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Ethiopia to become official BRICS+ member tomorrow

ADDIS ABABA – Ethiopia’s bid to join BRICS was welcomed by the leadership of the group during its 15th Summit held in Johannesburg on 24 August 2023. According to ENA, Ethiopia will

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Ambassadors express keenness to bolster ties with Ethiopia in 2024

• Convey New Year best wishes

BY ASHENAFI ANIMUT

ADDIS ABABA– Resident ambassadors of various countries in Addis Ababa have expressed their New Year best wishes and

optimism on bolstering amicable relations between Ethiopia and their respective nations.

Conveying his New Year wish, Ambassador of Brazil to Ethiopia and Permanent

Representative to the African Union Jandyr Ferreira Dos Santos said that the Brazil and Ethiopia friendship has continued to deepen while making a significant progress in their shared pursuit of

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Gov’t extends about 15.2 bln Birr humanitarian support to drought victims

• Amhara State backs to normalcy

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Ethiopia’s 2023 diplomatic achievements in retrospect

BY YESUF ENDRIS

As years go by, the happening of new developments and challenges in social, economic, political and diplomatic spheres is common. As a country, Ethiopia has also achieved many diplomatic successes and passed through pressing challenges. Hereby, *The Ethiopian Herald* reviewed some of the country’s major diplomatic successes of the outgoing year as follows.

Ethiopia’s official request to join the BRICS economic bloc was endorsed on August 24 during the 15th BRICS Summit in Johannesburg, South Africa. Following the

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A year to reinvigorate the spirit of partnership, multi-stakeholder collaboration

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A glimpse of Ethiopia’s economic progress amid challenges

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News



Wondmenew Wedaje

Lalibela set to welcome Genna celebrants

BY ESSEYE MENGISTE

ADDIS ABABA- Preparations have been finalized to colorfully celebrate Ethiopian Christmas (Genna) which takes place on January 8, announced Lalibela City Administration.

Deputy Mayor of Lalibela City Wondmenew Wedaje told The Ethiopian Herald that his Administration has been undertaking preparations to peacefully celebrate Ethiopian Christmas and St. Lalibela festivities.

The administration has been undertaking various activities by establishing a committee comprised of religious leaders, elders, investors, government bodies and others, he expressed.

Hotels have been getting everything ready to offer hospitable services for guests, he added.

The Deputy Mayor said that city administration is working with security bodies and local communities to observe the festival peacefully.

Genna celebration has religious and cultural aspects that attract tourists, he said, adding that his administration is working hard to increase number of visitors that had seen a slight decrease since 2019 because of COVID- 19 and conflicts.

He believed that business communities, investors, hotel owners and others can utilize the festivity to revive their businesses thereby contribute to tourism reinvigoration in which the city administration has been working on.

As to Deputy Mayor, Genna is a special festival in which the faithful practice religious and cultural performances including religious songs, dances, feeding the hungry, washing the feet of celebrants, arranging them with a place to rest and so on.

The festivity is also promoting peace and unity, he added.

Therefore, when the community celebrates Christmas, they should fulfill their religious obligations and contribute to peace building efforts, he said.

Wondmenew called upon all Christians, including Ethiopians and foreigners to celebrate Christmas in Lalibela as the local community is ready to receive them warmly.

Gov't extends about 15.2 bln Birr humanitarian support to drought victims

• Amhara State backs to normalcy

BY TSEGAYE TILAHUN

ADDIS ABABA – The Ethiopian government in collaboration with partners has allotted 15.2 billion Birr-worth humanitarian assistance in three rounds for drought-hit areas to bridge food shortages since last July, the Government Communication Service (GCS) said.

In a press briefing he gave yesterday, the GCS Minister Legesse Tulu (PhD) stated that since July, the government in collaboration with partners has distributed over 1.75 million quintals of humanitarian assistance to people affected by the drought and unprecedented floods in three rounds.

Currently, there are some 3.8 million people who are exposed to drought in eight zones of Amhara, four zones of Tigray, three zones of Afar and in other areas. Similarly, there are also some 1.5 million citizens who were affected by unprecedented levels of floods in Somali, Southern Ethiopia, Oromia, Amhara, Gambella, Afar and South Western Ethiopia states, Legesse elaborated.

According to the minister, some 125, 000 hectares of farming land and 123, 000 hectares of grazing land is extremely damaged by flood in these areas. The problem has also caused the death of about

Photo: Dagne Abera



Legesse Tulu (PhD)

21, 000 animals as well as harmed health and education institutions.

“Consolidated efforts of the federal and state governments are underway to provide food and non-food amenities that have enabled the country to save the lives of drought affected people.”

He further noted that some 5500 ex-combatants surrendered and joined rehabilitation centers through the ongoing law enforcement operations in Amhara State. Another 4000 reunited with their families having received the rehabilitation program.

The State of Emergency has played an immense role in normalizing situations

and averting signs of disorder that has created fear in the public and reinstalling the state bureaucracy up to Kebele level. Some 360 people are held accountable by law and another 288 are also identified as main perpetrators of a crime involved to dismantle the Amhara State administration.

Moreover, over the last two months, more than 54, 000 citizens received capacity building training that aims to fill the capacity-related gaps in the state leadership. Currently, over 100, 000 kebele leaders are completing the training that helps to address maladministration and service delivery problems, the minister remarked.

Nation to mark Coexistence Day tomorrow

BY MISGANAW ASNAKE

ADDIS ABABA-The Ministry of Culture and Sport disclosed that the Co-existence Day, which aims to enshrine the long peace of the country, will be marked for four days nationally.

In a press briefing organized in connection with the celebration yesterday, Culture and Sport State Minister Workinesh Biru stated that the Coexistence Day will be marked from Monday to Thursday in various activities.

The state minister further noted that the main reason to mark the day is to strengthen the society’s long-cherished culture of co-existence and resolve common problems thereby ripening the fruit of development. “Coexistence is not a new phenomenon for Ethiopia but has existed for a long period of time and passed from one generation to another.”

She added, “Our forefathers and foremothers paid noble sacrifices to protect their dignity and to pass an independent country to this generation. Thus we need to sustain their success and accommodate different cultures, thinking and beliefs that



would lay the foundation for peaceful co-existence.”

The current generation needs also to repeat the forefathers and mothers’ proud history by maintaining peaceful co-existence that defined the former in a good manner, Workinesh added.

According to her, the Coexistence Day celebration is organized by the Ministry of Culture and Sport in collaboration with

the National Committee that is composed of the Ministry of Peace, Ministry of Education and Ministry of Foreign Affairs and among others.

The day will be marked under the theme of “living in diversity.”

Various activities including supporting the poor and voluntary programs are parts of

Editorial

Ethiopia's resilience in 2023: Upswing in face of adversities

Presumably, life is not a bed of roses. As such, facing hurdles in one's exertion to confront barriers and navigate past blockades is a natural phenomenon. Facing the ugly face of a hurdle should not come down as something out of the ordinary.

Hence, cognizant of the unforeseeable and foreseeable obstacles in store for those all-out to shape their fate anew, not yielding to despondency on one hand and maintaining one's tempo of a resolute fight for yet higher level of achievement on the other hand are perceptiveness.

Resilient and dream chaser Ethiopia was acting as per the aforementioned backdrop.

In 2023, Ethiopia portrayed an upward trajectory in political, diplomacy, economic and social spheres in the face of adversities. Reasons attributable to the upswing in different spheres of endeavor are activities undertaken here and abroad.

The fact that though over 40 countries had forwarded a request to join BRICS, Ethiopia's enjoyment of a preferential treatment on grounds of its achievements is a source of pride. When we ring in 2024, this information will be made official. The foreign affairs policy of the country is the salient tool that was highly instrumental in actualizing the unfolding.

In the Saudi-Africa summit Ethiopia was represented by its prime minister.

Taking into consideration Ethiopia's improved diplomatic ties WB and EU have pledged support. Backed by popular support, the GERD, which witnessed 4th round filling, is well in progress. The country's effort to sell electricity to neighboring countries is crystalizing.

Considering the salubrious investment climate in Ethiopia, various investors are showing interest to outlay their money. Some have begun practical actions. Factors ascribable for this success reside in the thwarting work of bureaucratic procedures especially in foreign trade. Catalyzing the process was made possible.

Drawing domestic and foreign investors to the industrial parks is another an upward spiral witnessed in the departing year. Expansion works in human capital and digital skills were also done.

Ethiopia is portraying a rapid economic growth against Macroeconomic challenges and internal conflicts. In the green legacy, the country's thrust to plant tree seedlings exceeding its quota and inviting neighboring countries deserves a high-five for the task demonstrates Ethiopia's influence-wielding power.

In Cop-28 staging a pavilion Ethiopia has exhibited its awe-inspiring green initiative works exemplary to the globe. In so doing, it had won a tap on the back from developed nations that need to support such holy ventures of green development.

Regarding efforts geared towards food self-sufficiency, commendable works were made to come up with bumper wheat and rice harvests, among others. Projects like *Yelemat Tirufat* have brought about tangible changes.

Knowing full well, tourism is the untapped potential of the country, in the Gebeta for the Hager (Dine for Nation Project), efforts to develop touristic spots were made to fructify. Also, additional efforts under the projects Dine for Generation and Dine for Sheger were made during the outgoing year.

Infrastructural facilities were put in place in the touristic sites.

Praises were extended to Ethiopia pertaining to enumerated achievements.

Works to get the country's tangible and intangible heritages inscribed in UNESCO's list were attended by success. Here, it suffices to mention the Bale Mountain, the Gedo cultural landscape and the Shuwal Eid cultural festival. Moreover, two of Ethiopia's Eco-tourism villages were singled out best by World Tourism Organization.

In 2024, strengthening its relationship with other countries, Ethiopia needs to enjoy support and debt cancelation to let its development surge ahead.

But the achievements must not be taken as a warrant that the hurdles were ones that could be underplayed. There were some pockets of unrest in some parts of the country, which resilient Ethiopia, votary of peace in the region, is handling cautiously. Ethiopia is due to set the ball of national dialogue rolling towards restoring time-old tranquility.

Ethiopia is an anchor country in the Horn it will continue so.

A happy new year

Ambassadors' New Year Messages

Stepping into a year of fostering partnership

BY AMBASSADOR ERVIN MASSINGA
(UNITED STATES AMBASSADOR TO ETHIOPIA)

As we welcome in the year 2024, the U.S. Embassy in Ethiopia is delighted to commemorate the 120th anniversary of diplomatic relations between the United States and Ethiopia. This historic milestone reflects a journey of mutual respect, enduring friendship, and collaborative progress. Our bilateral ties, established in 1903, have flourished over the decades, encompassing cultural, economic, and diplomatic dimensions.

Former President Barack Obama once said, "Africa's rise is not just important to Africa, it is important to the entire world. We are not just natural partners, we are global partners." This sentiment echoes our commitment to Ethiopia as a friend and partner on the African continent.

As we step into this New Year, we reaffirm our dedication to fostering a partnership that supports Ethiopia's journey towards peace, unity, and prosperity. May this year be a beacon of hope and progress,



strengthening the bonds between our nations and peoples.

Happy New Year to all Ethiopians, at home and abroad!

Reinvigorated Israel-Ethiopia relations

BY AMBASSADOR ALELIGN ADMASU
(ISRAEL AMBASSADOR TO ETHIOPIA)

Over three months ago, on the occasion of the Ethiopian and Israeli New Year celebrations, I published in this newspaper a message to the government and people of Ethiopia, sending wishes of health, prosperity and peace for both of our countries and peoples.

Today, as we mark the Gregorian New Year, my wishes are only amplified as I think of all of the potential that the coming year holds for both of our countries.

Only three months have passed since my last message, but unfortunately, so much has changed. On October 7, Israel was dragged into a war against its will, following a horrific attack by Hamas terrorists. Still, we have hope and are constantly praying for a peaceful and complete resolution of the current crisis, including a return of our hostages and security for our people.

As we enter the year 2024, Israel and Ethiopia look back at a rich history and shared heritage dating back to Biblical times. In our modern era, we recognize the strong cooperation between our countries and their people, in fields including healthcare, agriculture and food security, aviation, technology and more.

Even in these difficult times, the



cooperation between Israel and Ethiopia continues. Just in the last few weeks, Israeli organization Operation Ethiopia has sponsored dozens of emergency eye surgeries for patients at Menelik Hospital, the agricultural experts at Fair Planet have been working to expand their assistance to farmers around the country, and infectious disease specialists at NALA are planning a new campaign to fight tropical diseases in key regions.

The above are but a small taste of the ongoing cooperation between our two countries in the government, private and NGO spheres.

May 2024 bring a reinvigorated relationship between Israel and Ethiopia, building off of previous years and helping us shape a better future. For Israel and Ethiopia, wishing a healthy, prosperous, secure and peaceful 2024.

Happy New Year!



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News

Ethiopia's 2023...

endorsement, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) said Ethiopia's accession is a great moment for the country that aspires to strengthen partnership with BRICS members for an inclusive global order.

"It is a great moment for Ethiopia as the BRICS leaders endorsed our entry into this group today. Ethiopia stands ready to cooperate with all for an inclusive and prosperous global order."

Since then, Ethiopian high-level officials, including the Prime Minister have had consecutive discussions with BRICS current and incoming members on bilateral and multilateral cooperation. Accordingly, last August, Premier Abiy and his Indian counterpart discussed ways to strengthen bilateral political and economic cooperation.

By the same token, Ethiopia and Brazil exchanged views on ways to scale up their investment ties on 14 December. The Ethiopian Industrial Parks Development Corporation met with Brazilian investment officials at the Ethio-Brazil Investment Seminar here and conferred on how to capitalize Ethiopia's accession into the BRICS family.

Ethiopia's official membership in BRICS will be confirmed as of tomorrow January 1, 2024.

Another milestone in Ethiopia's diplomacy in 2023 is the transformation of its bilateral

relationship with China to All-Weather Strategic Partnership. PM Abiy and Chinese President Xi Jinping signed the agreement in Beijing last October to elevate the previous Comprehensive and Enduring Strategic Cooperative Partnership to an All-Weather Strategic Cooperation Partnership.

In the United Nations General Assembly which was held in last September, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Demeke Mekonnen met with more than 30 world leaders and corporate heads. According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the event was a showcase to the normalcy of Ethiopia's diplomacy with the West.

Ethiopia reintroduced the Green Legacy Initiative globally in the UN General Assembly and the event was the biggest one in which the country blamed industrialized nations for their poor performance towards achieving Sustainable Development Goals.

The conclusion of the bilateral agreement that expanded Ethiopia's multifaceted cooperation with the United Arab Emirates (UAE) is also another diplomatic success witnessed in the outgoing year. In this regard, Prime Minister Abiy and UAE President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan discussed bilateral and regional issues during the latter's visit to Ethiopia.

After Sheikh Mohamed's visit here, Deputy

Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Demeke Mekonnen and UAE Foreign Minister Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan agreed to strengthen the bilateral ties in New York on 23 September.

In COP-28, Ethiopia has made active participation whereby its Green Legacy Initiative was recognized in the biggest environmental global leaders' meeting. During the session, Premier Abiy told global leaders to narrow the climate finance gap and to fund environmental programs.

The World Bank President Ajay Banga's visit to Ethiopia was also another major diplomatic event of 2023. Banga came here for a two-day visit on July 31. During the visit, he discussed with Ethiopia's high-level officials including Prime Minister Abiy and Finance Minister Ahmed Shide and met with industrial park employees and CEOs of different business companies.

Ethiopia's Foreign Affairs State Minister Ambassador Misganu Arga and Pakistan's Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Hina Rabbani Khar officially inaugurated the Ethiopian Embassy in Islamabad on May 1. Ambassador Misganu said during the inauguration that the opening of the Embassy marks a new history in the diplomatic, political, economic and social cooperation between the two countries.

Ethiopia and Pakistan achieved remarkable progress in the year in advancing bilateral cooperation in a number of fields. Also, the two countries agreed to pursue strategic partnership in international issues including climate change, immigration, security and terrorism.

Pakistan's Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Hina Rabbani Khar also appreciated Ethiopia's commitment for economic partnership.

It was also in the same year that more than 10 countries have submitted their interest to open embassies in Addis Ababa. Colombia was one of those interested in opening embassy and the country's Vice President Francia Elena Marquez and her delegation visited Ethiopia last May.

Moreover, the Ethiopian government was in better engagement with South American countries, *The Ethiopian Herald* learned.

Despite the aforementioned achievements, Ethiopia has experienced some diplomatic glitches in the outgoing year and the failure to reach a final agreement with Egypt on the Abbay Dam is one of the most pressing one. The four-round of talks that had been held by negotiating teams in Addis Ababa and Cairo concluded without results. Ethiopia claimed Egypt's defiance to reasonable approach is the reason to the talk's failure.

Ambassadors express...

prosperity and development.

He further remarked that Ethiopia's admission to BRICS bloc is a shared victory by Ethiopian government and its people. Besides, it is a testament to the strategic importance and growing influence of Ethiopia in the international community.

He said: "The successes we have achieved together have laid the foundation for further cooperation and progress in the years to come. Also, we are looking for Ethiopia's future role in the BRICS as an opportunity to further deepen our partnership as we explore new avenues for collaboration and mutual support."

"This New Year will be the great time for us to further strengthen their engagement towards a shared vision of a peaceful, prosperous, and sustainable future," he added.

Likewise, Chinese Ambassador to Ethiopia Zhao Zhiyuan extended his sincere New Year wishes saying that 2024 will be a year of health, happiness, prosperity to the people of China and Ethiopia.

Amb. Zhiyuan further noted that under the guidance of the two leaders, China and Ethiopia upgraded their bilateral relations into all-weather strategic partnership and remain committed to further enhancing mutual trust and cooperation across all arenas.

Applauding Ethiopia's BRICS membership, the ambassador stated that Ethiopia will bring more dynamics to the bloc's cooperation. Also, China always stands ready to expand cooperation with Ethiopia within the BRICS framework while their cooperation in various fields keeps gaining momentum.

He pledged to strengthen practical cooperation in various fields under such frameworks as the Belt and Road Initiative and the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation. In this New Year, the two countries will

usher in greater opportunities for respective development and friendly cooperation, he said.

In a similar vein, Indian Ambassador to Ethiopia, Robert Shetkintong said that this New Year would be a time to take the two nations' friendship to the next level.

He stated that on the sidelines of BRICS Summit, Prime Ministers of Ethiopia and India agreed to deepen relations and discussed ways to expand bilateral cooperation in various areas.

Congratulating Ethiopia for joining the BRICS family, the ambassador said that India and Ethiopia have many similarities in terms of religion, language, ethnicity, festivals and cuisine.

Israel Ambassador to Ethiopia Ambassador Aleign Admasu remarked that as the world ring in 2024, Israel and Ethiopia look back at a rich history and shared heritage dating back to Biblical times.

Amb. Aleign said, "In our modern era, we recognize the strong cooperation between our countries and their people in various fields such as healthcare, agriculture and food security, aviation, technology among others." Having said these countries have long been enjoying all-weather cooperation, he indicated that the year 2024 will be a healthy, prosperous, secure and peaceful.

May 2024 bring a reinvigorated relationship between Israel and Ethiopia, building off of previous years and helping them shape a better future, he added.

Ambassador of Russia to Ethiopia, Evgeny Terekhin on his part stated that the year of 2023 was a special period for the bilateral relations of the two nations in which they celebrated their 125th anniversary.

"Our ties have gone through fire and water and evolved into a multifaceted partnership based on shared interests, reciprocal assistance and

cooperation in various fields. Our ties are a unique example of interstate relations, which have been invariably marked by mutual trust, respect, solidarity and friendship."

The meeting between President Vladimir Putin and Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) this year could be testimony for the upward interaction trajectory, he stated.

He said, "We are firmly committed to the enhancement of our cooperation with Ethiopia, our close and dear friend and time-tested partner."

Ethiopia's accession to BRICS opens up broader prospects for deepening the nations' interaction, he mentioned, adding its participation in BRICS will provide new opportunities for the comprehensive growth of Ethiopia and will make a significant contribution to the development of the bloc.

"May the year of 2024 be generous with joyful events, brilliant victories and achievements, positive emotions and success in all endeavors," the Ambassador expressed.

Similarly, the United States Ambassador to Ethiopia Ervin Massinga said, while welcoming the year 2024, the U.S. Embassy in Ethiopia is delighted to commemorate the 120th anniversary of diplomatic relations between the United States and Ethiopia.

"This historic milestone reflects a journey of mutual respect, enduring friendship, and collaborative progress. Our bilateral ties, established in 1903, have flourished over the decades, encompassing cultural, economic, and diplomatic dimensions," Amb. Ervin pinpointed.

Stepping into this New Year, Amb. Ervin said, "We reaffirm our dedication to fostering a partnership that supports Ethiopia's journey towards peace, unity, and prosperity. May this year be a beacon of hope and progress, strengthening the bonds between our nations and peoples."

Ethiopia to become...

be officially joining the BRICS+ tomorrow.

In addition to Ethiopia, Egypt, UAE, Saudi Arabia and Iran will officially join the BRICS the coming Monday thereby increasing the number of members of the group to ten, it was stated.

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) commended Ethiopia's accession to the group saying: "An important moment for Ethiopia, the BRICS leaders accepted our entry into the group today.

Ethiopia stands ready to cooperate with all for an inclusive and prosperous world order."

Reports indicate that more than 40 countries had shown interest in joining BRICS, including 22 countries which had formally requested to join.

Nation to mark...

the four-day event that would be held across the country.

During the occasion, leaders of the Inter-Religious Council of Ethiopia expressed their desire to contribute for the peace building efforts and to promote peace among their respective followers.

Special Edition

Recapping Ethiopia's impressive reform program in 2023

BY SOLOMON DIBABA

As the New Year 2024 is unfolding across the globe, Ethiopia is best assured that her relations with African countries, particularly countries in the neighborhood, EU, USA, the Middle and Far East is ever growing. For Ethiopia, the year 2023 was a year of impressive achievements and challenges that has never stopped the country from registering marked socio economic growth amidst multiple sets of challenges.

Over the year 2023, Ethiopia conducted her foreign relations and diplomacy prioritizing the relations between the neighboring countries in view of strengthening regional integration, cooperation on peace development, defense diplomacy and continued to play a leading role in the AU.

Ethiopia maintained stronger political, diplomatic and economic relations with the EU manifested in the visits paid to the country by the foreign Ministers of Germany and France. Strengthening of international diversified comprehensive economic, political, scientific and technological cooperation with Russian Federation, Turkey, PRC, South Korea, India, Japan and Check Republic and other countries clearly showed that Ethiopia's diplomatic standing at the international community is ever growing.

The official visit paid to Ethiopia by Sheikh Mohammad bin Zayed Al Nahyan President of the United Arab Emirates and a high-level Emirati delegation kicked off with a series of talks to explore opportunities of further cooperation in sectors such as agriculture, food security, energy, trade, investment and technology.

Co-operation agreements to combating terrorism, climate change, advancing technology, developing government and modernization, and co-operation between the Abu Dhabi Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Ethiopian Investment Authority, among others.

The UAE supports efforts to deliver peace and stability in Ethiopia and has provided more than \$5 billion in aid to encourage the nation's development. The UAE provided timely and most needed support for Ethiopia to ensure the country's security.

Ethiopia's National Green Legacy Initiative was further accelerated by conducting a national tree planting program which also included planting fruit trees. The significance of this home grown national initiative is that it combines economic benefits, environmental protection and utilization, promotion of food security and climate diplomacy. Over the year 2023, Ethiopia used the Initiative to effectively conduct climate diplomacy actions in cooperation with Kenya, Djibouti and Somalia.

On the other hand, two important national

campaigns including *Ethiopia Tamirt* (Let Ethiopia Produce) and *Yelemat Trufat* in poultry, eggs, honey, fish and meat products were commissioned in the country focusing on import substitution and food security.

Ongoing eco-tourism projects financed by *Gebeta Le Hager* that have been conducted at Wonchi, Gorgora, Kella, Koisha and recently at Chebera Chrchura are already close to completion with highly potential sites for tourism development in the country. It is reported that 8 more similar projects are planned to be constructed over the coming years.

In terms of economic development, Ethiopia has now effectively managed to be self-sufficient in wheat production and is even exporting a certain amount to the international market. This export diversification and import substitution program is expected to include rice, maize and fruits like avocado. The manufacturing, construction and transport industries are striving not only to connect the country internally but also at the regional level through railway and the Ethiopian Airlines Group.

Furthermore, promoting African economic integration in the spirit of Pan Africanism and Agenda 2063, Ethiopia helped to found AfCEFTA and has recently delivered a list of 5,700 commodities to the African Trade Ministerial Council. In this context Ethiopia will provide 5,700 items in the non tariff scheme after 7 years.

On yet another development of national significance, the convocation of Ethiopia's National Dialogue is expected to take place in the current fiscal year. The Ethiopian National Dialogue Council has been activity working to discharge its national mandate entrusted to it by the proclamation that provided for its founding.

Ethiopia's national dialogue program as stated by the ENDC functions on four major principles which include inclusivity of representatives of all stakeholders, transparency, ownership and neutrality. Although the independent Commission is conducting the coordination of the entire process the entire people of Ethiopia own the program itself.

In pursuing a policy of peace and development not only at the international level, the Ethiopian government has continued to live up to its expectations the Agreement on Permanent Cession of Hostilities signed between the Government and the TPLF a year ago in Pretoria to end the devastating two years war in the northern part of the country. Similar peace initiative was held with OLA at Tanzania.

The formation of BRICS by China Brazil Russia, India and South Africa on June 16, 2009 has set a new global alternative for economic development of member nations and is expected to positively alter the global economic order in favor of

those countries who request for justice in economic relations across the globe.

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed who attended the meeting tweeted earlier:

"An important moment for Ethiopia, the Brics leaders accepted our entry into the group today. Ethiopia stands ready to cooperate with all for an inclusive and prosperous world order, Congratulations to all Ethiopians!"

Over the year, Ethiopia voiced her legitimate right to have access to ports as part of her logistics, security and development needs in the volatile Horn of Africa Region. As stated by Prime Minister in his presentation to the HPR, having access to ports would enable Ethiopia to share its own natural resources with Africa and the rest of the world thus contributing to the global economic development in the context of BRICS, Belts and Roads Initiative, Agenda 2063, AfCFTA and African economic integration.

What makes Ethiopia's accession to ports an important component of its socio-economic, diplomatic, political, historical and socio-cultural development? Why are ports so important for Ethiopia? It is useful to give adequate answers to these important questions and related issues to clearly understand the *raison d'être* for highlighting on the issue.

Ethiopia's strategic and geostrategic location and its proximity to the Red Sea which hosts 10% of world trade with the length of 2,500kms linking the Mediterranean Sea with the Indian Ocean, Middle East, Persian Gulf and Far East Countries. Ethiopia is at close proximity with major important ports on both sides of the Red Sea including the ports of Jeddah, Port Sudan, Massawa, Assab, Djibouti, Berbera, and Another 10 ports belonging to Saudi Arabia, 15 sea ports of Somalia, Berbera Port of Somaliland, and Mombasa port of Kenya.

On the other hand, 40% of global fossil fuel trade is transacted through the Red Sea which makes access to ports on the Red Sea highly critical for Ethiopia. Second, access to ports has a critical bearing on the national security of the country. Ensuring national security of Ethiopia as an important diplomatic, political and economic center linking the Horn and the rest of Africa, the issue of access to ports peacefully and through negotiations is of critical importance for Ethiopia.

In 2023, GERD has finally shaped up for Ethiopia after 12 years. As the saying goes, better late than never. By completing the filling of this flagship dam, Ethiopia has been able to save billions of birr that could have been expended for filling the dam over the next several years. The question now is what is in store for this country once GERD is completed?

The writer of this article divides the outputs

from GERD into five categories including. Self-reliance, regional peace and security, transfer of knowledge and technology as well as introduction of new social services. All five are relevant not only to Ethiopia but to the African region at large.

GERD is one of the major indicators of efforts on national self-reliance, what does self-reliance imply in relation to GERD? The first point that comes to the mind is self-reliance in clean, cheaper and sustainable hydroelectric power for the nation and countries of the Horn of Africa.

Here it is important to note that hydropower is not the only renewable energy resources for Ethiopia and Africa. The 12 river basins of Ethiopia have a potential capacity of producing 954 Tera Watt Hour while the nation has a potential of geothermal power source of 10,000 MW and 1.3 million MW from wind farm as well as 60,000 MW from solar energy sources. GERD is only a fraction of what the country could produce over time.

First, Ethiopia's self-reliance is not limited only to the generation and distribution of hydroelectric power. Moreover in terms of economic development with particular emphasis on agriculture, a huge potential of lakeside farming along both sides of the huge lake from GERD will be an excellent location for investment in agriculture. This includes the development of fishery which will diversify the food habit of the local population in Benishanguel and development of agro-industrial complex producing canned fish and other food items.

The 70 artificial lakes created on GERD will become tourist attraction centers for tourists from Sudan and Egypt, USA, Europe, the Middle East and Asia. This would not only boost Tourism Ethiopia but will help to create a stronger sense of friendship among the people of Ethiopia and visitors from these countries.

The expanse of this great lake will provide a maritime transport system for the local people and tourists who wish to enjoy excursions on the lake. The entire economic activities surrounding GERD will be part of the economic integration in the region by using Ethiopia as a center of power hub.

As stated time and again, despite the rigid position repeatedly taken by Egypt, Ethiopia still stands for equitable utilization of the waters of the Nile and is ready to cooperate with all riparian countries as provided by the NBI.

Despite challenges, Ethiopia will continue in its quest for national peace and prosperity.

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

Special Edition

Ambassadors' New Year Messages

2024 New Year Remarks



**BY AMBASSADOR ZHAO ZHIYUAN,
(CHINESE AMBASSADOR TO ETHIOPIA)**

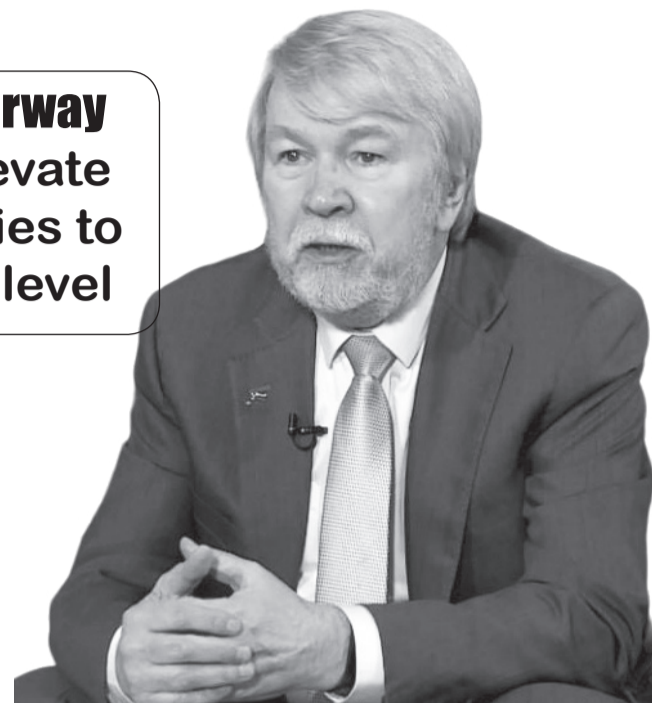
Time flies, and year of 2024 is here as promised. On the occasion of bidding farewell to the old year and welcoming the new, as Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, I would like to extend my sincere greetings and blessings to all the Ethiopian people and Chinese compatriots in Ethiopia!

The year of 2023 was nothing but extraordinary. Chinese President Xi Jinping met with Prime Minister Abiy

Ahmed (PhD) in Africa and China respectively. Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) attended the Third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation and paid a successful official visit to China after four years since 2019. Under the guidance of both leaders, China and Ethiopia upgraded our bilateral relations into All-weather Strategic Partnership, which means that rain or shine, we two friendly developing countries both agree to step up mutual support on issues of each other's core interests and major concerns, and remain committed to further enhancing mutual trust, cooperation across the board

See 2024 New... page 7

Efforts underway to bring elevate economic ties to the proper level



**BY AMBASSADOR EVGENY TEREKHIN
(AMBASSADOR OF RUSSIA TO ETHIOPIA)**

Dear friends!

Please accept my heartfelt congratulations on the upcoming New Year.

The year of 2023 is a special date for our bilateral relations, which celebrated their 125th anniversary. Our ties, having gone through fire and water, have evolved into a multifaceted partnership based on shared interests, reciprocal assistance and cooperation in various fields. Russian-

Ethiopian ties are a unique example of interstate relations, which have been invariably marked by mutual trust, respect, solidarity, and friendship.

Interaction between our countries continues on its upward trajectory. We are observing a significant intensification of political dialogue at the high and highest levels, which is distinguished by its trust-based nature. The meeting between the leaders of our states – President Vladimir Putin and Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) – in July this year became further evidence of this.

The outcomes of the Second Russia-Africa

See Efforts underway... page 7

A very good year for Brazil-Ethiopia relations



BY AMBASSADOR JANDYR FERREIRA DOS SANTOS

(AMBASSADOR OF BRAZIL TO ETHIOPIA & PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE TO THE AFRICAN UNION)

As we take a moment to reflect on the past year, we find many reasons to celebrate. The friendship between Brazil and Ethiopia has continued to deepen, and our two nations have made significant progress in our shared pursuit of prosperity and development.

With the reopening of the Ethiopian Embassy in Brasilia, there is a great

potential to develop closer dialogue between Brazil and Ethiopia.

I would particularly like to celebrate the accession of Ethiopia to the BRICS. It is a shared victory by the government and people of Ethiopia, and a testament to the strategic importance and growing influence of Ethiopia in the international community. No accession of African countries to the BRICS could fail to give due recognition to Ethiopia, one of the largest and most dynamic countries in the continent, which is why President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva gave his full support to the Ethiopian candidacy.

See A very good year... page 7

Tena Yistilin!



**BY AMBASSADOR ROBERT SHETKINTONG
(INDIAN AMBASSADOR TO ETHIOPIA)**

Ethiopia was one of the first countries from Africa to establish diplomatic relations with India in 1948. Therefore, we have just completed celebrations of 75 years of diplomatic relations between our two countries. As part of the celebrations, six Indian cultural groups performed in Ethiopia and three Ethiopian cultural

groups visited India.

Prime Ministers of Ethiopia and India met on the sidelines of BRICS Summit. The leaders agreed to deepen relations and discussed ways to expand bilateral cooperation in areas like parliamentary contacts, development partnership, trade & investment, defense, ICT, agriculture, and skilling of youth. The New Year is a time to take our friendship to the next level.

See Tena Yistilin! ... page 7

Special Edition

Recapping major...

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed received General Abdelfattah Alburhan, President of the Transitional Sovereignty Council of Sudan and his delegation at Bole International Airport.



Tena ...

In April, Indian External Affairs Minister met Deputy Prime Minister & Minister of Foreign Affairs Demeke Mekonnen and discussed on bilateral relations, developments in the region and shared views on our strong multilateral cooperation. In February, a 50-member Ethiopian Parliamentary delegation attended a training programme in New Delhi.

India has substantial business presence in Ethiopia. About 650 Indian companies are registered with the Ethiopian Investment Commission. Most of them are in and around Addis Ababa. About 90 factories/farms are located in Oromia region. About 15 companies are in Debre Birhan and some textile companies at Hawassa. The biggest banana farm in Ethiopia is an Indian investment near Arbaminch. An Indian tea estate is in Gambela region and a coffee plantation is near Bonga. About 10 factories were in Mekelle and a factory has been established in Shire.

India is the second largest trading partner for Ethiopia. Our bilateral trade stood at USD 2.8 billion in 2022.

Indian business delegations have visited Ethiopia for Pharma Conference & B2B meeting; business delegation led by Indian Economic Trade Organization; India Africa ICT Expo; Ethio India ICT Expo; Ethio Health Congress and Light Expo.

This year, we held the Joint Trade Committee meeting. Both sides made comprehensive review of their bilateral trade and acknowledged the huge potential for diversification of the trade basket and agreed to cooperate in standardization & quality assurance, financial, pharmaceutical, automobile, renewable energy, agriculture & food processing sectors.

India provides scholarships and short term training programmes. This year, 59 Ethiopian scholars were provided full scholarships including PhD courses. Every

year, about 400 Ethiopian nationals attend short term training courses in India.

I want to congratulate Ethiopia on joining the BRICS family. Indian PM Narendra Modi stated - On the occasion of the 15th anniversary of BRICS, we have taken the decision to expand this forum. India has always fully supported this expansion. Such an expansion will make BRICS stronger and more effective. In that spirit, India welcomes the new countries into the BRICS family.

India and Ethiopia have many similarities including our celebrations of diversity in terms of religion, language, ethnicity, festivals and cuisine. For any country, peace should win and must prevail. It will bring prosperity and development in the country.

On the eve of the coming New Year, I want to greet all sisters and brothers in Ethiopia the very best.

Tena Yistilin - Stay healthy!

A very good year...

For many years, Brazil and Ethiopia have worked together to strengthen our partnership and promote cooperation in various fields, such as political ties, trade, investment, aviation and cooperation for development. The successes we have achieved together have laid the foundation for further cooperation and progress in the years to come. That is why we see

Ethiopia's future role in the BRICS as an opportunity to deepen our partnership further, as we explore new avenues for collaboration and mutual support. We are confident that we will continue to build on the achievements of the past.

I would also like to commend the resilience and determination of the Ethiopian people, who have shown remarkable

strength through challenging times. We all have to recognize Ethiopia's progress in addressing social, economic and security issues, and we stand ready to support Ethiopia in its development journey.

Together, Brazil and Ethiopia can work towards a shared vision of a peaceful, prosperous, and sustainable future.

Efforts underway...

Forum for Russian-Ethiopian relations also deserve high praise. On the sidelines of the St. Petersburg events, a whole range of bilateral agreements were signed in a variety of areas – from air services and information security to the peaceful use of nuclear energy and cooperation between customs services. We are convinced that a great groundwork has been laid for the strengthening of the legal framework of our relations.

Maximum efforts are being exerted to bring trade, economic and investment interaction between our countries to the proper level. I am confident that the meeting of the Co-Chairs of the Intergovernmental Russian-Ethiopian Commission on Economic, Scientific, Technical and Trade Cooperation, as well as the Russian-Ethiopian Business Forum, held on December 19-20 in Addis

Ababa, have given powerful impetus for the further development of our interaction across the entire spectrum of areas. The potential of Russian-Ethiopian relations is enormous, and I have no doubt that through joint efforts and hard work we will be able to fully realize it. We are firmly committed to the enhancement of our cooperation with Ethiopia, our close and dear friend and time-tested partner.

Undoubtedly, the momentous decision on Ethiopia's accession to BRICS opens up broader prospects for deepening our interaction. As the BRICS Chair in 2024, Russia intends to effectively implement the decisions taken at the BRICS Summit in Johannesburg, including those related to the expansion of the association. I am certain that your country's participation in BRICS will provide new opportunities for

the comprehensive growth of Ethiopia and will make a significant contribution to the development of the association itself.

I would like to avail myself of this opportunity to thank the team of "The Ethiopian Herald" newspaper for the fruitful and intensive cooperation in the outgoing year. I wish the newspaper further great success in its noble cause.

On behalf of the Russian Embassy in Ethiopia and on my own behalf, I convey my warmest congratulations to the people of Ethiopia on the forthcoming New Year. May the year of 2024 be generous with joyful events, brilliant victories and achievements, positive emotions and success in all endeavors.

Happy 2024!

2024 New Year...

and strategic consultation regardless of how the external and internal environment may evolve.

Thanks to our collective efforts, Ethiopia will join the BRICS on January 1st, 2024. Just as Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) said, Ethiopia's BRICS membership could be taken as one of the biggest diplomatic victories of the country recorded in the last few decades. I'm sure that Ethiopia will bring more dynamics to BRICS cooperation, and China always stands ready to expand cooperation with Ethiopia within the BRICS framework.

China-Ethiopia cooperation in various fields keeps gaining momentum. We are determined to implement the Global Development Initiative, Global Security Initiative and Global Civilization Initiative, and we strengthened practical cooperation in various fields under the frameworks of the Belt and Road Initiative and the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation together. By 2023, China has sent a total of 22 batches of more than 500 teachers to various agricultural vocational colleges in Ethiopia to cultivate talents for local agricultural development. China has sent 24 batches of medical teams here to disseminate medical knowledge and offer free clinic for the locals. The practical cooperation between China and Ethiopia has fully boosted local employment. Chinese investment has created 560,000 jobs, and China has also provided thousands of Ethiopian students with opportunities to study in China. Our two sides have continued to make progress in practical cooperation in trade, investment, infrastructure, agriculture, communications, finance, culture, education, people to people exchanges and other fields, bringing more benefits to the two peoples.

In the New Year, China-Ethiopia relations will continue to develop in depth and substance. The two countries will usher in greater opportunities for respective development and friendly cooperation. China is willing to further strengthen cooperation with Ethiopia and push our All-weather Strategic Partnership to a new high. I believe that as long as we work hand in hand, the future of China and Ethiopia will be even brighter!

May the new year of 2024 bring health, happiness, prosperity to both the peoples of China and Ethiopia! Wish China-Ethiopia friendship everlasting!

Special Edition

Ethiopia's remarkable achievements in 2023

BY ADDISALEM MULAT

The year 2023 will forever be remembered as a turning point in the history of Ethiopia. It was a year filled with extraordinary events that captivated the entire nation. What made it even more remarkable was the stark contrast it presented compared to the previous year. Instead of facing challenges and setbacks, Ethiopia experienced a period of tremendous achievements and blessings that would shape its future in profound ways.

One of the most noteworthy accomplishments during this period was Ethiopia's successful transition from being a major importer of wheat to becoming an exporter. This significant milestone in the country's economic development signaled a shift towards self-sufficiency and a growing agricultural industry. It not only boosted the nation's food security but also brought about a newfound sense of pride and confidence.

However, the crowning achievement that overshadowed all others was the final stage of filling the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD). This monumental project represented a feat of engineering and determination holding immense potential to revolutionize Ethiopia's energy sector. Once completed, it would provide a reliable and sustainable source of electricity that could propel the country's progress and open up endless possibilities for growth.

As the year finally came to a close, Ethiopia found itself on the brink of unprecedented growth and prosperity. The remarkable triumphs achieved throughout the year had laid a solid foundation for the nation's future. With a newfound sense of potential and optimism, Ethiopia stood ready to embrace the opportunities that awaited fueling its journey towards a brighter tomorrow.

Ethiopia's rise in the BRICS Bloc

In a truly remarkable twist of fate, Ethiopia achieved a substantial diplomatic triumph by being extended a warm welcome as the newest member of the prestigious BRICS bloc at the annual summit in Johannesburg. The BRICS nations, consisting of Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa, unanimously endorsed Ethiopia's admission into their ranks acknowledging the mounting significance of this strategically positioned African nation.

The inclusion of Ethiopia in BRICS serves as a testament to its strategic location rapidly advancing economy and unwavering dedication to advocating for the interests of Africa on the global stage. This historic summit, coupled with Ethiopia's acceptance into this bloc bolsters its standing as an emerging strategic power holding immense potential for both regional and international collaboration.

As Ethiopia embarks on this new era in its diplomatic journey, it is anticipated that its membership in BRICS will serve as a springboard to further enhance its economic trajectory and forge stronger bonds with influential global stakeholders. This prestigious accolade not only elevates

Ethiopia's global stature but also presents a unique opportunity for the nation to play an active role in shaping the BRICS agenda and crafting policies that will foster its own development as well as that of the entire African continent.

The inclusion of Ethiopia underscores its expanding influence and potential, paving the way for increased cooperation, enhanced trade opportunities, and greater avenues for investment. By embracing this golden opportunity and enacting vital reforms, Ethiopia can position itself as a pivotal player in global affairs while working tirelessly towards achieving sustainable and inclusive growth.

The Fourth filling of the GERD

The completion of the fourth round of filling for the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) stands as a momentous achievement that marks a pivotal chapter in Ethiopia's history. It not only showcases the nation's unyielding commitment to its objectives of development but also serves as a testament to its independence and determination.

Despite confronting numerous obstacles, both from within the country and externally, Ethiopia's unwavering resolve and dedication have propelled this ambitious project forward. The GERD, with its triumphant completion of filling rounds symbolizes Ethiopia's sovereignty, self-reliance, and perseverance in the face of adversity.

The completion of the fourth filling of the dam holds great importance for Ethiopia on numerous levels. It serves as a testament to the country's self-sufficiency, as the entire dam was built solely by the Ethiopian people without relying on outside aid. This accomplishment not only demonstrates Ethiopia's capability to undertake ambitious infrastructure projects on a grand scale, but also serves as a beacon of inspiration for other developing nations striving to assert their independence and take control of their own development.

With the provision of a reliable source of electricity and irrigation for agriculture, the dam is expected to generate tremendous opportunities for boosting various sectors of the economy. By mitigating the impact of frequent droughts and famines through effective water storage, the GERD helps to ensure food security and resilience in the face of climate change challenges.

Ethiopia's leadership in regional energy production is also significantly strengthened by the completion of the dam. It establishes the country as both a provider and a shaper of the energy landscape in the region elevating its influence and positioning it as a key player in determining the future of the energy sector. This achievement not only underlines Ethiopia's commitment to sustainable development but also presents it with opportunities to collaborate with neighboring countries on cross-border energy projects.

The construction of the GERD was a truly collective effort, with individuals from all

walks of life contributing their financial resources and labor to support the project. This collaborative approach fostered a sense of national unity and pride illustrating the power of combined action when working towards a shared goal. The successful filling of the dam amidst numerous obstacles further solidifies Ethiopia's determination and resilience in pursuing its development aspirations serving as a testament to the nation's unwavering commitment.

Promoting environmental diplomacy at the global level

The Green Legacy Initiative (GLI) has successfully mobilized millions of Ethiopians from various sectors of society including government officials, students, teachers, local communities, businesses, and organizations. This widespread participation has had overwhelmingly positive impacts. One noticeable change has been the restoration of degraded lands which were previously unproductive to their former glory.

The adoption and execution of the Green Legacy Initiative (GLI) in Ethiopia have yielded remarkable results in enhancing soil quality, manifested by improved moisture retention and the flourishing of vegetation. Furthermore, the establishment of a strong and systematic tree planting program has successfully mitigated the longstanding issue of erosion that once posed a threat to the nation. This not only contributes to the preservation of soil but also plays a pivotal role in combating the adverse impacts of climate change.

In November, the 28th United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP28) took place at Expo City in Dubai. This annual conference serves as a global platform for countries, climate change experts, and stakeholders to address the pressing issue of climate change. The focus of the conference was the review of the Paris Agreement, a crucial international accord aimed at mitigating global warming.

Climate change holds a significant place in Ethiopia's foreign policy objectives, and the country has been working in collaboration with other nations and institutions to address this global issue. At the conference, Ethiopia showcased its successful experiences in tackling climate change with a particular emphasis on its extensive efforts in reforestation.

Ethiopia has not only planted countless seedlings but has also donated over one billion seedlings to other nations in Africa and shared its expertise by sending experts to assist in various initiatives. Furthermore, Ethiopia organized an expansive exhibition on the sidelines of the conference covering an area of 1,500 square meters. This exhibition beautifully highlighted the nation's achievements in promoting environmental sustainability.

Ethiopia actively shared its experiences, strategies, and solutions to address the growing concerns about climate change worldwide. Several world leaders, including

the host nation's leader visited Ethiopia's Green Legacy Pavilion, engaging in fruitful discussions on matters of mutual concern, including climate change. This showcases the collaborative approach taken by global leaders in addressing the shared challenge of climate change.

The Phenomenal growth of Ethiopia's wheat industry

For many years, Ethiopia heavily relied on imported wheat in order to meet its domestic needs. This reliance cost the country a significant amount of money. However, in recent years, a momentous change has occurred thanks to the Prime Minister's Wheat Production Initiative. This strategic effort has allowed Ethiopia to achieve self-sufficiency in wheat production and even become an exporter for the first time. This is a monumental achievement for a country that used to be one of the largest wheat importers worldwide.

The success of this transformation can be attributed to expanded wheat farming into new areas and improved productivity. In the past, wheat farming was mainly concentrated in highland regions and depended on rain-fed smallholder farms. However, the government has now started promoting irrigation-based wheat cultivation in arid lowlands to further increase production.

This diversification of cultivation methods has proven to be highly effective in boosting yields. Ethiopia's ability to not only become self-sufficient in wheat but also have surplus for exports is truly remarkable. Experts in the field believe that Ethiopia still has untapped potential for even higher yields and production volumes. The impressive wheat harvest serves as a testament to the success of the Wheat Production Initiative in ensuring food stability within the country.

Looking towards the future, Ethiopia is keen on continuously modernizing farming methods and expanding the acreage dedicated to wheat cultivation. This will further solidify its position as an emerging wheat exporter. In general, Ethiopia's journey towards self-sufficiency and becoming a wheat exporter is an inspiring example of effective agricultural transformation.

Despite facing numerous challenges, Ethiopia experienced significant growth and development in various sectors throughout the year 2023. The nation was able to overcome obstacles and achieve remarkable milestones that propelled its progress. Looking ahead to the year 2024, there is a strong belief that Ethiopia will continue its successful development initiatives, leaving no corner of the country untouched by progress.

This optimistic outlook is fueled by the nation's determination and resilience, as well as the solid foundation laid by the accomplishments of the previous year. With a continued focus on sustainable and inclusive growth, Ethiopia is poised for continued success and prosperity in the coming year.

Special Edition

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia wishes prosperous and joyous New Year to the diplomatic community and members of the International organizations based in Addis Ababa

A year to reinvigorate the spirit of partnership, multi-stakeholder collaboration

BY THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE FEDERAL DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ETHIOPIA

At the end of the year 2023, we take a moment to reflect on the major diplomatic endeavors of Ethiopia, including the success and challenges we have encountered in both bilateral and multilateral aspects and the way forward.

Over the last year, Ethiopia has made a significant progress in strengthening its diplomatic relations with its partners. The Government of Ethiopia has demonstrated a strong commitment to continue advancing the national interests of the country.

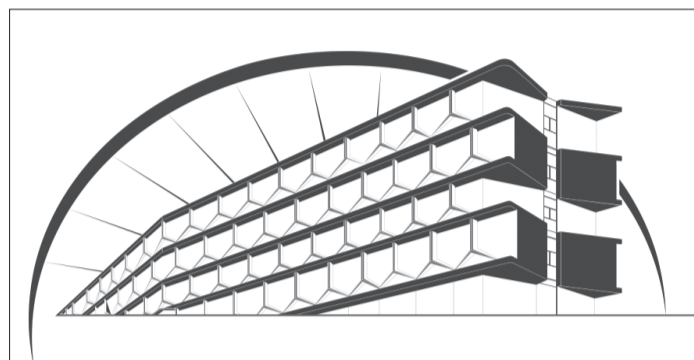
Following the signing of the Pretoria Peace Agreement, which ended a two-year-long conflict in northern Ethiopia, the Government has committed itself to its full implementation. A Transitional Justice Policy Framework mechanism, which aims to ensure reconciliation and accountability, has been developed and is in the process of implementation. The National Dialogue Commission is also in the process of conducting inclusive dialogue in the Country. The ongoing national reforms, including in governance and the justice system, have gained encouraging support from all our partners. This is crucial to promoting lasting peace and stability in the country and would further widen the peace dividend.

Ethiopia has signed cooperation agreements in political, economic, and cultural fields which further cement partnerships with a number of countries and international organizations. Such agreements would speed up the implementation of the ten-year development plan and the second homegrown reform program.

Ethiopia's request to join the BRICS family and the momentous decision of the leaders to accept Ethiopia as a member was a historic accomplishment. Ethiopia's engagement with existing and new BRICS members will be based on its long-standing principles in multilateral cooperation and on the promotion of its strategic interests. Joining the BRICS demonstrates our established diplomatic tradition of diversifying and expanding partnerships, advancing economic development, and regional integration.

One of the primary objectives of our diplomacy is the attainment of sustainable economic development. Ethiopia's major diplomatic activities have thus been focused on the implementation of the 10-Year Development Plan (2021-2030). Significant progress has been made to this end.

The Government of Ethiopia has taken



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FEDERAL DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ETHIOPIA
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

concrete measures, including the reform of national mechanisms, to ensure accountability in the protection of human rights. Significant progress has been made in the implementation of the recommendations by the report of the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission (EHRC) and the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNOHCHR) through the Inter-Ministerial Task Force. This necessitated ending the mandate of the International Commission of Human Rights Experts on Ethiopia (ICHREE) at the 54th regular session of the United Nations Human Rights Council.

Ethiopia's bilateral partnership with the United States, Member States of the European Union, the United Kingdom, and Canada continues to be strengthened.

The establishment of an all-weather Strategic Partnership between Ethiopia and the People's Republic of China during the meeting with Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed and President Xi Jinping has been a major diplomatic milestone of the year.

The signing of seventeen agreements with the United Arab Emirates during H.H. Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan's visit to Addis Ababa also demonstrated the strong ties between the two countries in economic development, infrastructure, energy, investment, trade, and other key areas.

The historic visit of Italian Prime Minister H.E. Giorgia Meloni and the Chancellor of Germany H.E. Olaf Scholz, as well as the visits of Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Foreign Secretary James Cleverly were important milestones in our diplomacy. Additionally, the visit of the Foreign Ministers of South Africa, France, Germany, Japan, South Korea, Rwanda and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela along with officials of the European Union and the United Nations were imperative in our diplomatic engagements.

The recent improvement in Ethiopia-EU relations needs further momentum and progress. The Structured Dialogue held on 07 December 2023 in Addis Ababa was a step in the right direction. Ethiopia will continue to advance its robust diplomacy with existing and traditional partners in the

spirit of consultation, mutual trust, and a true partnership of equals.

Ethiopia has also continued to play a constructive role in promoting peace, economic integration and interdependence in our sub-region and in Africa. We have promoted African positions to promote the implementation of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 sustainable development goals.

Ethiopia has remained to serve as a voice of reason in an increasingly complex global environment. It has promoted balanced and principled positions in the UN and other multilateral organizations. Ethiopia continues to strengthen cooperation with UN agencies. Over the past year we have secured political, financial, and technical support that contributed to national efforts of promoting sustainable development, reducing poverty, and building institutions that respond to the demands of our people.

The trilateral negotiation on the guidelines and rules for the first filling and annual operation of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) remained a priority in our 2023 diplomatic engagements. Ethiopia's position on the GERD is based on the principle of equitable and reasonable utilization of the waters of the Nile. Ethiopia will continue to use the waters of the Nile to meet the needs of present and future generations. Ethiopia also remains at the forefront of fighting global climate change. The Ethiopian Green Legacy Initiative is a primary demonstration of this commitment. Ethiopia's participation at the COP-28 was a great success, amplifying the green development model of Ethiopia and promoting a common position with Africa and other developing countries.

Given the growing population and economy of our country, we have been aware of the pressing need to diversify our options for ports and access to the sea. Although Ethiopia is a landlocked country, it is critical that it collaborate with littoral and its neighbors for shared prosperity and maintenance of peace, combat piracy, and transboundary crimes, and ensure freedom of navigation. With that in mind, we held several engagements in 2023 with our neighbors, and we will continue to do so in 2024 to ensure a win-

win solution for all parties.

In the coming year, Ethiopia is fully committed to further strengthening its cooperation with members of the international community. Its primary focus will be securing diplomatic and financial support that would contribute to our agenda of ensuring prosperity and progress. We will continue to engage with partners to advocate for common positions on mutually agreed-upon issues of cooperation, both in bilateral and multilateral frameworks. Accelerating the implementation of the 2030 sustainable development goals, fighting climate change, and addressing humanitarian needs by mobilizing sufficient and predictable financial resources will be another priority in Ethiopia's diplomacy next year.

Ethiopia will continue to advocate for peace and stability, regional cooperation, and partnership. We can all prosper together by promoting trade, investment, tourism, and people-to-people ties. As Ethiopia commences its responsibility as member of the BRICS family, we will continue to advocate for peace, shared prosperity, and a reformed and inclusive multilateral system anchored on the UN Charter. Reforming the current multilateral architecture to make it fit for purpose will remain on the agenda of Ethiopian diplomacy and this will be done in close coordination with all African friends. Addis Ababa being the third global diplomatic hub, Ethiopia remains committed to fulfilling its obligations in hosting international and regional organizations. It will continue to ensure that all international staff feels safe and at home in the Country. We are prepared to colourfully host the African Union Summit in February 2024.

Ethiopia believes that in today's interdependent world, the surge for diplomacy is imperative to addressing common challenges and harnessing opportunities. We hope that 2024 will be a year where the international community continues to work together with a reinvigorated spirit of partnership and multi-stakeholder collaboration. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia wishes a prosperous and happy New Year to all our international friends.

Special Edition

A glimpse of Ethiopia's economic progress amid challenges

BY MENGESHA AMARE

With about 120 million people, Ethiopia is the second most populous nation in Africa next to Nigeria, and one of the fastest-growing economies in the region. As one of the developing countries taking the right track towards growth and prosperity, Ethiopia has planned and working on to be a middle-income state within the shortest time possible.

Taking all this fact into account, *The Ethiopian Herald* approached Alemayehu Benti, an agro economist graduated from Haramaya University, to comment on what were the weaknesses in 2023 and strengths which need to be promoted and what measures have to be taken in 2024 to help Ethiopia secure sustainable economic growth.

He said, "Ethiopian economic growth is booming and GDP is projected to grow by 6.2% in 2024, driven by agriculture, industry, private consumption, and investment as the projection indicated. Ethiopia's strong growth rate builds on a longer-term record of growth over the past years where the country's economy grew at a remarkable rate per year. Undeniably, Ethiopia's real gross domestic product (GDP) growth slowed due to multiple shocks including COVID-19, with growth in industry and services easing to single digits."

As to Alemayehu, the consistently high economic growth over the years has resulted in positive trends in poverty reduction in both urban and rural areas. However, gains are modest when compared to other countries that saw fast growth, and inequality has increased in recent years. Furthermore, conflicts in various parts of Ethiopia, especially in the north, risked undermining the economic and social development progress the country has achieved.

The government has launched a 10-Year Development Plan, based on its 2019 Home-Grown Economic Reform Agenda, which runs from 2020/21 to 2029/30. The plan aims to sustain the high growth achieved under the Growth and Transformation Plans of the previous decade while facilitating the shift towards a more private-sector-driven economy. It also aims at fostering efficiency and introducing competition in key growth-enabling sectors such as energy, logistics, and telecom, improve the business climate, and address macroeconomic imbalances.

He said, "Ethiopia seeks to chart a development path that is sustainable and inclusive in order to accelerate poverty reduction and boost shared prosperity. Significant progress in job creation, as well as improved governance, will be needed to ensure that growth is equitable across society. Achieving these objectives will require addressing key challenges including addressing macroeconomic distortions that constrain private sector development, structural transformation, and generation of jobs, reducing the incidence of conflict that has been having a substantial impact on lives, livelihoods, and infrastructure."

Urban employment levels have not recovered fully, some households and firms continue to report income losses, and poverty is estimated



Ethiopia's economy on the rise in 2023 - EXPOGROUP

to have increased though the public is still suffering from the negative repercussions of high cost of living, he added.

According to Alemayehu, addressing food insecurity, which is growing due to high cost of living, adverse weather events, conflict, and global conditions leading to high inflation of food prices, needs to be the primary focus of the government.

"Ethiopia is one of the fastest economies in the world and its economy is expected to grow by 7.5 percent this year for instance. True, the economic growth comes against the backdrop of macroeconomic challenges that have plagued the country, including inflation, as well as the conflicts in different parts of the country. It is one of the few countries that are registering rapid economic growth in the world," he added.

The good thing in this regard is the first home-grown economic reform that was introduced by the government has played a vital role in such economic performance. As to him, the agriculture sector, which accounts for a greater share of the economy, has greatly contributed to the economic performance and the country is making tremendous progress in poultry, dairy and fruit production that included in "Yelemat Tirufat" which means making the dining table of households full with diverse food items.

As to him, the country has to diligently work on leveling the gap witnessed between import and export by well hammering on the service, infrastructure and the sector targeting at boosting foreign direct investment.

The agricultural and service sectors continued to contribute to economic activity and growth, while other sectors such as manufacturing and construction were being impacted by acute foreign exchange shortages, the suspension of the country's African Growth and Opportunity Act beneficiary status, and ongoing conflict in some parts of the country.

According to him, despite the various challenges, the agriculture sector has showcased a strong performance, particularly in irrigated wheat production, which bolstered economic activity. However, Ethiopia's political environment remained difficult, with active insurgencies in the Amhara and

Oromia regions though peace agreement with Tigray region is somehow delicate.

"High inflation and a shortage of foreign exchange further added to the short-term concerns regarding economic activity. The National Bank of Ethiopia said it has implemented import and exchange rate restrictions, leading to remittance transactions being conducted in the black market to manage foreign reserves. As a consequence, the gap between the parallel and official exchange rates continued to widen, foreign exchange reserves dwindled, and inflationary pressures intensified," he opined.

As inflation, high debt distress, as well as shortages of foreign currency would continue to be major challenges for the Ethiopian economy, the government has to well devise possible mechanisms against the problems. The government has issued a proclamation allowing foreign banks to operate in Ethiopia – but challenges still remain around oversight and regulatory issues.

Ethiopia should enjoy a positive economic position, bolstered by the country's free market-led economy, a well-established democracy and independent government institutions. Despite all these macroeconomic challenges, Ethiopia's market potential remains attractive for businesses that envisage long-term investment and the gains would turn potential into inclusive affluence, he opined.

Plan to expand critical infrastructure throughout the country is also in the pipeline as far as it is known he said adding that the country looks to mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change, the need for net-zero emission technologies present significant new opportunities for investment.

Ethiopia has maintained solid economic growth since the end of the pandemic, and the measures taken will enable the gradual return of inflation to its medium-term level, which together with the dynamism of the external sector will allow the current account surplus to be maintained and the net international investment position to further improve, he added.

"Expanding investments and improvement in human capital can also be observed, achieved

through investment in training and digital skills. Economic growth often is driven by consumer spending and business investment. Tax cuts and rebates are used to return money to consumers and boost spending. Deregulation relaxes the rules imposed on businesses and has been credited with creating growth but can lead to excessive risk-taking," he said.

As to Alemayehu, infrastructure spending is designed to create construction jobs and increase productivity by enabling businesses to operate more efficiently. The challenge is to recover and rebuild in a way that creates sustained growth and transforms our economies while tackling the social and ecological stresses caused by our current economic models. It is also clear that there is now a new and feasible approach to development across the country, which is much more attractive than destructive paths of the past. But the nation must invest and act quickly to get there.

Much of the fundamental structural change needed lies in transforming the key systems of energy, transport, industry, cities and land. All require combinations of institutional change, standards and regulation, design and good policy. The combination of all these would result in economic growth followed by real change though it doesn't suffice to deduce so, Alemayehu noted.

No doubt, he accentuated that economic development is key to eradicating poverty. Accelerating progress is essential if the goal of zero extreme poverty needs to be achieved.

He further underscored that as the private sector can be highly regarded as the engine of growth, the country has to capitalize on such a fashion for a successful businesses drive economic growth, create jobs and pay the taxes that finance services and investment.

He further stated that since foreign investment, and particularly exports can accelerate domestic development, the Ethiopian government has to work more towards encouraging responsible investment, helping markets work better for poor people and overcoming the impacts of high cost of living. This, of course, requires a focus on the short, medium and long term economic growth performances.

Special Edition

Ethiopia's climate change prevention initiatives outshine at COP 28 Summit

BY EPHREM ANDARGACHEW

The just ended year, 2023 has availed an important opportunity for Ethiopia to showcase its wide ranging endeavors of contributing to the global efforts of addressing the looming environmental crisis. Ethiopia used COP28 as an opportunity to showcase its efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to the impacts of climate change. This could include highlighting renewable energy projects, sustainable land management practices, and initiatives to build climate-resilient infrastructure.

As underlined by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD), the issue of addressing climate change has been more than three decades since climate change is a global political issue. The country has kept momentum with international conventions and made good strides in combining the climate agenda with the sociopolitical and economic dimensions of sustainable development.

All the regimes that ruled the country throughout the times have also shown due commitment to properly respond to the global efforts of containing the climate threat. Taking the importance of mitigating climate change impacts, the current government also has made various efforts. Ethiopia is making efforts to protect and heal the planet while ensuring growth and prosperity.

The interventions that the country executed

especially after the incumbent assumed office can be summarized in three major categories as presented in the COP 28 Summit held in Dubai.

The Green Legacy Initiative

The first and master piece environmental protection project of the country is the Green Legacy Initiative (GLI). This initiative is a powerful nature-based solution launched in 2019 is under implementation for about 5 years now.

The government has shown state of the art mode of leadership in discharging the mega initiative starting from the establishment of more than 1 hundred thousand nurseries across the country and mobilizing almost the entire population, foreigners and diplomats in the plantation activities. Ethiopia's Green Legacy initiative represents a proactive response to pressing environmental and socioeconomic challenges. It reduces carbon emission preserves biodiversity, create jobs, and boost sectors such as tourism.

He stated "I am proud to say that this initiative has received remarkable success by planting 32.5 billion seedlings. Our target is to reach 50 billion by 2026. When completed the initiative will become the largest afforestation project in the world. The impact of our initiative extends beyond borders as we are sharing seedlings with our neighboring countries. It can further play a catalytic role in Africa and complement existing initiatives such as the Africa Forest

Landscape Restoration Initiative and the Great Green Wall.

Yelemat Tirufat

Second, the country is taking action to transform the food system since climate change, biodiversity, water resources, people and food systems are strongly interrelated. Accordingly, Ethiopia has successful interventions in planting various drought-tolerant crops and using climate-smart irrigation-based technology like the national summer wheat production program whereby Ethiopia produces 6 million hectares in one year. This makes the country the largest wheat producer in Africa and relieved from wheat import dependency and made a wheat exporting country.

As part of the Green Legacy initiative, Ethiopia has extensively expanded the cultivation of perennial crops and fruits. Furthermore, it diversifies sector-prone practices to mitigate the impacts of climate change and promote nutrition-sensitive agriculture. The country has been also working to increase the supply of poultry, dairy, livestock, and honey products through a program called "Yelemat Tirufat". The country has also an urban initiative whereby it encourages eco-friendly and resource-efficient greening and farming matters for sustainable agricultural practice which optimizes effective water management and prioritizes investments in renewable energy-based irrigation systems.

Promoting Clean Energy

Ethiopia has also been investing extensively in renewable and green energy resources. It has the potential to generate over 60,000 megawatts of clean energy by expanding hydropower, solar, wind, and geothermal sources. Ethiopia's target is to triple the current power generation capacity and double its energy utilization efficiency by 2030. This in turn will allow the country to achieve universal access to electricity, minimize dependency on biomass fuel, and provide the opportunity for industries to reach their net zero targets by 2050.

Ethiopia also takes bold actions in the transport sector. It adopted policies to encourage the use of electrical vehicles that resulted in a sharp increase of hybrid and electric cars on the roads while reducing the macroeconomic burden of importing fuel. Similarly, Ethiopian Airlines is modernizing its Fleet by acquiring new energy-efficient aircraft. Furthermore, the country has electrified Railways a growing non-motorized transport infrastructure, and is expanding into a mass transit system.

However, Ethiopia has shown its commitment and determination in fighting the impact of climate change, but much remains to be done. It requires collective Global action for a stepped-up climate agenda the major challenge in scaling solutions is the cost of capital and how International financing is structured no country can effectively confront the climate challenge.

Ethiopia breaks own record in annual greening initiative

BY FIKADU BELAY

Ethiopia has planted a staggering 25 billion seedlings in the first phase of the Green Legacy campaign which was launched in 2019 by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD). It is noted that seedlings of trees, fruits, and cattle feeds were planted during the first phase of the Green Legacy Initiative.

According to a government report, Ethiopia shattered its previous record on July 17, 2023, when over 566 million saplings were planted nationwide in 12 hours under the 2023 National Green Legacy Initiative. Over the initial target of 6.5 billion seedlings for the previous planting season, Ethiopia has planted more than 7.5 billion saplings during the previous green legacy season.

Through the annual mobilization of over 25 million citizens nationwide, 32.5 billion seedlings have been planted in five years as part of the tree-planting program to address food security and reduce the impacts of climate change.

As a direct result of its efforts to halt climate change, the initiative has participated every individual in protecting the environment at the national level, Ethiopia introduced the green legacy concept to the globe during the previous

year. This practical application was showcased to the world during the COP28 climate change prevention meeting in Dubai through a pavilion, which encouraged other countries to adopt the approach as well.

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) said, "Our Green Legacy Initiative represents a proactive response to pressing environmental and socio-economic challenges. It reduces carbon emission preserves our bio-diversity, creates jobs and boosts sectors such as tourism."

The National Green Legacy Program's implementation has been successful in reducing deforestation and encouraging reforestation, enhancing natural habitats that can combat climate change and the effects of carbon emissions. These habitats are home to numerous plant and animal species and are a major source of biodiversity.

In addition, green infrastructure and sustainable land use practices can mitigate reliance on non-renewable sources of energy, providing oxygen, food, water, clean air, and medication. Also, it's to create a healthier and more sustainable future for ourselves and for generations to come.

Though Ethiopia's Green Legacy has received a lot of recognition from different international entities, what is

the most important thing is recognizing the initiative as part of the environmental combating of climate change.

African Union Youth Assembly-Ethiopia International Relations and Diplomatic Affairs Director Wechkuoth, suggested on the Ethiopian green legacy initiative "I do see Ethiopia as a country that is taking the lead, showing other countries as an example. It is so impressive; I think other nations should take Ethiopia as an example."

He said, "What is much more important now is we should always take examples, and we can set the tone for the other generations. Ethiopia has already built a future for the generation that will never be forgettable."

Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) Executive Secretary, Workneh Gebeyehu said on his part, in an effort that will help other countries in the East African region in battling climate change, Ethiopia has also been preparing billions of tree saplings. For this reason, it acts as a model for the East African region and other regions as well.

This is a major issue. It has also been shared with other countries. It has a great symbolic significance. He stated, "So this is a big example showing that there is big change by own effort, without expecting

support, by mobilizing own resources."

Research indicates that the Green Legacy has improved the climate in the area, resulting in reduced temperatures as well as increased rainfall. These changes have a big impact on the supply of water across the country and agricultural production.

The reforestation efforts under the Green Legacy initiative have numerous benefits for Ethiopia. They help to restore ecosystems, conserve biodiversity, and protect watersheds, which are crucial for water availability and soil fertility. Reforestation also contributes to carbon sequestration.

Those efforts not only benefit Ethiopia but also maintain the whole world. Ethiopian Forest Development Director General Kebede Yimam stated that the Ethiopian Green Legacy Initiative has the potential to lower the likelihood of drought and floods in East African countries; he stated that Ethiopia's unique achievements in forest development will maintain regional peace and food security in the region and the horn.

According to Workneh, eight countries in the region are highly affected by climate change-induced consequences. The region is a practical showcase of climate change-induced consequences, including flood and drought, which have been seen over the past few years, he said.

Special Edition

A week between Christmas, New Year

BY NAOL GIRMA

The time from December 26 until 31 is generally considered as part of “the holidays.” The six days between Christmas and New Year can be a very dynamic time. Celebrating the Christmas and New Year is a time of anticipation and excitement. A New Year brings new opportunities, do-overs, and new chances to better manage life. People naturally tend to experience times of reflection between Christmas and New Year. Maybe it is the family time. It could be the sense of one door closing and another door opening. Having just finished Christmas festivities, the week is like a long hangover. The festivities continue until the day of New Year. For many people during this time the joys of giving and sharing extend beyond religious belief and spread the spirit of peace on earth and goodwill to all mankind throughout the world.

Christmas is celebrated on December 25 and the vibe will continue until New Year for the following six days and it is both a sacred religious holiday and a worldwide cultural and commercial phenomenon. For two millennia, people around the world have been observing it with traditions and practices that are both religious and secular in nature. Christians celebrate Christmas Day as the anniversary of the birth of Jesus of Nazareth, a spiritual leader whose teachings form the basis of their religion. Popular customs include exchanging gifts, decorating Christmas trees, attending churches, sharing meals with family and friends and, of course, waiting for Santa Claus to arrive.

Celebrated on December 25 every year, Christmas shines as the festival of joy and happiness for Christians around the world. The day commemorates the birth anniversary of Jesus Christ and is observed as a grand celebration by people belonging to different religions. Unlike for non-Christians, Christmas holds a lot of religious importance for people following Christianity.

It is believed that on Christmas, the Almighty sent Jesus as a divine power to save people from falling into the grave of their sins. God sent his son to guide people toward the right path. The community organizes a mass service to remember Jesus Christ and the sacrifices he made for humanity. Christians remember Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection or the rise from the dead during the mass service.

Marco Degasper is an Italian that has been living in Ethiopia for over 9 years now. Herald approached him lately. “I’m married to an Ethiopian wife. I have 2 kids, house and business in Addis Ababa. So of course I am celebrating Ethiopian Christmas, in the traditional way with Doro wat. The Western Christmas includes things like a Christmas tree and Santa Claus who offer presents. As such, as my kids are 4 and 6 years, we also celebrate the international Christmas with presents. We’re celebrating the Ethiopian New Year, but not the international New Year’s eve



Marco Degasper



Toby Balch

on December 31st. Of course the weather is different, here in Ethiopia sunny and warm, in the mountains in Italy where I came from it is cold and there is a lot of snow.

Christmas is a time to be with the people you love. Often, this involves travelling to your hometown to be with parents, siblings, cousins, old friends, etc. For some households, it is the only time of the year when all the family is together. In Italy Christmas is celebrated mostly at home, while here in Ethiopia some people travel to special places like Lalibela or other pilgrimage places to attend religious ceremony.”

Christmas is certainly the most wonderful time of the year for sellers. The days and weeks before Christmas are characterised by frantic shopping for presents. Many groups of friends or workmates take part in a group. Such a place is where each person buys a small present for one another in the group, but the identity of the giver is never revealed. In many countries, Christmas Eve is a night for kids to go to bed early before their house is visited by Santa Claus, a magic man in a red suit who leaves presents for all the kids in the house. From huge cities to tiny villages, the month of December sees buildings and streets covered in coloured lights, red ribbons and smiling Santa Claus faces. People also decorate their houses and sometimes their gardens for the Christmas period. The most famous decoration is, of course, the Christmas tree – a pine tree covered in little shiny decorations and fairy lights.

Some people put a nativity scene in their house. This is a collection of little figures that represent the birth of Jesus



in Bethlehem. Apart from dinner at home with family or friends, Christmas is also a time for parties. At school, children often do a Christmas theatre performance or sing Christmas carols in a concert, then have a party with sweets and cakes. For adults, most workplaces usually have their Christmas. This can be a dinner in a restaurant or just a few drinks in a bar. At workplace parties, many romances have started under the mistletoe, a special plant which people hang from the ceiling.

Toby Balch a Canadian citizen approached by the Ethiopian Herald pointed out that like Ethiopians, Canadians are a diverse group, but one thing they stand united in is their devotion to whooping it up every December 31st to usher in the new year. For the most part, people gather together at homes or in restaurants and bars, drink champagne, dance, and socialize until the countdown at midnight. Many communities stage firework displays. Canadian traditions include decorating a Christmas tree and exchanging gifts. On

Christmas Day, a special meal is prepared; it often consists of a roast turkey, seasonal vegetables, mashed potatoes, and gravy. But here in Ethiopia Christmas is observed in a unique way from Christmas in the west. It is a solely religious celebration that has developed its own distinctive traditions over many years. In contrast to Christmas traditions and celebrations in the west, Ethiopia places more emphasis on ritual and ceremony than gift-exchanging.

He further said that the week between Christmas and New Year is a popular time in Canada. Lots of people head for southern climates or across the country for a holiday visit. If you are looking for a travel bargain, consider flying on Christmas Day, New Year’s Eve, or New Year’s Day. Flight fares peak the weekend before and the days after Dec. 25, and again on Jan. 2. Public transportation in Canada over the Christmas holidays will most likely be operating on a reduced schedule on Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and New Year’s Day.

Special Edition

2023: Successful year in Ethiopia's tourism position in the world's stage

BY LEUSEGED WORKU

The year 2023, which is left with less than 24 hours to out, was a time that Ethiopia experienced notable successes in the tourism sector. 2023 was a year that the country can expand and increase the number of its tourist destinations and enlisted its tangible and intangible heritages on the list of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO.)

The country, under the projects dubbed as Dine for Sheger, Dine for Ethiopia and Dine for Generation that have been initiated by the Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, can successfully increase and expand the number of its tourist destinations across the country. For instance, the renovated sites such as the Unity, Sheger, Entoto and Friendship parks, as well as the newly established high-tech Science Museum and the Abrehot Grand Library in Addis Ababa, and the projects under-construction such as the Wenchi Lake and the newly inaugurated ones including the Halala Kella Resort, and the Elephant Paw Lodge in the Dawuro Zone of South West Ethiopia, are some of the accomplishments which further enriching the country's tourist attractions.

Not only that during the year to be concluded, Ethiopia has also achieved remarkable successes in the tourism sector. It was able to get its tangible and intangible heritages. UNESCO recognized two of Ethiopia's tourist destinations: the Gedeo Cultural Landscape and Bale Mountains National Park.

The registration of the two sites was announced at the 45th Conference of the World Heritage Committee held in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

According to documents, situated along the eastern edge of the Main Ethiopian Rift, on the steep slopes of the Ethiopian highlands, the Gedeo Cultural Landscape is one of Ethiopia's attractions known for its stunning landscape, well preserved forest resources and traditional agroforestry practices of the indigenous Gedeo community.

The Gedeo people, who heavily populate the region, rely on their traditional knowledge to sustainably manage the local forests. Within these cultivated mountain slopes, sacred forests are preserved and utilized by the community for religious rituals associated with the Gedeo religion. Along the mountain ridges, clusters of ancient megalithic monuments stand, revered by the Gedeo people and carefully tended to by their elders.

Bale Mountains National Park, located in the Oromia State, is also another blessing that captivates visitors with its breathtaking landscapes. The park, established in 1970, covers a sizable area of approximately 2,150 square kilometers and lies about 400 kilometers southeast of Ethiopia's capital city, Addis Ababa. This National Park provides a sanctuary for a variety of wildlife species, including the critically endangered Ethiopian Wolf, which finds its habitat within the park's renowned Sanetti Plateau. Other captivating inhabitants of the park include the Mountain Nyala, Menelik's Bushbuck, warthogs, and a vibrant array of bird species.



Celebration of Shuwal Eid festival by the Harari people



Partial view of the newly inaugurated Chebera Elephant Paw eco-lodge



Choke Mountains Ecovillage

In addition to its natural wonders, the park holds significant cultural heritage. It is inhabited by diverse ethnic groups, including the Oromo people, who possess a distinct cultural identity and practice rich traditional customs.

Bale Mountains National Park stands as a valuable treasure of natural beauty and cultural significance in Ethiopia, attracting visitors' worldwide seeking adventure, wildlife encounters, and a deeper understanding of the country's natural history.

In addition to this success, another noteworthy recognition came in 2023 as UNESCO inscribed the annual three-day festival of called Shuwal Eid, celebrated by the Harari people on the 8th day of Shuwal month that comes after Ramadan people, to the "Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity."

Shuwal Eid is a festival that promotes cultural exchange and provides support for the local community and artisans. It is also a time for indulging in festive feasts and savoring special

meals. Traditional Harari dishes, such as injera (a flatbread), doro wat (a spicy chicken stew), and bula (a sweet rice dish), are lovingly prepared and shared among families. These meals represent an integral part of the celebration.

The year 2023 was also the best year for the Ethiopian tourism sector for it is a year Choke Mountains Eco village was honored by the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) as one of the Best Tourism Villages (WTV).

Situated on the third highest mountain in Ethiopia, Choke Mountain, the village can be found approximately 300km northwest of Addis Ababa in the West Gojam Zone at Degadamot Woreda.

At the heart of the Choke Mountains Ecovillage is organic farming, a practice deeply ingrained in the community. The village relies on sustainable agricultural techniques that prioritize the health of the soil, biodiversity, and the use of natural fertilizers. Methods such as agroforestry, crop

rotation, and companion planting are employed to enhance productivity while minimizing the reliance on chemical inputs.

Renewable energy sources, specifically solar power and hydroelectricity, play a significant role in fulfilling the energy needs of the ecovillage. The integration of these technologies reduces dependence on fossil fuels and contributes to the reduction of carbon emissions.

Water conservation is another critical focus of the Choke Mountains Ecovillage. The community implements various techniques, including rainwater harvesting, water-efficient irrigation systems, and water recycling, to ensure responsible water management, particularly in areas affected by water scarcity.

Prioritizing waste management, the ecovillage emphasizes recycling, composting, and waste reduction practices. Systems are in place to encourage residents to separate different types of waste and adopt habits that minimize waste generation.

Choke Mountains Ecovillage's recognition as one of the Best Tourism Villages highlights its commitment to sustainable practices in agriculture, energy, water conservation, and waste management. This award not only promotes the ecovillage as a model for responsible tourism but also serves as an inspiration for other communities worldwide.

Furthermore, in 2023, Lephis Village in Ethiopia was recognized as one of the Best Tourism Villages by the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO). This prestigious accolade is awarded annually to rural destinations that excel in nurturing rural areas, preserving landscapes, and upholding local values and culinary traditions. This year, Lephis Village stood out among 54 ecotourism villages selected by the UNWTO.

Situated in the Gambo Forest Zone in Arsi Negele, Oromia State, Lephis Village takes its name from the stunning Lephis Waterfall and is home to various endemic bird and wildlife species. It has become a noteworthy community tourism initiative with the support of the Ethiopian Sustainable Tourism Alliance (ESTA).

Thanks to this initiative, the villagers have been able to generate income through various means, such as producing and selling handicrafts, primarily managed by women, and offering horse riding services. The recognition by the UNWTO not only highlights the village's remarkable achievements but also elevates its status at the national level.

As Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed once stated in relation to the nation's untapped natural, cultural, religious and rich historic heritages, Ethiopia is a destination with rich variety of attractions, aside from its warm and welcoming people.

The Premier said that Ethiopia is a country endowed with magnificent bio-diversities that have potential tourism attractions and are located in the highest mountains and lowlands with conducive weather. These endowments are the foundation for the development of tourism.

In this regard, the country has a lot to offer to the world. And aside from the already registered tangible and intangible heritages, it will work more to develop its blessings and to get registered them on the list of UNESCO.

Special Edition

2023 : A year of diplomatic bonanza for Ethiopia

BY SOLOMON WASSSIHUN

This year has been a fantastic year for Ethiopian diplomacy as it achieved a series of diplomatic successes that bolstered the country's position on the international stage, while also promoting its national security and interests.

From the beginning, Ethiopians were full of optimism and hope for the year 2023. Just a few weeks before the start of 2023, they received unexpected good news on 2 November 2022. The devastating Tigray war, which had lasted two years, came to an abrupt end. Although both citizens and scholars received the news with skepticism, the fragile peace that emerged following the announcement of the Permanent Cessation of Hostilities Agreement, COHA continued to build up through the weeks until Ethiopians welcomed the year 2023.

Soon, Ethiopians saw that the promise of bringing an end to the devastating war in the new year was not just wishful thinking. Thanks to the persistent diplomatic efforts of Africa's veteran diplomats, and the perseverance of the Ethiopian diplomats, the COHA became effective and the peace-building process effort soon reached a point of return.

The news of Ethiopia joining the BRICS Economic Forum was as big a surprise and delight as the news of the declaration of the end of the war. Interestingly enough, both pieces of news came from South Africa - the first from Pretoria, the second from Johannesburg.

Ethiopia's admission to the BRICS 'club' is one of the most important diplomatic successes achieved by the incumbent Ethiopian government in the concluding European year. This success can undoubtedly be interpreted as an indirect recognition of Ethiopia's position as a geopolitical heavyweight and indispensable regional power in the Red Sea region. Some international media analysts covering the BRICS have described Ethiopia as the powerhouse in the Horn of Africa.

The news of Ethiopia's invitation to join the BRICS last August left many political analysts in disbelief, who could only guess how it came about. They could not explain what criteria the BRICS leaders used to select Ethiopia over other such African heavyweights like Algeria and Nigeria.

Ethiopia sees the BRICS as an alternative for bilateral and multilateral economic cooperation without jeopardizing its long-standing good relations with the G7 countries. The inclusion of Ethiopia in the BRICS club has enormous symbolic value in enhancing the country's image in the global arena. Another advantage is the possibility of conducting trade and investment in other ways without having

to resort to the US dollar.

Although started with promise hope and a vibe of optimism, 2023 was also a year that posed a huge challenge for Ethiopian diplomacy. The challenge is reintegrating the country back into the economic and political networks of the international community after two years of alienation, and designation, because of the Tigray war.

During the devastating war that ended about 14 months ago, Ethiopia's diplomatic relations with most of its development partners, especially in the West, were tense at best and confrontational at worst. This happened because Ethiopia was determined not to bow to pressure from foreign powers and interference in its internal affairs.

But soon after the signing of the Pretoria peace deal a year ago, Ethiopia's diplomatic relations that have been in the doldrums started to revitalize. The restoration process of diplomatic relations with the international community has continued to progress smoothly over the last 14 months, and now it appears that Ethiopia has almost fully restored its bilateral and multilateral relations with its development partners.

When he recently summarized the current status of Ethiopia's diplomacy at a parliamentary session, the Foreign Affairs State Minister Mesganu Arega said that the solid outcomes of the extensive work done by his office during the previous three months showed that Ethiopia's diplomacy is returning to its peak.

One of the patterns of events that further attest to this fact is the considerable number of heads of state and governments as well as the leaders of multinational agencies that paid an official visit to Ethiopia during 2023.

Secretary Blinken who never set foot in Ethiopia as the top US diplomat came to Addis Ababa last March and saw for himself the progress of the peace process in Ethiopia. That pivotal event set chain reactions of diplomatic events spurring the resumption of bilateral and multilateral cooperation between Ethiopia and the Western world.

A little over 3 months after Blinken's visit, the US administration announced last June it had lifted the Human Rights Violation Designation on Ethiopia. That was an important step taken by the US, paving the way for the process of normalization of diplomatic relations and bilateral cooperation between the two countries, a process which is still ongoing.

As with the Americans, Ethiopian diplomats have also achieved a lot in normalizing bilateral and multilateral relations with the Europeans: earlier this month, the Ethiopian mission led by the Deputy Premier had a structured dialogue with the Europeans led by the Head of the

efforts to consolidate peace and accelerate economic reforms in Ethiopia.

The beginning of the normalization of diplomatic relations with the US and the EU has opened the doors for the resumption of financial support for development by multilateral organizations such as the World Bank and the IMF. The newly appointed World Bank President, Ajay Banga, himself has included Ethiopia in the itinerary of his first trip around the world as President of the Bank in 2023. In addition, an International Monetary Fund (IMF) mission to Addis Ababa held two rounds of talks with government representatives last March and September on the possibilities of IMF support for the country's reform program, the "Home Grown Economic Reform Agenda".

Senior Ethiopian officials, starting with the Premier himself, have been working relentlessly in 2023 to rapidly normalize bilateral and multilateral cooperation with various development partners. Constructive engagement with all development partners based on neutrality, mutual respect, and benefit is the guiding principle of the incumbent government.

The Ethiopian delegations led by the Premier have made resoundingly successful missions at various international events held in 2023 including Russia [Africa-Russia summit], China [the 3rd Belt and Road Forum], South-Africa [BRICS summit], France [New Global Financing Pact summit], Germany [G20 Compact with Africa conference], Austria [the 20th UNIDO conference], UAE [COP 28], and Saudi Arabia [Saudi -Africa summit]. The Ethiopian mission has also bolstered the existing bilateral relations with friendly nations by paying several official visits to several countries during the concluding year. The working visit to Czech and Algeria are some of them.

During these international events and state visits, the Ethiopian delegation has signed several bilateral development agreements in various socio-economic sectors to help accelerate the implementation of the Home Grown Economic Reform Agenda, ensure macro-financial stability and rebalance and sustain growth. The agenda focuses on promoting investment in sectors such as agriculture and manufacturing, tourism, ICT, mining, and the creative industries.

All in all, 2023 was a year of diplomatic good fortune for Ethiopia, allowing the country to fully reintegrate with the international community and reinvigorate bilateral and multilateral economic cooperation to strengthen the country's momentum toward sustainable peace and prosperity. The diplomatic achievements of the outgoing year have cemented Ethiopia's image as a pre-eminent power in Eastern Africa, playing an indispensable role as an anchor for regional peace and economic integration.

Senior Ethiopian officials, starting with the Premier himself, have been working relentlessly in 2023 to rapidly normalize bilateral and multilateral cooperation with various development partners

EU Delegation to Ethiopia.

The Structured Dialogue took place within the framework of the 2016 Joint Declaration towards an EU-Ethiopia Strategic Engagement and both sides agreed to further enhance Ethiopia's utilization of the European Union's everything but Arms trade regime. They agreed to work together on issues of common interest and to support national

Present and future challenge: Making a New Year really "Happy!"

BY EPHREM ENDALE

Finally, 2023 is on its way out and tomorrow is New Year! To all whose New Year starts tomorrow Monday January 1, 2024 Happy New Year! Perhaps one of the sweetest phrases in the English language must be the "Happy New Year!" well wish. It should be. When the well wish comes from the deepest parts of the heart it means a lot to the receiver. After all, it is time of the greatest of optimism even in a world which is anything but nice; it's time for looking forward after dumping as much of the garbage of the old year for good; it's the time for starting on yet another new path and keep on moving without having to look back; It's a time of hope the broken would be mended, the tilting would be straightened up, the darkened would be awash with light. Everything would be nice and dandy on the New Year front!

Well the nice words aside it has been real long time since we had a world where most if not all of the wishes mentioned and other thousand-and-one wishes really happened. Especially in these times we're in the world's storyline is always changing and most of the time not in the nicest of ways. And the whole script is becoming so confused (and corrupted!) we lose track of where we're actually headed to and the real story of how we got to this point. The story here is if we were in a world where mankind looks at the past for the purposes of not whining but to learn from the mistakes, deliberate and accidental, believe me our smiles would have been brighter and

the folds of our foreheads fewer. One problem is mostly we seem to be content with adapting to new realities, however destructive, unsocial and barbaric while we should have been trying to correct and straighten up things while there still is time.

One thing most of us do whenever New Year comes around is read and listen prophecies and predictions, religious or contemporary, of incoming year. We'd like to be assured that the New Year would be what we would like it to be, that the pace of our personal progress would speed up without any hindrance that all our wishes would be answered and life would be the best it could be. Unfortunately, more and more such nice scenarios are becoming stuff for fiction, rudimentary fiction at that. "I can't believe he writes this garbage and expect us to buy his work! What's wrong with these writers! Maybe they are filling their bladders, and blood streams, with the wrong te!"

Well wishes come by the tons from all sides. Not only those you know but those who don't even know you exist wish you a very Happy and Prosperous New Year. No shortage of such things though it doesn't mean what our vocal chords play out is what our hearts believe in. It's rather easy to keep up a happy face and try to fool the world you're the nice kid and on the block and when you wish them a "Happy New Year" you really mean it. Yes it has been fairly easy to fake innocence and kind-heartedness which would lead people to say, "What a nice person he is! I never thought he was such a

good-hearted person!" How can anyone in their right minds not like such a person?" Even your most lethal enemy who always craves and even acts to dig the deepest of holes in which he'd put you in wouldn't deny you the "Happy New Year!" well wish. Wouldn't you say that's a little melodramatic!

So probably perhaps the past several weeks many people must have been searching in the scriptures and the prediction books and sites what would be happening in 2024. The craving for the good and uplifting news is almost universal, though these days there are too many bad apples in every basket. The single bad apple in a single basket no more works. "2024 would be a year of peace and prosperity where brotherhood among the various peoples of the world would be the strongest it had never been since the dawn of time. It would be a year where the guns fall silent everywhere and there would be no unsolved conflict, where not a single child dies of hunger or disease, where music, love smiles and humanity are at their brightest and at their best!" How about that? Any author who writes with these at the core of his world and still manages to sell millions of copies deserves some special Nobel Prize for having achieved the unthinkable. Imagining such a world demands real brainpower as putting the pieces together and claiming "Eureka!" could be science fiction of sorts in its own way.

About those prophecies and predictions it's all matter of what you really believe in and what you're willing to accept as truth and what you're willing to reject as falsehood. But go the literature

on the prophecies and predications for 2024 and I tell you need steel bones to have the courage not to throw up our arms and shout, "I knew this would be the year where everything would come crumbling down! Good bye you unfair cruel world!" Those claiming to have decoded the riddle of Nostradamus predictions say he didn't have good words for the year which would be ushered in midnight tonight; so doesn't the Bulgarian mystic woman. Now, with so much dark clouds hanging over much of the world I tell you it's challenging perhaps not to be moved by such predictions.

Now all this isn't about us being over-pessimistic. It's not about people having been programmed to look at everything negatively while refusing to acknowledge the positive. It's about the world being in one of the most trying and unpredictable of times and not about their refusing to look at the possibility of a peaceful world where everyone would live their dreams and humanity would reign. Everyone would like to wake up every morning, look at the bright sun and say, "Here is another good day which makes life worth living."

The challenge to mankind is how we cut down on empty rhetoric, look at reality eye to eye and work to change things for the better! We crave for sense and sensibility to take center stage where mankind pauses long enough to ask "Isn't it high time we made every New Year a really "Happy New Year?"

Anyways for those of you whose New Year is about to set in and for the rest of humanity a Happy New Year!

'Having a Nice Time!'

The skies would be dancing with color, people in the streets would be singing in the loudest voices they could manage and the "Happy New Year!" wishes would fill the air. These days it's seldom you see tens of thousands out in the streets and squares smiling, dancing and making merry. Nice, wouldn't you say? But somewhere in the world there would a couple of guys who amidst all the merry making try to hit the nail its head.

A:- I wish you a very Happy New Year!"

B:- Me too. Happy New Year to you and your beloved ones.

They look around all what's happening around them the minutes continue ticking away. Little by little the amusement gets somewhat less noisy as people start going to their homes. After there is home! And at home If awaits them with its many old and newer changeless and fewer delights, the delights might come in the form of the dinner table being full for yet another night. Out two guys regain their voices and continue talking in somber mood.

B:-You know, I find what transpires here a little... how can I put it, a little ironical. What do you think?

A:-Well, before I tell you what I think you have to explain to me what you mean by ironical.

B:-Not much explaining needed. What I was trying to say is that we are celebrating lives we aren't actually leading. At least most of us aren't leading lives that make as amused as we seem to be.

A:-And that makes us ineligible to have some good time?

B:-Despite all the troubles we're going through in our lives?

A:-Despite those and much more.

B:-Before answering, or trying to answer, your

question about being ineligible would you mind if I throw a question?

A:-You can throw as many questions as you wish.

B:-That's the kind of confidence I like.

A:-As many questions as you wish even though I might not answer ninety-nine of your hundred questions.

B:-That would be alright with me. Anyways, are we really having a nice time here? Or to put it in another way are we really as happy as our smiles and dances suggest?

A:-Hit them with the hardest questions first! That's what you, my good friend is doing.

B:-Yes that's what me, your good friend's doing. Would you be kind enough to answer my question?

A:-Look I don't want to sound philosophical. The last time I tried to be philosophical I ended up under the bus.

B:-And who threw you under it?

A:-My new beautiful girlfriend, who else! Maybe I was trying to impress her when I said there are philosophers' who would describe her beauty as illusion and not reality. She dumped me right then and there. (Laughter) To answer your question wouldn't you say the concept of having a nice time is subjective? I mean there might be some common denominators, but there are also our own specific meanings of having a nice time.

B:-I'm not talking about our out-on-the-town nights or our two-thousand birr per kilo weekend raw meat adventures. I am talking about such events as New Year eve.

A:-Well, you're losing me. Having a nice time is having a nice time eve or no eve!

B:-It isn't as simple as that. Here amidst these tens of thousands of people I think we aren't being ourselves.

A:-And what are we being?

B:-We're being what we think the public would like us to be. Even our smiles aren't naturally generated though we might think they are real. If we are seen frowning in the midst of so much smile and glee we would end up outcasts. Now about you losing me, I hope I pulled you back.

A:-No way; in fact you pushed me even farther.

B:-And why do you think I pushed you rather than pulling you?

A:-I've been telling you to go it easy on this Osho, Sartre and the like stuff. I think you got what you just said from one of those nerds who probably had too much spare time to spend.

B:-You don't like philosophy, do you?

A:-I hate it! Look what is happening in our life these days needs no philosophical intervention. By philosophizing you wouldn't fill the empty spaces on my family's dinner table. It is either there or it isn't.

B:-I'm not trying to philosophize. Look the other day you were telling me hundred kilos of teff going for fourteen thousand birr there is no way you could satisfy your family's needs as you used to.

A:- Correct; and they've accepted the fact.

B:-That's nice; many don't. What I'm trying to say is that when you return to your house the half full mesob of injera would still be half full. And of course there's that uneasy air hanging over your household because of the many financial problems that resulted from the steep rise in the cost of living. Did I miss something here?

A:- No, you didn't.

B:- Then my question since the smile would leave you face and the frown returns when you return home, it means your amusement and smile are temporary.

A:- I wouldn't deny that.

B:- That's why I am trying to tell you that at this place we aren't our real selves but what we probably would like to be.

A:- What's wrong with that?

B:- Aha! Now you're getting what I've been trying to say.

A:- And you've trying to say...

B:- Our having a nice time is not the real reflection of our internal feelings and our actual lives but about the lives we would have liked to enjoy. How about that?

A:- You never cease to amaze me. Why do you have to dig so deep into things and spoil the good feeling of the hour?

B:- That's not my intention.

A:- I know it isn't. But I think the important aspect you miss here is that however hard the lives of people are, however backbreaking and unbearable the burdens of daily life might be on them and their families people have every right to do things that, even if for minutes, frees them from the daily torment and have a good time. I don't think you should have a full dinner table and 24/7 smiles in the house to enjoy happiness and serenity wherever and wherever they get it.

B:- You really are talking now, aren't you?

A:- Yes I am! Don't think I'm blaming you of anything. But then as long as there isn't foul play, as long as no social values have been abused a few minutes of smile and joy here and there when the opportunities arise is good for the soul and has nothing to do with the number of dishes on the table. End of discussion. Can we join the crowd now?

B:- Yes, we can.

Recapping major diplomatic rapprochement success of 2023

BY COMPILED BY STAFF REPORTER

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed at the 41st Extraordinary Session of IGAD Assembly discussing various issues of regional importance, such as security, trade, infrastructure, energy, and climate change.



Vladimir Putin met with Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed on the sidelines of the Russia-Africa Summit in Sochi.



Ethiopia and China announced 'All Weather Strategic Cooperation Partnership' to elevating of partnership between the two countries. During the occasion, the elevation of partnership between the two countries from Comprehensive and Enduring Strategic Cooperative Partnership to an 'All Weather Strategic Cooperation Partnership' level has been announced.



Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken met with Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed and discussed on a range of issues critical to the U.S.-Ethiopia relationship.

Abiy conferred with President Ismail Omar Guelleh of Djibouti and President Hassan Sheikh Mohamed of Somalia on bilateral and regional issues of mutual interest.



Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed has conferred with French President Emmanuel Macron on the sidelines of the Compact with Africa Summit.

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