

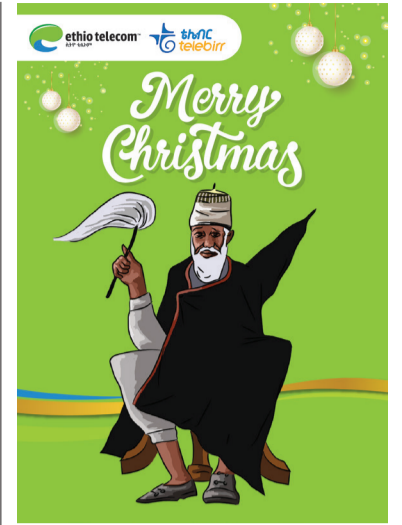


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Premier's call connects foreign-born Ethiopians with roots: Tourism Minister

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BACK TO OUR ROOTS



Photo: Hadush Abreha

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+251 911 45 9790
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4th Floor, Dabi Building, Bole road Addis Ababa Ethiopia

Ethiopia taking bold steps to join WTO in three years

BY TSEGAYE TILAHUN

ADDIS ABABA – Ethiopia is taking bold steps to finalize the process of joining the

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ENDC appeals media's active role in awareness creation

• Media chiefs pledge efforts in building informed public

BY YESUF ENDRIS

ADDIS ABABA- The Ethiopian National Dialogue Commission (ENDC) said both the state-run and private media have the gaps in building the public's awareness about its preliminary activities, mentioning the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) is an exception.

While presenting the ENDC progress report to the House of Peoples Representatives, the Chief Commissioner Prof. Mesfin Araya

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Ethiopia enjoys robust ties with Middle East, Asian countries: MoFA

BY BILAL DERSO

ADDIS ABABA- Ethiopia has enjoyed a unique relationship with the Middle East and Asian countries as the latter have no desire to interfere in domestic affairs and promote mutual respect, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) said.

Middle East, Asia, and Pacific Countries Affairs Director General at MoFA Ambassador Gebeyehu Ganga (PhD) told the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) that the country is working to strengthen its relations with those that do not meddle in its domestic matters.

Mentioning Ethiopia's cordial relationship



Ambassador Gebeyehu Ganga (PhD)

with countries in the Middle East, Asia, and the Pacific, the diplomat indicated that the

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The Delicate Process of Coffee Ceremony and Life

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Greening education: Education paying highest cost for ongoing climate crisis

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“Champions keep playing until they get it right.”

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Finance Minister discusses with ECA Executive Secretary

ADDIS ABABA- Ethiopian Finance Minister met and held fruitful discussion with the newly appointed Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) at a courtesy meeting held in the Ministry of Finance.

Minister of Finance, Ahmed Shide discussed with Claver Gatete, the newly appointed Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA).

After congratulating and welcoming the Executive Secretary of ECA, the Finance Minister stressed that Ethiopia and the Economic Commission for Africa should work together in order to make the collective voice of Africa be heard in the international arena.

With the aim of realizing growth and development, the government of Ethiopia has been undertaking Ethiopia's Home-Grown Economic Reform (HGER) Agenda and some other macroeconomic reforms in which the government aspires commonly engaged with reliable development partners

including the Economic Commission for Africa.

As the current Chairman of the Horn of Africa Initiative, Ahmed also highlighted his commitment to working together with the Economic Commission for Africa as regional economic integration is one of the important objectives of the commission to bring socio-economic change in the Horn countries.

Since the ECA was established for Africans' wellbeing, the Commission, African leaders as well as finance ministers should work together to put the African agenda on the forefront, said ClaverGatete.

The Economic Commission for Africa will undertake the 56th Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development from March 4-5, 2024, in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe.

The session is dedicated to discussing financing the transition to inclusive and green economies.

Administration obtains over 9 Bln Birr from public enterprises in three months

BY MESERET BEHAILU

ADDIS ABABA- Public Enterprises Holding and Administration disclosed that it has secured over nine billion Birr over the last three months of this fiscal year.

Administration presented its three month performance to the parliament.

Presenting the work performance, Administration Director General, Habtamu Hailemichael said that the institution has been securing more than nine billion Birr from public enterprises over the past three months. The administration planned to gain 11.86 billion Birr in the above-mentioned period but it would succeed only nine billion Birr. It means that the administration has achieved 79 percent of its target set.

As for the Director General, following the administration's hard work, the public enterprises revenue has become high. For example, the public enterprises revenue is 10 billion Birr, 35 billion Birr, and 45 billion Birr during the past three consecutive years.

"Public Enterprises Holding and Administration planned to collect 5.3 billion Birr within a quarter of the fiscal year and succeeded three billion one. This was secured from Postal Service Enterprise, Industry Parks Development Corporation, National Veterinary Institute, DBE, and Industrial Inputs Development Enterprise, which were healthy public enterprises.



Habtamu Hailemichael

In this regard, the National Institute of Animal Health has the largest share of profits. The administration has done to modernize the enterprises' management systems and money handling practices, identifying the way to get profit and making the process easy to realize the five years goal. Besides, the administration gives capacity building training for leaders and employees to be much more effective."

He further stated that Ethiopian Postal Service Enterprise ranked first from the African continent and 4th at the international level. The Development Bank of Ethiopia (DBE) has also provided huge credit/loan service and Ethio-engineering group makes profit at present.

Ethiopia requires drastic measures to curtail informal border trade: EIAR

BY MISGANAW ASNAKE

ADDIS ABABA – Ethiopia has to take strong measures to fight informal border trade that deprived the country a significant amount of income, the Ethiopian Institute of Agricultural Research (EIAR) said.

The institute has organized a workshop on Wednesday themed "Informal Cross Border Trade in Ethiopia: The Case of Live Animal and Other Agricultural Outputs of Ethiopia."

Presenting a paper on the occasion, EIAR Senior Researcher Rehima Mussema (PhD), said an informal cross border trade is preventing Ethiopia from securing a significant amount earnings in agricultural products and live animals sale.

She said more than 130,000 Ethiopia's live animal outflows due to informal cross border trade.

The main reason for the expansion of informal cross border trade, as to Rehima, are increasing number of market manipulators and bureaucracy, limited technical



support to farmers, lack of society collaboration, and absence of modern inspection tools.

However, she believed that it is difficult to stop this informal trade since it has socio economic benefit for border community such as employment opportunity, livelihood, food supply, and interaction with adjacent communities in the neighboring



Photo: Gebabo Gebre

country.

"We cannot stop informal trade market but we can minimize by decreasing pull factors, create awareness on community," the researcher said.

Live Animal and Animal Related Product Project Head at Ministry of Trade and Regional Integration Abebe Tadesse on his part said that his ministry is working with

Custom Commission to regulate informal and illegal border trade activities in checkpoints to facilitate the smooth exchange of goods with neighboring nations.

Informal cross border trade has been taking place in informal and formal way by traders, community, information providers among such nations in centuries, according to EIAR.

EIAR also called on members of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) to formulate a comprehensive legal framework to mitigate informal cross-border trade.

As to the institute, IGAD member states need to work hard on customizing and benefiting their community as well as boosting regional trade integration onwards.

The other strategy what IGAD nations needs to employ, according to EIAR is to revise trade policy, establish market center in border areas, and promote trade exhibitions, involving actors including officials and checkpoint gatekeepers.

Premier's call connects foreign-born Ethiopians with roots: Tourism Minister

BY ASHENAFI ANIMUT

ADDIS ABABA – Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed's (PhD) call to the second generation Ethiopians is instrumental to connect them with their country of origin and facilitate notable contribution in the national development, the Tourism Minister said.

Briefing the media yesterday, the Minister Nasissie Chali said that the call is a significant milestone for foreign-born Ethiopian to trace their roots, culture and history, explore new and existing destinations and make connections to contribute to the future of the country.

Nassissie further noted that the Primer's second-generation Ethiopians call, which is to be held under theme 'Back To Your Origins,' would be an opportunity for them to return to their origins and learn, understand and get immersed in the culture and history of their county.

According to the minister, the platform helps connect foreign-born Ethiopians with their origins by creating social, cultural and psychological ties and building a sense of patriotism thereby contributing to their country's development. "The Second generation Ethiopians initiative is a ground breaking way to share their skills, knowledge and experiences with their fellow country folk towards generating a remarkable output."

She added, "The first round of the program slated to be held under the theme 'Connect to your multi-cultural roots' from the end of December 2023 to the beginning of February 2024 with the view of entertaining the Diasporas experience and get reconnected

to the diverse cultures of the Ethiopian people."

Moreover, the program helps establish social and psychological ties that would help foreign-born Ethiopians to strengthen their role as ambassadors of their country of origin and share this knowledge around the world.

At the sidelines of this round, various activities such as handicrafts exhibition, cultural costumes show and bazaar and others are scheduled under the Ethiopian week, visit programs and conferences and public lectures.

The minister further noted that the second round program is set to be held under the theme 'Connect to your historical roots' from the end of February 2024 to the beginning of May 2024 with the view of enabling foreign-born Ethiopians to discover the history of their homeland and understand the selfless sacrifice paid by their forefathers and foremothers.

"These sacrifices brought a beacon of freedom for the black people around the world thereby building a sense of pride."

The third round is to be held under the Moto 'Leave your legacy, savor your holiday' from the mid June to 2024 to the end of September 2024 and aims to mobilize national volunteerism activities for the benefit of vulnerable communities throughout the country. Furthermore, the program provides an opportunity to engage meaningfully while savoring vacation times.

It is to be recalled that Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) has recently made the call to the second generation of Ethiopian Diaspora to come to Ethiopia in three-rounds.

ENDC appeals media's active...

stated that the mainstream media's coverage of the dialogue processes and progress has so far been inadequate. "Yet, the EPA has done commendable jobs in availing timely and accurate information for the public."

Stating the information flow has not reached a desired level, Mesfin pleaded with both public and privately-owned media to discharge their responsibility in awareness creation and to report the ENDC progress. "We cannot reach the public with our sole effort. We need the active engagement of all stakeholders including private and community-based media."

Public media chiefs on their part pledged to give more coverage to the ENDC activities and to ensure the public right to access information.

Accordingly, the EPA CEO Mesafint Tefera said that EPA will continue covering the ENDC's activities and progress in different formats that would help to create a strong public mobilization for the success of the National Dialogue. "EPA has a noble place in recording the major happenings of the country in its 83 years of existence and as the National Dialogue as a major happening, the media would attach due attention to inform the public about it."

Mesfianto also pledged to assign bit reporters to

the ENDC activities that would play a major role in keeping the public informed.

Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation CEO Getnet Tadesse also said that the membership in the Media Forum that is working on the National Dialogue is open for cyber media actors, private media companies, and content creators.

"Beyond the Forum's plan, the ENDC is expected to come up with its own national plan of communication that would be implemented by the media institutions," Getnet said, expressing EBC's readiness to enhance its coverage of the National Dialogue and to produce more contents.

Ethiopia News Agency CEO Seife Deribeon his part commented that the media has a due responsibility in building informed society about the National Dialogue that is among the is major national project of the current time.

"Having employed our extensive network, the ENA is covering the ENDC's ongoing activities at grass root level and in different languages...

[] I think, most of the must-told progresses of the commission especially its engagement in the grass root level are underreported. So, we will ready all our correspondents in branch offices to relentless coverage."

Industrial parks attract more investors: IPDC

BY ESSEYE MENGISTE

ADDIS ABABA – The Industrial Parks Development Corporation (IPDC) announced that the country's industrial parks have attracted more investment as 157 of the total 177 shades are occupied by investors.

IPDC CEO Akililu Tadesse told the Ethiopia Press Agency (EPA) that out of the 177 shades only 20 are available for new investments since the remaining 157 shades have been reserved by investors.

He also stated that among the 12 industrial parks five of them are fully reserved by investors.

Accordingly, Adama, Bole Lemi, Addis, Semera industrial parks and the Dire Dawa Free Trade Zone are fully taken by manufacturing companies, he noted.

Several activities are being undertaken to get investors to come in and work on the other parks,

he added.

The CEO mentioned the national reform, the macroeconomic restructuring and the peace agreement with TPLF among the major contributors for the increasing number of investors who took the shades.

He said that domestic investors have covered 50 percent of the 53 new investments operating in the parks in 2022.

Previously, many of the industrial parks were targeting AGOA market and the products were also produced based on the demand of the AGOA market requirements, Akililu said, adding that currently the parks are specializing in agro processing, machinery and automobile, pharmaceuticals, garment and textile as they are looking for various market options.

Today, the parks are steadily producing diversified products with the support of IPDC through facilitating market options like Europe and Asia, he indicated.

Ethiopia enjoys robust

bond with Middle East is especially strong in terms of culture and religion. Also, a large number of Ethiopians live and work in Middle East countries and changing their livelihoods.

According to him, among Asian countries, Ethiopia has reached the level of strategic partnership with China and strong collaborations have also been formed with Japan, Korea, and India in education, trade, investment, technology transfer, and human resource development. "This shows that the countries have a relationship with the idea of traveling together regardless of internal or external pressure."

The director general further highlighted that Ethiopia's relations with Middle East countries notably Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) are invigorating in various areas of mutual benefits. The two energy-rich countries are becoming sources of investment and market destinations for Ethiopia and they are also supporting the latter in the field of education, science and health.

"Currently, Ethiopian citizens are legally traveling to Saudi Arabia, UAE, Jordan, and other Middle East countries for employment in various fields. Similar labor pacts will be made soon with Bahrain and Kuwait and we have focused on studying job opportunities, negotiating, legally providing employment, and protecting the rights and benefits of citizens."

In terms of trade exchange, China and India are the major destinations for Ethiopia's agricultural commodities, and Middle East countries are taking coffee, sesame, flowers, vegetables, fruits, and other products in bulk from Ethiopia. Also, consolidated efforts are underway to take Ethiopia's trade and investment relationship with Asian and Middle East countries to a higher level.

Health, investment, and business forums that have been held with Japan, Saudi Arabia, China, and other countries in the region will continue to be strengthened, Ambassador Gebeyehu remarked.

Ethiopia taking bold steps...

World Trade Organization (WTO) within three years, said the Ministry of Trade and Regional Integration (MoTRI).

Briefing the media, MoTRI Minister Gebremeskel Chala noted that the country is working on fulfilling formalities to complete the WTO negotiation process by 2026.

Currently, the country is on the right track for the organization accession as it has been fulfilling the formalities, he stated.

"We finalized conducting a study on the amount of customs duty increment in the future. The national committee which was established by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) last week has been reviewing the document. The committee is reviewing especially for trade offers for import goods," Gebremeskel.

The custom duty on goods is among the 181 questions presented to Ethiopia to make clear its policy framework as a prerequisite, he noted.

As to him, this was presented after a fourth round negotiation with the WTO in which member countries requested Ethiopia's

customs duty on import and local goods.

Member countries also demanded the country to explain its amount of custom duty adjustment in the future, he said.

Ethiopia has set a legal framework to perform trading between the public enterprises and private sector and others, the Minister added.

Earlier, policy implementation of the country was full of challenges that affected the negotiation process, he said, adding the government has been taking various measures including privatizing telecom, allowing foreign banks to join Ethiopia's market and so on.

He indicated that it takes an average of ten years for countries to join the WTO though it took Ethiopia almost 20 years only for membership negotiation since the finance, transport, telecom and other sectors were fully closed to the private sector.

Over the last 20 years, Ethiopia conducted negotiations with WTO member countries in which the members had presented some 900 queries about the country's conducive environment in accordance with WTO principles.

Opinion

Applying compatible dispute settlement strategies to realize stabled nation

BY GETACHEW MINAS

Dispute settlement strategies may vary based on the nature, type and depth of the dispute that occurred at the community, regional and state levels. These levels have their specific nature partly related to one another. If community level dispute is not resolved in time using local elders and concerned authorities, it may flare up into a wider regional level. At the regional level, it may involve a wider range of dwellers and groups that represent different age, sex, ethnicity, tribe, or clan.

Whatever the level may be, the parties involved in the dispute operate within specific context. They may be engaged in political and social disputes that require specific and relevant strategy for settlement. In the case of Ethiopia, which is a country with diverse cultures, ethnicities, and a complex political landscape, effective dispute resolution strategies should take into account several factors.

The major components of dispute settlement strategy include: cultural sensitivity; legal framework; mediation and dialogue; community involvement; government involvement; conflict prevention; capacity building; international support; public awareness and education; and monitoring and evaluation.

Cultural sensitivity is the first component of the dispute settlement strategy. It implies understanding and respect for the diverse cultures and traditions within Ethiopia. Cultural nuances can play a significant role in dispute resolution. Strategies for dispute settlement have to be very sensitive to cultural and traditional differences. These factors may contribute to more effective communication between disputing parties. These parties will find the way to resolve disputes and arrive at resolutions acceptable by all. Dispute resolutions presuppose a legal framework that ensures the proper execution of resolution by parties to the conflict. Legal enforcement agencies may play a role in case of breach of agreements to resolve conflicts.

Parties have to familiarize themselves with the legal framework in Ethiopia, including relevant laws and regulations pertaining to dispute resolution. Of course laymen are not expected to know the legal framework in its entirety. They may be required to engage legal experts or consultants who are well aware about Ethiopian law. However, some legal experts serve both sides of the contestants to the disservice of the legal framework of the country. They may handover secrets of a disputant to another, leading to unfair treatment of entities whose rights are infringed, violated, breached and transgressed.

In other words, those who are entrusted with the right and authority of keeping law and order have to be trustworthy. Disputants have to accept those assigned to settle their disagreements. The slightest

element of distrust of judges, conciliators, and mediators by disputants would lead to mistrust of all parties. All of those engaged in mediation should be neutral entities. They do not side with any parties to ensure that disputes are settled without turning to a court trial.

Legal experts encourage mediation and dialogue as a primary means of dispute resolution. Mediation is a positive intervention in a dispute in order to resolve it. It consists of negotiation between disputing parties, assisted by a neutral third party. It is defined as an intervention by an acceptable, impartial and neutral third party to assist disputing parties in voluntarily reaching their own solutions.

In some legal jurisdictions, mediation is a mandatory part of the litigation process before proceeding to trial. Authorized court officials may dictate when mediation is to be applied. Generally, it involves two or more parties in a dispute; it is entirely voluntary and non-coercive; and the mediator does not decide for the parties, but rather encourages them to agree to a settlement.

The mediator may provide relationship-building or procedural assistance and options which have not been previously contemplated by the parties. The mediator encourages parties to explore alternate possibilities in settling the dispute. Ethiopia has a strong tradition of community-based conflict resolution; efforts should be made to involve local leaders, elders, or other respected figures who can mediate between conflicting parties.

There is a tradition of involving the community in the dispute resolution process in Ethiopia. Community-based approaches often lead to more sustainable solutions as they take into account the local context and the needs of the people affected by the dispute. Ethiopian elders are keen to resolve disputes without offending the parties involved. They handle each of the contending parties carefully without intruding or negating the interests of disputants.

Through conducting rounds of meetings and dialogue among contending parties, the local elders introduce their skills of handling disputes. They apply ways and means of convincing both parties to the dispute to come closer to settle their disputes. Normally, the elders are elected by both parties to a dispute. In turn, the elders elect their chairperson. The decisions passed by these elders are recognized by the legal authorities or courts.

The legality of the decision process by elders is guaranteed by the relevant courts. Once the legality of the process is guaranteed, the decision passed by the elders is legally acceptable. However, parties dissatisfied with the decisions of the elders may appeal to the legally authorized courts for final decision.

Government Involvement is of the essence. It is a requirement to work closely with

relevant government bodies to guarantee that the process of dispute settlement is legal. Concerned institutions have to guarantee that the settlement of disputes is on the right track.

All the above mentioned details of processes do ensure that the dispute resolution process aligns with national laws and policies of the Ethiopian government. This may include collaborating with local government officials, the judiciary, or other relevant authorities. The collaboration of local authorities guarantees the success of decisions passed by the elders. The judiciary may confirm, if necessary, the decisions passed by these elders. Other relevant authorities have crucial roles to play in respecting the decisions of elders at local levels.

The most crucial step is conflict prevention. It is useful to develop and implement strategies for conflict prevention. These strategies emanate from identifying causes and effects of conflict that have taken place in other parts of the society. Identifying and analyzing the true causes of conflicts is one of the remedies for settlement of disputes that lead to major conflicts.

Petty issues that are not spotted and recognized in time may grow into a major concern that upset and bother the entire community. Elders may be agitated and disconcerted, disappointed and distressed if minor issues turn out to be unmanageable, unruly and riotous. Other members of the community, in the long run, tend to disrespect elders that failed in their mission of securing peace, security and order for the disturbed, scared and upset residents.

It is, therefore, a priority to identify and address potential sources of conflicts before they escalate to catastrophic levels. Thus, early recognition and settlement of disputes can help to mitigate difference of opinion and promote long-term stability at the societal level.

Settlement of disputes at any level of the society in Ethiopia requires capacity building in skills of conflict settlement. It is crucial to invest in such skills at the community and institutional levels. This includes training local leaders on how to identify the root causes of conflicts. If these causes are studied in detail, they provide information on the real causes and trends of disagreements that grow into conflicts. It is also crucial to involve mediators who come in between disputants and settle issues before they grow into higher levels. Similarly, other stakeholders in conflict resolution have to develop real and relevant skills and techniques which they may impart to elders of the community.

Some minor issues may grow to higher levels involving some or most parts of Ethiopia. In this respect, it may be wise to seek international support. Global or regional support may help in gathering experiences of dispute settlement from

other developing countries that have undergone through similar conflicts. The concerned government authority should be ready to gather these experiences and assimilate them into the local situations.

The same authority may also look for mediation strategies that have been used by other countries. If the dispute involves transnational issues, relevant incidents at regional level have to be searched and identified. Transnational conflicts may need external assistance for settling them peacefully. International assistance obtained from experienced institutions and experts is deemed beneficial. International organizations may provide additional resources and expertise for the settlement of disputes. Also, diplomatic channels may provide additional resources and perspectives.

It is important to raise public awareness in Ethiopia about dispute resolution mechanisms. It may not be new for Ethiopians to resolve disputes at any levels. People that suffered in different systems of government have wider experience about social disputes and their settlements. They are very aware of the importance of peaceful conflict resolution. They have mostly been involved after conflicts have occurred at any level.

The question is how to identify issues before they lead to conflicts. In this respect, educating the public can contribute to a culture of dialogue and understanding that keep disputes at bay before they develop into conflicts. The responsibility for identifying minor societal issues that may develop into disputes, disagreements, clashes, collisions and fights at higher levels is that of social scientists, including psychologists. These professional groups are responsible for identifying minor conflicts that may grow to higher levels. They may suggest preventive measures for concerned authorities.

For ensuring the effectiveness of a dispute settlement strategy, it is important to establish mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating. Without guaranteeing the effectiveness of dispute resolution efforts, any attempt to resolve issues is an abuse of resources. It leads to a waste of human lives, if conflicts are not settled as soon as possible. However, this demands regular assessment that can help identify areas for improvement. The assessment, however, has to be based on research, monitoring and evaluation that may ensure that the chosen strategies are yielding positive results.

It is important to note that the specific details of a dispute settlement strategy will depend on the nature of the dispute, the parties involved, and the broader socio-political context. Therefore, a flexible and adaptive approach is recommended for the development and implementation of the strategy of dispute settlement in Ethiopia.

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

Editorial

Opinion

Plan your trip to Ethiopia for *Gena and Timket*

Gena and Timket are among the widely and colorfully celebrated religious holidays in Ethiopia. Gena is an Ethiopian equivalent of Christmas, a holiday that takes place annually on 7 January marking the Birth of Jesus Christ. Timket is the feast of the baptism of Jesus, epiphany marked in 20th January. Both Christian holidays are observed in January, the first month of the year. You may plan your trip to the New Year for a special treat in Ethiopia, and bless the remaining months of the year.

Ministry of Tourism has disclosed that it has prepared to welcome visitors on the occasion of the celebration of the two holidays. The ministry has indicated that preparations include allocation of additional flights, as well as reliable hospitality in the places where the two holidays are particularly celebrated.

The Birth of Christ is celebrated across the world where there are Christian communities. The way it is celebrated in Ethiopia has also its own features. The word Gena refers to different traditional games played by men using a club and small wooden ball that resembles hockey. Since it is played around the celebration of the Birth of Christ, the holiday also took its name from game as interchangeable term for the usual name of the holiday, Lidet or Birth.

This being a social part of the feast, the holiday is also marked by series of religious events that are of unique solemnity handed down from the ancient tradition of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church (EOC).

Even more than the events on Gena, more attractive and breathtaking religious and social activities take place during the celebration of Timket. The Ethiopian Epiphany is unique in that, among other things, it is celebrated out doors and in most cases takes at least three days of celebration.

During the Timket celebration many people take to the streets in procession to accompany the tabots in their respective parishes to the place where they stay overnight for a special sermon. People participate in a special prayer and later to receive blessings from the sprinkling of the holy water or Timket.

What makes Timket a special and memorable holiday are the social activities that undergo on the sides of it. Since the holiday takes place for 3 to 5 days out doors, it is a special moment for youths to show up their beauty and look for their soul mate, just like Valentine's Day.

It is also a time for carnival as many smart merchants supply goods of diverse types for sale around the venue of the holiday. This adds the splendor of the celebrations.

Despite being a religious holiday wearing traditional costumes, singing and dancing traditional music and dances are permissible and are also a long held tradition in various parts of the country. Accordingly, people from various nations and nationalities of the country come out to the celebration with their captivating costumes, music and dances.

All these events depict the bigger Ethiopia in one place at a time. This makes January the right time for those how want to discover a lot about Ethiopia in one trip. Don't miss the holiday vibes in January in Ethiopia.

Leadership should play its role to build democratic system, address problems peacefully

BY ENDALE HAILE (PhD)

The two former leaders of Ethiopia, Emperor Yohannes IV and Menelik II had sealed a historical agreement that peacefully ended their rivalry for power. Signed on March 20, 1878 at a place called Liche, near the City of Debre Berhan (Bahru Zewdie, 2016) The Liche Agreement has such a big historical significance as it has precluded a possible escalation of the power rift in to massive civil war which would have exposed the nation to much larger crisis given the political situation of that time.

As per the agreement Emperor Yohannes IV consolidated his power as Emperor of Ethiopia and resorted to the other work of defending the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the country while emperor Menelik II became King of Shoa, and was able to reign as Emperor up on the death of Emperor Yohannes IV.

This may be a good lesson and a benchmark for twenty-first-century political leaders, as well as the people to think out of the box, shrink from clutching on conflict and violence as a means to our differences and consider peaceful means to reach our target. This is the right time to look back our history which is marred by decades of conflict and contribute to the effectiveness of the ongoing efforts of transitional justice and national dialogue.

As noted by many historians, the modern history of Ethiopia started in 1855 and lasted until 1974, was mainly characterized by many civil wars that are mainly precipitated by power struggle. For instance, the war between Emperor Tewodros II and different nobilities included the battles of Gur Amba (November 1852), Gorgora Bichin (April 1853), Aysahl (June 1853), Gundet, and Gura (June 1875).

The reign of Emperor Menelik II (1896–1906) has also seen many wars with regional kingdoms. In the same way, the period of Emperor Haile Selassie I (1930–1974) was challenged by internal power struggles including the 1960s abortive coup d'état, and the 1974 revolution.

Similarly, the Dergue regime from 1974 to May 1991, had contended the 17-years' war with the secessionist Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) and other opposition armed groups in various parts of the country.

During the EPRDF's regime, the Ethio-Eritrea war, among other sporadic conflicts, had caused the deaths of millions of people.

The conflicts mentioned above were factional struggles within the core supreme elites, who were grouped as proponents and opponents of the power holder. Contrary to

this, during the era of Ethiopia's modern history, the people have struggled for their political rights, which were ignored by the ruling elites. In this regard, the first Woyane rebellion in 1943, the rebellions in Bale (1963–1971) and Gojjam (1960–1968), the Ethiopian Students' Movement, and the frequent strikes by urban residents after the 2005 election are good illustrations of how the people have been struggling for their liberty, freedom, and democracy for decades.

Given all these historical accounts of resorting to conflict as means of solving difference, can we conclude that Ethiopians are warlike? In this case we have to see the matter distinctively between the people and the leaders.

From my point of view, there is a traditional saying about people: "People do not make mistakes". So, I could not draw the conclusion that Ethiopians are warmongers. It is possible to mention many traditional, social systems where people apply to address conflicts peacefully. It is important to ask why we Ethiopians have failed to build a democratic political system since we have a 3000-year history of state-building culture.

Therefore, majority of the responsibility to exploit all the rich cultural heritages and potential of the people to address conflict through peaceful means and even build a prosperous nation, lies on the shoulder of the leadership. Leaders must take advantage of these chances to build a democratic political system through becoming committed, selfless, and visionary towards the notion of democracy.

Leadership entails formulating a vision for the future, developing a rational strategy for realizing that vision, and enlisting the support of political actors who can help. Politics is based on a "leader-follower" relationship that is purposeful, interactive, and capable of causation (Ayee 2007, 166). They need to examine the soundness of their policy for democratization, effectiveness of their democratic institutions, and independence of their media.

Therefore, to change the history of recurrent conflicts and wars, the only solution will be to launch a recognized democratic culture and political system in the country. The democratic culture and recognized political system can entertain both power and democratic questions. Just like what Emperor Yohannes IV and Emperor Menelik II have done at Liche more than a century ago, leaders, scholars and people need to think out of the box, explore many possible options to solve problems and work towards building a peaceful nation.

Editor's Note: The author is a scholar in public policy and management.

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Department

email: etpresspromotion@gmail.com
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Telegram :- 0976084707 - press

Editor-in-Chief: Worku Belachew
email- workubelachew@press.et
Address- Nifas Silk Lafto Sub-city
Woreda - 05, House No----
Tel- +251 111 26 41 98

Managing Editor: Wakuman Kudama
Email: wakuma220@gmail.com

Deputy Editors-in-Chief:
Alem Hailu
Elizabeth Mengistu
Zekarias Woldemariam
Desta Geberehiwot
Daniel Beyene

Website: www.press.et
email: ethiopianherald@press.et
Fb/ /Ethiopian Press Agency/
The Ethiopian Herald

Business & Economy

Ethiopia's pursuit of sea access, its implications for economical integration

BY ADDISALEM MULAT

It is crucial to acknowledge Ethiopia's strategic endeavor as it holds immense potential for long-term security and significant economic growth, not only for Ethiopia but for the entire region as well. By fully embracing Ethiopia's aspiration for sea access, neighboring countries have the opportunity to cultivate an environment characterized by collaboration, mutual benefit, and shared progress.

This recognition acknowledges the importance of Ethiopia's pursuit and its potential impact on both its own development and that of the surrounding nations.

Understanding Ethiopia's strategic interest in seeking sea access creates a foundation of trust, cooperation, and collective advancement. It provides neighboring countries with a valuable opportunity to engage in constructive dialogue, establish mutually beneficial partnerships, and strengthen regional integration. This recognition of Ethiopia's pursuit promotes a sense of shared purpose and aids in the formation of a more cohesive and interconnected regional community.

Perceiving Ethiopia's pursuit of sea access as a potential source of sustainable security and economic growth allows neighboring countries to lay the groundwork for a more harmonious and interconnected regional landscape. By endorsing Ethiopia's vision for sea access, collaborative efforts can be fostered to promote peace, stability, and shared prosperity among all nations in the region. This perspective facilitates the pooling of resources, leveraging of strengths, and enhancing the collective capacity for economic and social progress.

Recognizing Ethiopia's quest for sea access as a means to bolster sustainable security and overall progress enables neighboring nations to align their own interests with those of Ethiopia. This alignment creates a harmonious environment conducive to collaborative endeavors and joint initiatives. The shared vision fosters a sense of common purpose and solidarity among nations, leading to the creation of a more stable and prosperous regional landscape.

By perceiving this pursuit as a potential source of sustainable security and economic growth, neighboring countries can lay the foundation for a more cohesive and interconnected regional community. Embracing Ethiopia's vision for sea access paves the way for collaborative efforts aimed at promoting peace, stability, and shared prosperity among all nations in the region.

The country's pursuit of sea and port access presents an opportunity for neighboring countries to partake in a shared vision of regional development and growth. By recognizing Ethiopia's quest as a means to bolster sustainable security and overall progress, neighboring nations can align their own interests with those of Ethiopia, thereby creating a harmonious environment conducive to collaborative endeavors.

This shared vision can serve as a unifying



force, fostering a sense of common purpose and solidarity among nations leading to the creation of a more stable and prosperous regional landscape.

By understanding and respecting Ethiopia's strategic pursuits, neighboring nations can establish a framework for equitable cooperation, transparent communication, and inclusive decision-making. This level of understanding and mutual respect contributes to the strengthening of diplomatic ties, the resolution of potential conflicts, and the promotion of peaceful coexistence among nations in the region.

Ethiopia's focus on port development extends beyond its own economic interests; it also acknowledges the importance of regional security. Stable economic growth creates a foundation for peace and prosperity. By investing in port infrastructure, Ethiopia aims to promote stability in the region, thereby safeguarding its own interests as well as those of its neighbors. A secure regional environment ensures smooth trade flows, discourages conflict, and establishes an atmosphere conducive to harmonious cooperation and shared prosperity.

The benefits of prioritizing port development extend beyond the economic and security realms. Ethiopia recognizes the potential for positive social impact that comes with increased connectivity and access to global markets. Robust port infrastructure promotes inclusivity by providing opportunities across various sectors, empowering women and youth, and reducing poverty levels.

As Ethiopia continues on its path towards economic advancement, it remains committed to inclusive development that considers the well-being of both its citizens and the wider region. By recognizing the critical role ports play in fostering economic growth, ensuring regional stability, and promoting social empowerment, Ethiopia is taking proactive steps towards realizing its vision of a prosperous and interconnected nation.

By regarding Ethiopia's maritime aspirations positively, the neighboring countries can contribute to fostering stability and harmony in the area while simultaneously benefiting from the economic potential that sea access can bring. Ethiopia's resolve to secure access to the sea should not be perceived as a source of concern by its neighboring countries; rather, it should be regarded as a potential avenue for fostering collaboration and shared

prosperity through the effective utilization of maritime resources.

It is vital for neighboring nations to actively endorse and support Ethiopia in its endeavor to obtain sea access recognizing its potential to catalyze the reinforcement of regional cooperation and the establishment of stronger economic bonds.

The narrative surrounding Ethiopia's quest for sea access presents an occasion for neighboring countries to transcend traditional perceptions and embrace a forward-looking perspective. Rather than considering Ethiopia's aspirations as a threat, nations can reframe them as a pathway towards collaborative engagement and joint advancement. This shift in mindset encourages the exploration of innovative approaches to leveraging the region's maritime resources for the collective benefit of all parties involved.

A secure and prosperous Ethiopia has the potential to ripple positive effects throughout its neighboring countries contributing to a more stable and conducive environment for socio-economic progress. Recognizing the intrinsic link between Ethiopia's security and regional stability presents an imperative for neighboring nations to align their efforts in supporting Ethiopia's pursuit of sea access viewing it as a vital element in the collective journey towards a more secure and flourishing regional landscape.

Embracing Ethiopia's quest for sea access thus serves as a springboard for reinforcing the interconnectedness and interdependence of the region, paving the way for joint initiatives and synergistic endeavors aimed at yielding shared benefits for all stakeholders.

The strategic significance of Ethiopia's pursuit of sea access extends beyond its own borders presenting an opportunity for neighboring nations to reframe their perspective and engage in constructive dialogue. Viewing Ethiopia's ambition as a conduit for bolstering regional cooperation and economic interdependence opens avenues for nurturing a climate of trust, understanding, and joint commitment towards common goals.

Understanding Ethiopia's determination to obtain sea access as a catalyst for strengthening regional cooperation highlights the potential for transformative change within the region. By embracing this

pursuit as an opportunity for joint progress and mutual growth, neighboring nations can embark on a journey towards building a more cohesive and interconnected regional community.

This paradigm shift paves the way for the cultivation of cross-border partnerships, trade facilitation, and infrastructural development, creating a framework for sustained engagement and collaboration aimed at fostering a more resilient and integrated regional landscape. The recognition of Ethiopia's pursuit of sea access as an opportunity for regional collaboration embodies a paradigm shift towards a future characterized by shared prosperity and mutual benefits.

Addis Ababa University Interim President, Samuel Kifle (PhD) told the Ethiopian News Agency (ENA) that Neighboring countries should view Ethiopia's quest to access to sea as a means for sustainable security and robust economic development of the region. In an exclusive interview with ENA, Samuel said that Ethiopia's quest for access to international sea and ports is a life-long question in its history, civilization, nation formation and state building.

Ethiopia's economy is one of the largest in Africa and of course the first in east Africa, he said and added; "We have huge population and young population growing at fast rate; and this implies that we need to have a robust economic growth where ports play critical role not just for the economy but also for the sustainable security of the region."

Rejection of the sea outlet affects Ethiopia's economy and security, he stated, and pointed out that the issue is critical concept that intellectuals have to have a discussion on and do intellectual discourse explaining why Ethiopia is asking for port development. The Interim President emphasized Ethiopia's access to the international sea fosters regional integration based on shared interests.

"Our quest is about equity, about fairness; about moral issue that we continue to supply fresh water to our brothers but our brother's keep us away from ports is not a fair issue. They have to view it as a quest for a cooperative development, a quest for sustainable peace in the region, a quest for robust economic growth. This is a quest for justice as well and our brothers and sisters in neighboring countries have to view the question from this point of view," Samuel elaborated.

People in Ethiopia share similar culture, language and faith with peoples in Eritrea, Djibouti, Somalia, Kenya, and Sudan, he said, and stressed; "But Ethiopia being the supplier of fresh water from all its rivers except Awash River is not getting any water from anyone else."

Furthermore, the interim president pointed out that all Ethiopia's rivers are crossing borders to sisterly countries even though it gets no drop of water that comes from Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Eritrea, Sudan or South Sudan.

Art & Culture

The Delicate Process of Coffee Ceremony and Life

BY BITANIA TADELE

Step 1: Gather friends and families around with warm smiles and a sense of anticipation as the ceremony takes place in the home of the hostess.

Step 2: Roast the Beans over an open flame, and skillfully stir in a pan called a 'menkeshkesha,' ensuring they are evenly heated. As the beans crackle and release their aromatic oils, everyone present is captivated by the sensory experience unfolding before them.

Step 3: Grind with Precision using a traditional mortar and pestle called 'mukecha.' This step requires patience and precision accompanied by a rhythmic sound produced by this process further adds to the tranquil ambiance surrounding the ceremony.

Step 4: Brew with Care. Hot water is poured over the freshly ground coffee powder in a traditional clay pot called 'jebena.' The pot is then placed on hot coals to allow for slow brewing. As the steam rises from its spout, it fills the room with an enchanting aroma.

Step 5: Wallah. Savor the Moment
The coffee is poured into small, handleless cups called 'sini' filled with sensational taste. Coffee holds a special place in Ethiopian culture. It is not merely a beverage but an integral part of their social fabric. The coffee ceremony is an age-old tradition



that has been passed down through generations, symbolizing hospitality, friendship, and community. It is a ritual that brings people together to share stories and build connections. In a world that often moves at a rapid pace, where instant gratification is the norm, it is essential to take a step back and appreciate the beauty of slow and deliberate processes. The Ethiopian coffee ceremony is a perfect example of such a process, teaching us valuable lessons about calmness, tradition, and the significance of taking our time.

The deliberate and unhurried nature of the ceremony reminds us of the importance of slowing down in our fast-paced lives—calmness. It teaches us to appreciate the present moment and find solace in simplicity. The Ethiopian coffee ceremony teaches us that life's most meaningful experiences often lie in the process rather

than the end result. It reminds us to slow down, appreciate the present moment, and savor the journey. In a world where everything is fast-paced and instant, this tradition serves as a gentle reminder of the importance of patience, mindfulness, and connection.

Moreover, The ceremony serves as a reminder of the significance of honoring our cultural heritage. It connects us to our roots and fosters a sense of belonging, reminding us that traditions hold immense value in shaping our identity, this ceremony emphasizes the value of tradition. It is a celebration of cultural heritage that has withstood the test of time. By participating in such rituals, we honor our ancestors and keep their memories alive. We learn that traditions are not merely customs but threads that weave together generations, creating a sense of belonging and identity.

The Ethiopian coffee ceremony also highlights the significance of community and human connection. It brings people together in an intimate setting where conversations flow freely, fostering deeper relationships. In a society increasingly dominated by digital interactions, this ceremony reminds us of the power of face-to-face communication and genuine human connections.

The delicate process of the Ethiopian coffee ceremony teaches us invaluable lessons about calmness, tradition, and process in our lives. It encourages us to embrace patience, appreciate our cultural heritage, and prioritize meaningful connections over instant gratification. So let us take a moment to reflect on this beautiful tradition and incorporate its teachings into our own lives – one slow sip at a time.



Merry X-mas

BY SENAIT G/HIWOT

*Merry X-mas she says
With a delight on her face
Our king was born today
Let's make a celebration okay?
Her family agrees with her
They spend a lovely x-mas together
They sing X- mas carols*

*And play different games
They become thrilled to share
Happy moments with each other
And finally they take a picture
Because this is a moment to remember
Merry X- mas they say
They will remember this day!*



My hobby

BY ALEM HAILU G/KRISTOS

*In the late hour of the night
When I'm alone
Or even when I'm lonely
Amidst a crowd
I feel at home
Whenever I pen down
A poem.*

Indepth

Greening education:

Education paying highest cost for ongoing climate crisis

BY SOLOMON WASSIHUN

It is a global catastrophe of astounding proportions that millions of children are on the run today, forcibly displaced from their homes. As conflict and climate change increasingly become the most pressing challenges facing the world now, the number of displaced children has doubled in the last decade alone, reaching a record high of 43.3 million children.

Yasmine Sherif, Executive Director of Education Cannot Wait (ECW), says that conflict- and climate-change-affected children are the least likely to enroll in or stay in school and are therefore the furthest left behind when it comes to fulfilling their basic human right to quality education. Many of these children are in the poorest and most vulnerable nations. ECW is the global fund for education in emergencies and protracted crises.

Stressing that the needs are enormous and responses must be immediate before the unfolding education crisis becomes irreversible, Sherif emphasized the need to build climate-resilient education systems as an adaptation measure, including climate change-proof education infrastructure that will ensure learning continuity.

“More than 62 million children—nearly one-third of the 224 million crisis-affected children worldwide in need of educational support—are also affected by grave climate-induced disasters. We have issued an urgent appeal for 150 USD million in new funding to respond to the climate crisis. We must act now with speed, for in the face of human suffering and the destruction of our planet, patience is not a virtue,” she said.

Awut Deng Acuil, South Sudan’s Minister of General Education and Instruction, brought the situation there more into focus during an ECW side event on the designated day for education. It was the first time in the history of the COP Summits to have an entire day dedicated to the education agenda, reflecting the strong interconnection between the climate crisis and the global education crisis.

An estimated 70 percent of school-aged South Sudanese children have never set foot in a classroom, and only 10 percent of those who enroll complete primary education. This is one of the worst completion rates globally. As South Sudan faced multiple challenges over many years, a girl in South Sudan is more likely to die in childbirth than to complete primary education.

“There are parts of South Sudan that are completely flooded. I have never seen water that comes and never recedes. You hardly see any land. A week ago, I visited Unity State to assess the impact of climate shocks, and I saw many displaced families. At least 40 percent of schools are flooded and have



remained closed since 2021. Before the pandemic, we had 2.3 million children in school; today, we have 2.1 million children out of school. For those still in school, the ratio is 120 students per teacher,” she said.

“To get to school in these areas, children and teachers walk along dikes—barriers built to hold back water—and despite the risks, they are running out of options. Some of the schools are inaccessible for rehabilitation. For those that can be rehabilitated, we use boats to transport rehabilitation material.”

But as the country was picking up its pieces through a peace agreement that has provided stability and normalcy, climate-induced disasters have exacerbated barriers between children and education, rolling back time by derailing access to education.

Sherif said ECW and South Sudan’s education ministry will not recoil from the imposing challenges and have a strong partnership to push the education agenda forward, appealing for additional donors to meet a funding gap of USD 25 million to fully implement the ECW-supported Multi-Year Resilience Programme in the country. She added that the needs are increasing as the conflict in Sudan pushes children out of their homes and into South Sudan.

“Since 2020, we have supported partners in improving access to quality, inclusive education for children and adolescents and increasing retention rates in South Sudan. ECW’s funding focuses on the most vulnerable ones, including girls, internally displaced children, and children with disabilities. Interventions range from covering school fees, reaching students remotely, training education personnel, and implementing child protection pathways in schools. This holistic education must

be urgently scaled up to reach all crisis-impacted children,” Sherif emphasized.

Ole Thonke, Undersecretary for Development Policy, Government of Denmark, reiterated Denmark’s commitment to resolve the climate, conflict, and education crises, as they are all different sides of the same coin. The country has announced a new additional USD 6 million pledge to ECW to support the delivery of quality education to vulnerable children and youth at the forefront of the interconnected crises of climate change and conflict, with a particular focus on girls and adolescent girls.

In pastoral communities such as Kenya and the larger Horn of Africa belt, girls are particularly at risk. As the climate crisis threatens to paralyze pastoral economies, families who have lost their livestock are increasingly marrying off their young girls. Current education systems are not equipped to handle the spiraling effects of the climate crisis. In fact, delegates heard that education systems as they are currently structured can only harness 35 percent of the value, talent, and potential nestled within each child—the gift of undiscovered human brilliance.

The side event was held within the context of the RewirEd Summit, which focuses on rewiring learning for green skills, green jobs, and the green economy and ensuring that acquired skills match the needs of current markets and the world’s most pressing needs.

“Since the first RewirEd Summit, we have worked very hard to follow through on the commitment we made to elevate the role of education as the most powerful and valuable opportunity for human development. We

needed to bring education to the heart of all these challenges and leverage its potential to offer solutions. We are here because of one of the greatest challenges of our time: if we do nothing about climate change, it will affect the entire future of our planet,” said Dr Tariq Al Gurg, CEO and Vice Chairman of Dubai Cares.

Dubai Cares hosted the second RewirEd Summit to encourage dialogue and action to put education at the forefront of the climate agenda. The one-day summit brought together ministers, high-profile speakers, and panelists from UN agencies, climate actors, international NGOs, academia, marginalized communities, indigenous populations, teachers, and youth, as well as representatives from the public and private sectors from around the world.

“It cannot be business as usual; as long as we keep education confined within outdated, unambitious, and broken systems, we will continue to be in a vicious cycle where for every step forward we take, another pandemic, climate disaster, or conflict will set us back again, if not even further away from our goals to help people as well as the planet. The only way forward is to recognize that the pathway to meaningful progress towards 2030 and beyond must be through positioning education at the core of every single Sustainable Development Goal,” said Reem Al Hashemi, UAE’s Minister of State for International Cooperation.

ECW’s Executive Director, Yasmine Sherif, addressed delegates over the urgent need to fast-track solutions for crisis-impacted children during the RewirEd Summit plenary session. Credit: Joyce Chimbi/IPS (SOURCE: INTER PRESS SERVICE)

Law & Politics

Having access to the sea: A must-do tall order

BY DANIEL ALEMAYEHU

The Red Sea has been caught in the crossfires of global rival forces and their proxies. The last couple of years have seen intense military activities, and so do the pitfalls. The strategic location came under immense pressure due to the staggering race by competing blocs to assert upper hand and control the sea. Countries near and far have been throwing their full weight to protect their interests in the troubled region. This has far-reaching implications for the countries sitting a stone's throw away distance from the sea.

In the present climate, nations from every direction have been leaving no stone unturned in order to meet the burgeoning economic demands of their people and safeguard their national security. The current global high tides have created lots of flaws in most countries across the world forcing nations to look for every possible opportunity even in the far-flung parts of the globe. The Red Sea has thus become the eye of the storm with the number of actors seeing an uptick recently.

And, countries like Ethiopia have been going through some rough years facing major challenges. The predicaments are even harder and deeper in land-locked countries as most of the nations are living in poverty.

As one of the most populated nations and being the nearest nation to the sea with no sea outlet, Ethiopia has been struggling to cope with the economic and security pressures as the Horn Africa region goes through mixed trajectories. In this regard, the question of having access to the sea is a must-do and a waste no time tall order for Ethiopians.

In good truth, Ethiopia is trying its best to withstand the economic impact that comes with created by the nation's inability to get its own sea outlets. It is important to remember that the country pays billions of dollars to Djibouti to get port service. Such expense is costing the nation its arms and legs as a quarter of the country's GDP is almost similar to the money paid for port access. When the time goes by, Ethiopia still encounters and will face a hard time feeding its people as Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed recently forecasted that the nation's population would double in the coming decades.

It is a fact that not having access to the sea has the ability to hinder any nation not to be competent in any international markets. It is true that sea transportation is cheaper than land, which is why many commodities are shipped by sea.

Having no genuine access to the sea has a lot of impact on the day-to-day activities of the country. In relation to attracting investment, for instance, many investors may look for coastal nations so that they can simply transport their products with very little expense. Again, by attracting as many investors as possible, the nation can create more jobs for the people and foster the nation's economy. However, Ethiopia



Ethiopia

aspires to achieve economic growth by enhancing export trade, and the country will not be able to achieve the intended goal by using Djibouti ports alone. Therefore, it needs sovereign access to ports that would facilitate its international trade because Djibouti ports alone

has largely been a bystander in the past three decades.

Accordingly, Ethiopia has become one of the investment hubs in Africa, especially in East Africa, by constructing 13 industrial parks and one African free trade area across the country. Though the nation still tries to expand its manufacturing sector to its limit, multiple hurdles including lack of access to the sea made the road to success bumpy. In order to foster economic growth, it is very important to give due attention to utilizing ports. Access to the sea is the most crucial question that needs to be addressed if there is any possibility. That is why; Ethiopia should aggressively work on this.

On the other hand, the Horn is one of the busiest and most secure geographic segments of the world, and Ethiopia is the most populous nation in the area. Countries in the Horn are renting their land to the most powerful states around the globe for military base services.

For instance, there are over 11 military bases in Djibouti alone. For this and other reasons, Ethiopia should not sit idle amidst the militarization. Therefore, Ethiopia's national security and sovereignty are always at stake if sea-port owners refuse to provide any access.

Further, Ethiopia is the only nation with the nearest possible location to the sea and has no access to it. Its proximity to the sea has a positive impact on getting access as the country remains keen to forge regional integration. Locking 120 million people who are just 60 kilometers away from the sea proves illogical. Against this backdrop, Ethiopia's call for mutual benefits and access to the sea is a timely and proper step. The country is very much known for its habit of living peacefully with its neighbors. The nation still strives to negotiate with its neighboring countries to ensure mutual benefits through give-and-take approaches. The fact is the country will no longer be a bystander in the Red Sea amidst the layers of the menaces facing it. The people and government of Ethiopia know the cost of not having access to the sea.

Accordingly, having stayed with the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA), an expert in the area Abdulrahman Ahmed (Ph.D.) stated that seaport is crucial from both economic and security standpoints and Ethiopia's aspiration to access the Red Sea or Indian Ocean by all peaceful means is justifiable.

From an economic standpoint, Ethiopia can benefit from export trade because of its strategic location close to Babel-Mandeb, the Red Sea, and the Indian Ocean. Having enjoyed an important geographical location,

having direct access to sea outlets is also crucial for the country to maintain its peace and stability and preserve national interests.

"Ethiopia had broad influence in the historically important region and its ability to acquire a seaport would enable its voice to be heard at the regional and international levels and would also have a positive impact on the country's relation with the rest of the world."

The expert further noted that Ethiopia's large population which currently stands at approximately 120 million is also another factor to its port aspiration. "The increasing population requires Ethiopia to have a seaport, and this sea port will foster the country's international trade. As society's life is highly dependent on import-export activity, there will be an urgent need for a seaport."

Ethiopia aspires to achieve economic growth by enhancing export trade, and the country will not be able to achieve the intended goal by using Djibouti ports alone. Therefore, it needs sovereign access to ports that would facilitate its international trade because Djibouti ports alone are not sufficient to handle the entire cargo and cause delays that could sometimes span for a week or two, Abdulrahman elaborated.

"The cost incurred to rent Djibouti ports represents approximately a quarter of Ethiopia's national GDP, amounting to more than 2.5 to three billion USD, and this is a very large number from the state budget and the national economy."

Ethiopia needs ports to protect its national security and foster economic growth, and this will enhance cooperation, economic integration, and political and security stability among the Horn of Africa countries.

The Ethiopian government is also expected to utilize diplomatic channels to communicate with neighboring countries and encourage them to join its aspiration to ensure mutual growth in the Horn of Africa, he pleaded.

Women In Focus

“Champions keep playing until they get it right.”

BY ELIZABETH MENGISTU

She received her first degree in mathematics from Harvard College, and her second degree in Mathematics from the University of Cambridge. She also got another masters in Applied Mathematics from Harvard University.

Rediet Abebe, even though, was in her twenties, she could successfully attain her dreams, and make a name for herself in the computer science and mathematics field. Being the first Black woman to complete a Ph.D. in computer science in the history of Cornell University; and becoming the first Black female Computer Science Assistant Professor on her department’s faculty at the University of California, Berkeley, Rediet can grab several headlines, and wow the whole world with her numerous achievements.

“Cornell’s first Black female CS Ph.D. blazed her own trail,” wrote the Cornell University’s Computer Science in its Chronicle, following Rediet’s achievement for being the first black woman to earn PhD in Computer Science, setting records at New York University.

MYSCHOOLNEWS also reported her success as a groundbreaking milestone as the first Black woman to attain a Ph.D. in computer science from this same university.

“Rediet Abebe, a 28-year-old woman of African descent, has etched her name in history by becoming the first black woman to achieve a doctoral degree at Cornell University in New York.”

“Hailing from Addis Ababa, Rediet Abebe is a Junior Fellow at the Harvard Society of Fellows and has achieved a groundbreaking milestone as the first Black woman to attain a Ph.D. in computer science from Cornell University.

Her research, as reported by Atlanta Black Star, is centered on the development of algorithms and artificial intelligence solutions that promote equity and social welfare,” the report added

Her commitment to designing and analyzing algorithmic, discrete optimization, network-based, and computational techniques aimed at enhancing access to opportunities for historically marginalized communities, it stated referring to her online bio.

According to the piece, beyond her academic pursuits, Rediet is actively engaged in significant initiatives. She serves as a member of the NIH Advisory Committee to the Director working group on artificial intelligence and is also the co-founder of Black in AI, a non-profit organization dedicated to advancing diversity in the field of artificial intelligence. Furthermore, she co-



Rediet prepared her final thesis, titled “Designing Algorithms for Social Good,” According to the piece, her final thesis focused on algorithms and artificial intelligence for equity and social good

founded Mechanism Design for Social Good (MD4SG), an interdisciplinary research initiative and workshop series involving participants from over 100 institutions across 20 countries.

Rediet was born and raised in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. She followed her education at Nazareth School and went to International Community School of Addis Ababa winning a competitive merit-based scholarship to pursue her high school education.

Then she moved to the United States of America in 2015 and attended her education at Harvard University where she earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Mathematics and later a Master of Science degree in applied mathematics.

As an undergraduate, she co-authored research papers in mathematics, physics, and public health. While she was at Harvard, she contributed to the Harvard Crimson as a staff writer, where she focused on the Cambridge public school system. She also produced a number of research papers, according to documents.

After college, she attended the University of Cambridge as the Governor William Shirley Scholar at Pembroke College. Then, she joined Cornell University and completed her doctoral degree in computer science at the University. Rediet is the first Black woman to complete a Ph.D. in Computer Science in the university’s history.

Rediet prepared her final thesis, titled “Designing Algorithms for Social Good,” According to the piece, her final thesis focused on algorithms and artificial intelligence for equity and social good and designed to find solutions and improve societal welfare, including research addressing issues such as income shocks faced by economically

disadvantaged families who are laid off or have gaps in income, it was learnt.

As she reflected, she draws inspiration from her homeland, Ethiopia, where she observed pervasive income inequality, with grand mansions juxtaposed with modest dwellings on the same streets.

While stating about her work, she said, “It is something that is really shaped my identity as a person, as a researcher. I realized that actually if you do computer science or applied mathematics and ultimately other fields, you can work on really interesting challenging mathematical questions. You can do a lot of data-driven work, you can play with data. But, you can also think about problems that affect society immediately.”

She also expressed her aspiration to continue diversifying the technology landscape through her work and organizational endeavors.

Rediet, Co-Founder of Black in AI, firmly believes on the need for more diversity in AI job roles. She also wishes to improve diversity in the field of artificial intelligence.

“Rediet’s work and vision has mobilized an entire research community, creating new directions for computing to address societal challenges and increase access to opportunity,” said her adviser, Jon Kleinberg, the Tisch University Professor of Computer Science and interim dean of Computing and Information Science.

Currently a junior fellow at the Harvard Society of Fellows – one of only two fellows with Computer Science Ph.D in the society’s history – Rediet joined the faculty of the University of California, Berkeley, as an assistant professor of electrical engineering and computer science.

Among other, her honors include a Cornell Social Justice Award in 2019. She was featured in “35 Innovators Under 35” in the MIT Technology Review in 2019 and earned a place on the annual Bloomberg 50, which looks at the people in business, entertainment, finance, politics, and technology and science whose 2018 accomplishments were particularly noteworthy.

The Forbes Magazine in its 2017 list of ‘Incredible Women Advancing A.I. Research’ featured Rediet. Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia, has kept her name in the first category of the notable scientists and engineers from Ethiopia or of Ethiopian descent.

Likewise, the Berkman Klein Center for Internet & Society at Harvard University also named Rediet to MIT Technology Review’s 35 Innovators Under 35 for her work using algorithms and AI to improve access to opportunity for historically marginalized communities.

Society



Creating job through outsourcing

BY MENGISTEAB TESHOME

These days outsourcing services is becoming a common trend among organizations; and companies tend to outsource services for various reasons including to save time and energy, reduce operational cost, address skill gaps, to focus and run the core task they are authorized to in due attention.

Nowadays, Ethiopia is gaining popularity as an outsourcing destination in Africa, for its low labor wages and reliable power supply among others.

According to the Ethiopian Outsourcing Association General-Manager Tadios Tefera, though outsourcing has the potential in yielding big benefits in terms of creating jobs and ensuring conducive business environment, it is limited to a company's noncore activities which are confined to services including recruitment, security and janitorial services.

He further noted that, Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) is foundational to international corporations in terms of reducing operational cost and quality promotion among others.

According to him the Association was founded by industrial leaders in the outsourcing sector, and is working closely with ministries and stakeholders to assist with policy designs, creating jobs with the aim to make the country the leading outsourcing destination.

So far, the association has been involved in business-to-business engagements with various countries. "Forex generation is expected to be 50 million USD and the sector is anticipated to create 500,000 dignified and well-paying jobs," he revealed.

Mentioning the efforts put forth to create a favorable environment for business process, he said outsourcing should be further strengthened in supplying the sector with skilled human capital and building infrastructure that could improve the implementation of outsourcing.

It is high time to practice outsourcing in a more productive way than before through developing a working policy of human development starting from lower grades to higher learning institutions.

"We had a productive discussion with the Ministry of Labor and Skills and confirmed our support for the sector; we are grateful for the provision of services to increase the impact of the outsourcing industry in a more organized fashion."

Countries are promoting outsourcing through putting incentives packages and devising policies and strategies, and India and China among others are benefitting because they are able to attract more companies in the manufacturing and software sectors to invest in their respective nations and create jobs, he added.

Emphasizing the importance of building Special Economic Zones (SEZs) that could nurture outsourcing activities, Tadios said that Ethiopia should also further strengthen the establishment of the SEZs operation and keep on supporting outsourcing to creating fertile ground, nurture the sector in more practical and productive fashion and create jobs for the new generation.

He noted that, since the Special Economic Zones are privileged to be treated with occupational and trade laws that are different from the rest of investment activities, outsourcing practice will be spread nationwide.

He further noted that, there is fertile ground for instance the growing IT infrastructure and increasing skill level of workers are luring multinationals and big companies to join the outsourcing industry. Moreover, tech giants such as Microsoft and Google are offering programming courses and mentorship programs that will further expand the tech talent pool in Ethiopia.

He also called on respective institutions to act promptly and backing the development of the industry so as to help more fellow citizens get jobs and thereby lead improved lifestyles.

In an exclusive interview with *The Ethiopian Herald* STEM Synergy Ethiopia Country Director Aseggedech Shawl for her part said that exercising outsourcing lessens the challenges of scarce resources.

According to her, outsourcing could be materialized if higher learning institutions are determined in producing competitive

students in line with the international standard competency and ready to penetrate the international labor market.

Ethiopia has the potential to deliver skilled human power to the international labor market and achieve better results from its business processes.

"I have first-hand information that the government is working on shaping a new curriculum that could help higher education learning institutions produce skilled human power with international skill standards."

She called on stakeholders to heighten efforts in providing fellow citizens service of certification with a number of competencies and arrange the platform to join the international labor market through legal approaches.

The certification helps citizens to acquire equal wages and exercise rights while working in the foreign land.

Lately, the Ministry of Labor and Skills (MoLS) held a consultative forum on digital industry outsourcing in the presence of stakeholders and entrepreneurs who are engaged in the digital outsourcing industry.

Speaking at the forum, MoLS Minister Muferihat Kamil said that following the Digital Ethiopia 2025 strategy, outsourcing activities in the digital industry has a potential to create massive job opportunities for citizens and enables to earn foreign currency. For this reason, over the last couple of years, the government has been working in creating a favorable environment including legal frameworks and tax incentives to support the sector.

Since the sector has become operational, it was enabled to create jobs for over 15 thousand peoples in a short period of time. As the sector has not yet been utilized in terms of its vast potential, it has brought enormous opportunities to our country.

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

"Our business environment needs further

reforms for easy startup, operations and quality infrastructure in urban and rural centers. Universities and TVET institutions need to design curricula to produce more advanced technical and industry-relevant skills to help play their great role in the industry," she noted.

As to her, the sector is projected to gain about 50 million USD per annum.

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

Concerted governance efforts and supportive policies are a springboard in unlocking the immense potential of Ethiopia's outsourcing industry for transformative skills and job-led economic growth, she stated.

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

Ministry Information Technology Park Corporation CEO Henok Ahmed, for his part noted that making the outsourcing industry productive is the main focus area of the government.

According to him, the Ministry has signed MoU with leading outsourcing companies; and five top outsourcing companies will commence operation in the ICT Park soon. Ethiopia ICT Park is built with state of art technology and ready for companies which are interested to commence operation.

The Ministry acknowledges the challenges like power, internet connectivity infrastructure and working space, and the facilities in the ICT Park are equipped with all necessary inputs. "We are ready to work in collaboration along with sector's stakeholders to undo the challenges these industries are facing in more organized fashion.

The sector has high potential in creating jobs and serves as a venue of technology transfer and calls on higher education learning institutions to produce competent human power, he remarked.

International news

Several dead as devastating Christmas storms sweep eastern Australia

Nine people have died after Christmas storms pounded Australia's eastern seaboard, authorities said Wednesday, including two women who were washed through a stormwater drain.

Thunderstorms and destructive winds have in recent days battered the Australian states of Victoria and Queensland—capsizing boats, sparking flash floods, and tearing down concrete powerlines.

The government weather bureau has warned that coastal regions in Queensland were still at risk of “dangerous” storms, “life-threatening” floods, “giant” hail, and “damaging” winds.

Three women were “exploring” a large stormwater drain in the rural Queensland town of Gympie when they were swept away by floodwaters on Tuesday afternoon, police said.

By Wednesday police divers had recovered the bodies of two of the women. The third survived after she was washed onto the banks of a nearby river. Eleven people were tossed into the ocean when a 39-foot yacht capsized at sea during an annual fishing trip near

Brisbane.

Police said Wednesday that three men had drowned, while eight survivors had been scooped from the water and rushed to hospital.

“It has been a very tragic 24 hours due to the weather,” police commissioner Katarina Carroll told reporters.

The body of a nine-year-old girl was found after she went missing in flood waters on Brisbane's outskirts, police said, while a 59-year-old woman was killed by a falling tree on Queensland's Gold Coast.

tility company Energex said it was racing to restore electricity to more than 80,000 homes in the state.

“How strong were those storms? Enough to snap multiple concrete poles supporting high-voltage lines,” it posted on social media.

Meanwhile in Victoria, a woman was found dead late on Tuesday evening after flash floods swamped a regional campground in Buchan, 350 kilometres (217 miles) east of the state capital Melbourne.

A man was killed after he was struck by a falling tree branch in Caringal, 180 kilometres (111 miles) east of Melbourne.

(Source: France24)

Turkish parliamentary committee okays Sweden's NATO bid

The Turkish parliament's foreign affairs committee on Tuesday approved Sweden's NATO bid following deliberation, a first step necessary for putting it to a full parliament vote.

The bill regarding the approval of Sweden's accession protocol to NATO was adopted by the committee with votes by the ruling Justice and Development Party, the Nationalist Movement Party, and the main opposition Republican People's Party. The IYI (Good) Party voted against the bill, while the Peoples' Equality and Democracy Party did not participate in the voting.

Fuat Oktay, the committee's chairman, said that Sweden has taken steps, especially regarding the financing of terrorism, but added that Turkiye has “not yet seen the expected results in the fight against terrorism”.

The parliament might debate the bid at the general assembly later this week for the final vote. But if the parliament enters recess, the vote will be delayed to the coming new year.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan signed Sweden's NATO accession protocol and submitted it to the parliament in October.

Turkiye approved Finland's NATO bid in March but has slow-walked Sweden's accession, demanding the Nordic country further address Ankara's security concerns.

Turkiye is under pressure from the United States to approve Sweden's accession to NATO, but Ankara has been holding up its ratification to press Washington to allow the sale of F-16 fighter jets.

(Source: China daily)

and footwear, mobile telephones and



Published Weekly in Collaboration with Haramaya University

HU and NASA researcher and scientist sharing experience session

BY EPHREM ANDARGACHEW

Ethiopian National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) researcher and scientist Dr. Berhanu Tefera Bulcha shared his expertise with Haramaya University researchers, lecturers and students.

Dr. Berhanu Tefera Bulcha, an American NASA researcher and scientist, who is also one of the world's most influential Ethiopians developed technologies to look for water on the moon.

During the event, Dr. Berhanu expressed his gratitude for the opportunity to share his experiences and knowledge at HU. He also added that countries that recognized the importance of science, technology, and research findings to national growth began space research 70 years ago and is examining the present and future phenomena. To solve their challenges, developing countries should follow in their footsteps and prioritize research and technology.

The developed countries invest a lot of money in education, which enables them to bring development to their country. These countries have worked not just for the past, but also for future generations, ensuring



Dr. Berhanu T. Bulcha Haramaya University Community

that their progress will continue. Similarly, developing countries should also support their potential resources with technology and think about developing issues that may be of interest.

According to him, "Even though our country Ethiopia is facing numerous problems, scholars like you and me who have had the opportunity to learn should make significant efforts to solve our country's societal problems through various research, science, and technology works."

Higher education teaching and learning activities should center on activities that address the country's concerns. Investing in science, research, and technology is thus

a critical means of growth for Africans. Developing nations, in particular, should organize academics who have studied at various levels and reside abroad to engage in various research initiatives that would benefit their country and people, he explained.

To solve the issues facing both Ethiopia and the continent, we must build capability through our participation in project competitions held by international research institutes. In addition, he promised to link HU researchers and experts to work together with international research institutes.

Haramaya University President Dr. Jemal Yousuf in his part said that inviting eminent academics and scholars to share their expertise

benefits HU in a variety of ways. It brings a wealth of knowledge and expertise in their respective fields.

By inviting them to share their experiences, HU provides an opportunity for students, faculty, and researchers to learn from the latest research, best practices, and innovative ideas. They also inspire and motivate, create opportunities for networking and collaboration, enhance research culture, and so on.

As a result, this exchange experience session has been organized since research conducted by higher research institutes contributes significantly to the country's economy and general development. Sharing practical experience with professionals and scientists is critical to aligning the work with global research efforts and learning from the experiences of other nations, which will lead to better outcomes, he added.

Therefore, inviting famous researcher and scientist Dr. Berhanu to share his experiences at HU enriches the academic atmosphere, fosters information exchange, inspires the next generation of academics, and promotes cooperation and networking within the academic community.

