rights that have given to them by the British Queen. They don't really have any historical basis for telling Ethiopia what to do. And in fact, the British and other Neo colonial powers never wanted Ethiopia to develop this dam. They wanted to use Lake Tana as a giant water tank to feed their agriculture in Sudan and Egypt. So they've always been opposed to this. I mean, this goes back 300 years to the present. They've been opposed to the development of the Blue Nile Basin, they've been opposed to electricity and that position cannot stand up to the needs of providing electricity, employment, agricultural development, for not only Ethiopian people, but from the neighboring nations, which the good will provide. So the colonial mentality has to give way to the mandate for

development.

**How do you think could the two sides break the stalemate and strike a deal in the future?**

As I said earlier, we have to change the subject. The topic of providing a guaranteed amount of water to the Aswan Dam each year is a dead issue. That cannot happen. It's over. The dam has been built as only a small amount. More has to be collected in the first phase up to I think 49 billion cubic metres. We have to leave that subject and we have to go to a higher plan; we have to go to a different thinking; a different manifold no longer discussing water guarantee to the Aswan Dam, but discussing how do we use the GERD and potentially other developments of more dams in the Blue Nile Basin for the benefit of all of the downstream nations in the Nile basin. This requires a higher level of thinking. It requires a level of thinking where your concern is the future development of all the people. Those who are living in the Blue Nile, basically, that's several 100 million people over I think, 10 countries? How do we get together and improve the standard of living of our people? How do we end poverty? How do we use this energy, which is a potential 5150 megawatts, and more energy potential. So we have to stop thinking about my country's historical right. And the same thing comes up in discussions in the Horn of Africa. We have to get beyond that. And think about what is the benefit for the futures of our people in the next one to two generations, like we have to expand our thinking, improve our thinking, to this level, and get away from this is mine. This is yours. You can't take mine. This petty, geopolitical mentality is really stupidity. And I and the leaders of African nations on many different fronts have to learn to rise above this and think about the future. What is going to help their people in the future? And how do we work with other nations? Not how do we demonize other nations. That's what's discussion has got to be. The Ethiopian should be actually promoting this discussion. Go beyond where they've been at this point, and actually promote a conference have let's have a conference in Addis Ababa, on the future development of the Nile basin, and which then we can discuss how to cooperate with each other for the benefit of our people.

**Thank you very much for your collaboration!**

Thank you.

# Society

## Capacitating citizens, institutions with digital technology

BY MENGISTEAB TESHOME

It is evident that institutions are increasingly embracing digital technology to provide reliable and efficient services, ultimately enhancing customer satisfaction. The application of digital technology in both public and private sectors has led to more convenient and time-saving service delivery for clients.

Industry experts continue to advocate for the adoption of digital technology in order to reap the benefits mentioned above. They believe that implementing digital technology is instrumental in promoting social development, achieving productivity enhancements, and ensuring inclusive growth within communities. Presently, public and private institutions are actively competing to provide digital services, aiming to offer high-quality services and improve the accessibility of information while ensuring efficient service provision to customers around the clock.

Health, education, and financial institutions have already embraced digital technology to make service provisions more accessible and efficient than ever before. As a result, customers and beneficiaries are expressing their satisfaction with the use of these technologies.

Mulatu Gebremariam, a resident of Addis Ababa, is one of the beneficiaries whose life has been simplified due to the application of technology in the health sector. In an exclusive interview with The Ethiopia Herald, he expressed, "Previously, searching for all my documents and compiling them was hectic and time-consuming whenever I needed medical treatment or other services. Now, as a client of Black Lion Hospital, I visit the hospital every three months for checkups. Thanks to the automation and digitalization in place, all necessary documents and results are easily accessible through digital technology, making the process wonderful and efficient."

He further added, "I hope that all health facilities and other public and private institutions will adopt digital technology to satisfy society by providing quality services and creating a more competitive business environment."

According to him, services in a number of health facilities are transitioning to a paperless system, and mobile banking and internet usage are becoming increasingly common. However, the competency of institutions in providing quality services remains in question. Instances of poor service delivery due to power outages and connectivity issues in



the digital technology infrastructure of the health and finance sectors have been experienced.

Tesfaye Alemnew, Public Relations and Communications CEO at the Ministry of Innovation and Technology, stated that concerted efforts are underway to embrace digital technology and enhance service efficiency through the adoption of digital strategies and the implementation of education policies that recognize the significance of digital technology transformation.

Ethiopia has encountered both positive strides and challenges in its digital journey. The nation is investing in digital technology infrastructure and striving to produce a skilled workforce to create enabling systems for digital technology transformation. The government has launched numerous online portals to facilitate citizen and supplier access to services, including E-services, E-trade, Ease of Doing Business, and City portals. A new government portal administration and development guideline emphasizes an inclusive and user-centric approach, but its impact is yet to be fully assessed.

The Ministry of Innovation and Technology is currently developing a five-year e-government strategy that includes creating enterprise architecture for e-government, which is expected to be finalized in the upcoming year. However, digital infrastructure remains a challenge, and plans to upgrade and invest in the infrastructure, including the deployment of a data center, is underway.

Ethiopia aims to ensure that 70 percent of its citizens are digitally literate and financially included by 2025, recognizing digital and financial literacy as crucial to achieving this goal. The Ministry of Innovation and Technology, along with leading institutions such as the Ministry of Education, Ethio-Telecom, Artificial Intelligence and Information Network Security Administration (INSA), and the Ethiopia Communications Agency (ECA), have the responsibility to make this goal a reality.

Stakeholders are called upon to enhance their efforts in capacitating citizens and

**Ethiopia aims to ensure that 70 percent of its citizens are digitally literate and financially included by 2025, recognizing digital and financial literacy as crucial to achieving this goal**



private and public institutions with the ability to find, evaluate, and communicate information using digital platforms for the common good.

The Ministry of Innovation and Technology, within its mandate, is responsible for building citizens' capacity nationwide. To this end, the Ministry is focused on delivering quality and standardized digital skills and literacy training content for citizens under its Digital Strategy, in collaboration with relevant stakeholders.

It is evident that institutions are

increasingly transitioning from paper-based work to digital processes, even at the grassroots level. Institutions equipped with skilled human resources are effectively leveraging new advanced technology, thereby enhancing customer satisfaction. In the current competitive landscape, capacitating the workforce with digital literacy is essential for institutions to sustain their operations successfully.

Furthermore, educational institutions should prioritize equipping the younger generation with digital technology from an early age. They should also provide intervention training to fill the skill gaps of learners. Higher education institutions should dedicate attention to empowering teachers with digital and digital pedagogical skills, enabling them to utilize technology for a more productive teaching and learning process.

Moreover, increasing computer accessibility, implementing training programs on digital technology, and promoting a positive attitude toward this technology could play a vital role in improving the deployment of information systems in both public and private institutions, thereby building a digital society.

"It is crucial to provide digital skills training through various channels to the workforce of institutions in the country, with a primary focus on youth, women, and smallholder farmers," emphasized the official.

The Ministry of Innovation and Technology's 2025 Digital Ethiopia Strategy emphasizes the proactive embrace of digital technology to ensure that communities benefit and exert efforts for the success of the youth in a rapidly evolving future world, enabling their dreams to come true.

While Ethiopia has developed potential space to enhance the transformation of digital technology and leverage it for a more prosperous society, the international community and development partners should support the nation's progress by providing technical and financial backing.

# International

## Angola to leave OPEC over reduced oil production quotas

The African oil producer refused to accept the production cuts imposed by OPEC, saying its membership in the oil cartel was no longer benefiting the country.

Angola on Thursday said it was leaving the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) over a disagreement about oil production quotas.

The decision comes after the oil cartel decided last month to slash output further next year.

### What was the reason given?

"If we remained in OPEC... Angola would be forced to cut production, and this goes against our policy of avoiding decline and respecting contracts," Mineral Resources and Petroleum Minister Diamantino Azevedo told state broadcaster TPA.

"We feel that at this moment Angola gains nothing by remaining in the organization and, in defense of its interests, it decided to leave," Azevedo said in a statement released by President Joao Lourenco's

office.

### Production cuts as oil price drops

OPEC has implemented supply cuts of more than five million barrels per day (bpd) since the end of 2022 to prop up prices.

Anticipating a drop in demand for 2024, the wider OPEC+ group last month agreed to a further voluntary cut of oil production by 2.2 million bpd in the first quarter.

Angola's production ceiling was already reduced in June to 1.28 million bpd from 1.45 million bpd, which OPEC said would better reflect its actual production.

"When we see that we are in organizations and our contributions, our ideas, do not produce any effect, the best thing is to withdraw," Azevedo said.

Angola's exit is a setback for OPEC, but it had a relatively small output compared with 28 million bpd for the whole group.

Source: Reuters



## Malawi bans maize imports from Kenya, Tanzania over disease

Blantyre, Malawi — Malawi, which already is suffering from food shortages, this week banned the import of unmilled maize from Kenya and Tanzania over concerns that the spread of maize lethal necrosis disease could wipe out the staple food.

The ministry of agriculture announced the ban in a statement that said the disease has no treatment and can cause up to 100% yield loss. The statement said maize can be imported only after it is milled, either as flour or grit.

Henry Kamkwamba, an agriculture expert with the International Food Policy Research Institute, told VOA that if the disease were introduced into the country, it would be difficult to contain.

He used the banana bunchy top virus as an example of the potential danger.

"Think of how we lost all of our traditional bananas in the past and now Malawi is a net importer of bananas ... due to our lax policies in terms of imports," he said.

"There are these similar concerns with maize," he said, with maize being the nation's main food crop.

Kamkwamba predicted the ban would help Malawi prevent the disease from spreading.

Kenya and Tanzania have long been primary

sources of maize for Malawi during periods of food shortage.

Malawi is facing shortages largely because Cyclone Freddy destroyed thousands of hectares of maize last March.

The World Food Program in Malawi and the Malawi Vulnerability Assessment Committee estimate that 4.4 million people -- around a quarter of the population -- would face food shortages until March 2024.

Grace Mijiga Mhango, the president of the Grain Traders Association of Malawi, said that while she understands the severity of the impact of the maize disease, banning imports at a time of need would likely result in higher costs.

"If we really don't have enough food, then we are creating another unnecessary maize [price] increase," she said.

The next alternative for maize imports is South Africa, she said.

"South Africa is quite a distance," she said, "and they don't have enough. ... It will be expensive."

Malawi's government said the ban will be temporary as it explores other preventive measures to combat the spread of maize lethal necrosis disease.

Source: VOA



## Nigeria: British court dismisses P&ID \$11 Billion damages against Nigeria

P&ID had little or nothing to show as track record of work executed in the gas sector to merit a project of that scale.

Nigeria on Wednesday got a hard-won relief from a thorny lawsuit against it by Process and Industrial Developments (P&ID), a company registered in the British Virgin Islands.

The case had ground on for more than a decade and would have wiped out about one-third of Nigeria's foreign reserves if victory had gone the way of the company.

P&ID, founded by Irish businessmen Michael Quinn and Brendan Cahill, had its bid to exact \$11 billion in damages from the country over a controversial gas contract dismissed by London's High Court Wednesday

The bid was dismissed because, among other grounds, awarding the contract had been tainted by bribery and fraud.

The court refused P&ID's permission to appeal against the decision.

In August 2012, P&ID had taken Nigeria to arbitration in relation to a contract it signed two years before with the petroleum ministry to construct and operate a gas processing facility.

Its contention was that the country had not met its obligations under the contract terms, causing it to stall.

But the circumstances surrounding the contract were questionable. The contract was the product of a proposal the Nigerian government never asked for but which P&ID made to it. There was no tender conducted.

P&ID also seemingly had little or nothing to show as track record of work executed in the gas sector to merit a project of that scale requiring such a princely sum to deliver it. It is best known as an offshore company with no assets, having few staffers and no website to speak of.

In 2017, it received an arbitration award in the sum of \$6.6 billion to compensate for lost profit from the contract which would have run for 20 years. Accrued interest would later push the damages to \$11 billion.

Nigeria succeeded in its quest to turn the tables on the company this October when the court granted its prayer to reverse the award.

Justice Robin Knowles ruled that P&ID officials paid bribes to employees of Nigeria's Federal Ministry of Petroleum Resources to obtain the contract, a fact the company concealed from the arbitration tribunal until further scrutiny brought it to light.

Grace Taiga, a one-time director of legal services at the ministry who had been at the centre of bribery allegations, died in September.

"Mr Michael Quinn in his witness statement of 14 February 2014 (said) that he was 'explain[ing] how the GSPA came about' when he did not do that because he did not mention that Mrs Grace Taiga had been paid a US\$5,000 bribe at the end of December 2009 and a £5,000 bribe on 29 March 2010," Mr Knowles said in his judgement on Wednesday.

GSPA is the abbreviation for the controversial gas supply and processing agreement.

"P&ID's continued bribery or corrupt payment of Mrs Grace Taiga directed to the arbitration period in order to suppress from the Tribunal and Nigeria the fact that she had been bribed when the GSPA came about. This continued bribery or corrupt payment is fairly described by Nigeria as bribery 'to keep her 'on-side', and to buy her silence about the earlier bribery," he added.

The judge went further to say P&ID wrongfully held on to Nigeria's Internal Legal Documents it got in the course of arbitration to closely observe whether Nigeria had found out "the deception being practised by P&ID on the Tribunal and on Nigeria as a party before the Tribunal."

The high point of the ruling was the decision to brush aside P&ID's leave to appeal the court's verdict under section 68 (4) of the Arbitration Act, allowing the dust to settle on the prolonged legal battle.

Source: Premium Times

# Verbatim and Caption

## Ethiopia has symbolic status in Africa: Djibouti Nat'l Assembly President

*The relationship between Ethiopia and Djibouti is historic and strong. Djibouti is always committed to strengthen the people to people ties between the two friendly countries to the next level. Djibouti is ready to strengthen bilateral cooperation with Ethiopia in the areas of trade, economy, tourism and culture.*

*Djibouti is a true friend of Ethiopia, which has a symbolic and unique status in Africa. In addition, Ethiopia always is at the front to protect the interests of Africa.*

*Dileita Mohamed Dileita, Djibouti National Assembly President addressed the House of People's Representatives of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia.*



## Ethiopia committed to enhance strategic relationship with Djibouti: HPR Speaker

*Ethiopia and Djibouti legislators discuss on strengthening and sustaining the existing strategic partnership of the countries. We discussed about ways of improving bottlenecks of customs services during import-export trade through the Djibouti Port.*

*Maintaining joint infrastructures, including railway and road connecting the two neighboring countries, was dealt during our bilateral discussion.*

*We will work together to further enhance and sustain the existing strategic relationship of our two countries.*

*Tadesse Chafu, Speaker, Ethiopian House of Peoples Representatives*

## REQUEST FOR BIDS

- **Country:** Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia.
  - **Name of Project:** Drought Resilience Sustainable Livelihood Programme (DRSLP/AICS)
  - Loan: Soft Loan
  - **Title:** Procurement of Construction of Civil Works, Supply and Installation of pipes for Gerirrona Wakele, Tegrina Awagera, and Afamana Tebediha Kebeles in Chifra Woreda, Oudulyna Asbole and Hebertuna Rasa kebeles in Telalak woreda, Daedo village in Amibera Woreda and Kilentina Dersada, Eyeledina Gendewri, Daweborena Kulbet and Kehertuna Tutli kebeles in Dewe Woreda and Supply and Installation of Solar Pump and solar panels with accessories for Tegrina Awagera kebele in Chifra woreda
  - RFB Reference No. - AFAR/DRSLP/AICS/W/NCB/03/2023-Lot 1, Lot 2, Lot 3, Lot 4, Lot 5, Lot 6, Lot 7, Lot 8, Lot 9, Lot 10 and Lot 11.
1. The Federal Government of Ethiopia has received financing from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs / Directorate General For Development Cooperation of The Government of Italy, toward the cost of the Drought Resilience and Sustainable Livelihoods Program (DRSLP/AICS) and it intends to apply part of funds to cover eligible payments under the Contract for Construction of water supply and sanitation project for Gerirrona Wakele, Tegrina Awagera, and Afamana Tebediha Kebeles in Chifra Woreda, Oudulyna Asbole and Hebertuna Rasa kebeles in Telalak woreda, Daedo village in Amibera Woreda and Kilentina Dersada, Eyeledina Gendewri, Daweborena Kulbet and Kehertuna Tutli kebeles in Dewe Woreda and Supply and Installation of Solar Pump and solar panels with accessories for Tegrina Awagera kebele in Chifra woreda, Afar National Regional State.
  2. The Afar Regional State Bureau of Livestock, Agriculture and Natural Resources Development now requests sealed bids from eligible bidders for the Construction of Civil Works, Supply and Installation of pipes for Gerirrona Wakele, Tegrina Awagera, and Afamana Tebediha Kebeles in Chifra Woreda, Oudulyna Asbole and Hebertuna Rasa kebeles in Telalak woreda, Daedo village in Amibera Woreda and Kilentina Dersada, Eyeledina Gendewri, Daweborena Kulbet and Kehertuna Tutli kebeles in Dewe Woreda and Supply and Installation of Solar Pump and solar panels with accessories for Tegrina Awagera kebele in Chifra woreda .
  3. Bidding will be conducted through the National Competitive Bidding (NCB) a procedure specified in the World Bank Guidelines: Procurement under DRSLP/AICS Grant, and is open to all bidders from eligible Sources Countries as defined in the Guidelines.
  4. Bids shall be valid for a period of One Hundred fifty (150) days after Bid opening. Bids must be delivered to the address below on or before January 22, 2024, at 10:00 a.m.

Electronic bidding will not be permitted. Late bids will be rejected. Bids will be publicly opened on January 22, 2024, at 10:30 a.m. in the presence of the Bidders' designated representatives and anyone who chooses to attend at the address indicated below.

5. All Bids must be accompanied by a bid security amount 2% of the total amount of the bid in the form of Unconditional Bank Guarantee or CPO.
6. Qualification requirements include: All Water Works Contractors: - (i) The Essential Construction Machineries, Tools, Equipment and experienced Manpower (ii) completion of at least two similar contracts in each of the last three years, (iii) annual turnover for Construction of Civil Works, Supply and Installation of pipes for lot 1-lot10 and for Lot 11 Supply and Installation of Solar Pump and solar panels with accessories, in each of the last three years, (iv) liquid assets. Additional details are provided in the Bidding Documents.
7. A complete set of Bidding Documents in English may be purchased directly from the Afar Regional State Bureau of Livestock, Agriculture and Natural Resources Development upon payment of a nonrefundable fee Birr 1000.00 (One thousand birr) for one bid document. The method of payment will be cash payment. The document will be delivered in person duly authorized to collect the documents.
8. Bidders should present renewed license and Water Works Registration Certificate for the year 2016 for Lot 1-Lot10. Supply and Installation of Solar Pump and solar panels with accessories for Tegrina Awagera site (Lot 11) bidders should present renewed license and Water Works Registration Certificate and it also Electro Mechanical materials Supplier registration certificate for the year 2016. Level 5 and above.
9. Afar Regional State Bureau of Livestock, Agriculture and Natural Resources Development reserves the right to reject all or part of the bid.
10. Address: Afar Regional State Bureau of Livestock, Agriculture and Natural Resources Development.

**Attention: Mr.Yasin Ahmed Pro/Fin/Property Administration Directorate Or Mr.**

**Afnan Mohammed (Program Procurement specialist)**

**Floor: Ground City: Samara Country- Ethiopia**

**Telephone: 0336663376**

**Samara,Ethiopia**

**Afar Regional State Bureau of Livestock, Agriculture and  
Natural Resources Development Bureau**

# Verbatim and Caption



## Seedling preparation for next season underway: PM Abiy

**A** seedling preparation for the next plantation season, 2024 rainy season, is underway across the country. From year to year we're investing in our Green Legacy. Seedling preparations is underway for next year's planting season.

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD)

## Negotiation is the only way to solve dispute over GERD

*As usual, Ethiopia is ready and committed to continue the tripartite negotiation on the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD). The downstream countries should return to the negotiation table. Egypt in particular implicitly proposed a colonial era water share agreement. Egypt should stop unfounded propaganda and media campaign as the differences with respect to the dam can only be resolved through negotiation. The entire negotiation process has been progressive despite some divergence.*

*Ethiopia seeks the issue to be solved through the 2015 Declaration of Principles that promotes equitable water utilization without causing significant harm to each nation. Ethiopia has no intention to use Nile water alone as an upstream country; we have pushed for a dream together to bring regional integration.*

Ambassador Sileshi Bekele (PhD), the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) Ethiopia Negotiation Team leader



## Published Weekly in Collaboration with Addis Ababa Culture, Arts & Tourism Bureau



### The Vibrant Hub of Africa

## Bureau sustaining efforts to make Addis Ababa vibrant hub of Africa

BY LAKACHEW ATINAFU

What could be better than feeling a sense of stewardship for nature and nurturing the sensuous beauty that will shape tomorrow and leave a living legacy for future generations? The Addis Ababa Culture, Arts, and Tourism Bureau is at the forefront of efforts to build the city's image and enhance urban tourism while promoting a green legacy.

The bureau has been actively addressing these crucial issues, recognizing their significance for the city's existence. Starting from the middle of December, 2023, in the presence of the staff and leaders of the Addis Ababa Culture, Arts, and Tourism Bureau, the second round of the nursery care program took place at Entoto Park. It is worth noting that during the national sapling planting program last summer, the bureau conducted a successful sapling planting program in Entoto Park under the motto "Let's plant tomorrow today."

In addition to these environmental



Dr. Hirut Kasaw

initiatives, the bureau recently collaborated with the Shema Art Exhibition, which was held from December 10 to December 17, 2023. The exhibition showcased Shema paintings and was a joint effort between the Addis Ababa Culture, Arts, and Tourism Bureau. The honorable Nafisa Almehadin, Minister of State for Culture and Sports of the Federal Republic of Ethiopia, attended the closing program and delivered a message emphasizing the significance of Shema, a textile obtained



from cotton seeds.

The Minister highlighted the potential of cotton productivity and its role in leading the nation to success and glory. By effectively utilizing this potential, the country can not only promote its natural beauty but also generate economic benefits from the Shema textile sector. However, it is important to address elements that frequently exploit such endeavors to incite conflicts, as their intentions remain detrimental to progress.

During the closing speech, Dr. Hirut Kasaw, representing the Addis Ababa Culture, Arts, and Tourism Office, expressed gratitude to Wanos Multi Media for organizing the successful painting exhibition. She emphasized that the exhibition showcased a dress profile that beautifully expressed Ethiopian culture. The event, organized by the Addis Ababa Culture, Arts, and Tourism Bureau Art Resources Platforms and Events Planning Directorate, in collaboration with Wanos Multi Media, captivated the audience with its traditional music and vibrant atmosphere.

The Addis Ababa Culture, Arts, and Tourism Bureau continues to demonstrate its commitment to creating a vibrant and thriving hub in Africa. Through its initiatives, such as the nursery care program and collaborations with art exhibitions, the bureau is not only preserving the city's natural beauty but also promoting cultural heritage and economic growth. With each step taken, Addis Ababa moves closer to becoming a true gem of Africa.