



The Ethiopian Herald

Vol. LXXX No 106 12 JANUARY 2024 - Tir, 3 2016

Friday

Price Birr 10.00

ካስማ ፊርኒቸር
Gard Sholla Century Mall 3rd floor
+251913230014 ቤደውሉ

📍 Kasmafurniture 📍 Kasma Furniture
📧 Kasma.furniture 📧 kasma furniture
🌐 kasmafur.com



IPDC, investors with 100 mln USD capital ink agreements

• *Mekelle Industrial Park gets back to business*

BY MESERET BEHAILU

ADDIS ABABA – The Industrial Parks Development Corporation (IPDC) signed agreements yesterday with some 11 investors who registered an initial aggregate capital of 100 million USD to engage in various sectors.

At the signing ceremony, IPDC's CEO Akililu Tadesse said that the investors will be involved in five

See IPDC, investors... page 3

Ethiopia's long diplomatic journey testimony to amicable foreign relations: President Sahlework

• *MoFA launches Diplomacy Week*

Page 3



Ambassador Tibor Nagy

Ethio-Somaliland MoU opens door for mutual benefits: Tibor Nagy

BY STAFF REPORTER

ADDIS ABABA- The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that was reached by Ethiopia and Somaliland will open the door

See Ethio-Somaliland... page 3

EU extends 43.5 mln Euros assistance to Ethiopian IDPs

BY TSEGAYE TILAHUN

ADDIS ABABA - The European Union (EU) and its partners have extended 43.5 million Euros assistance to improve the living conditions of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and communities affected by conflict and natural disasters.

The above was disclosed at a signing ceremony held yesterday for the assistance made through the EU, International Organization for Migration (IOM), Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS), Danish and Ethiopian Red Cross Society and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

Speaking at the occasion, EU

See EU extends 43.5 mln ... page 3



Significance of access to the sea for Ethiopia

Page 6

A love triangle

Page 7

Multi-purpose robot by a young student with a creative knack

Page 8

Homecoming programs aim to expedite Diaspora's economic contribution

BY MISGANAW ASNAKE

ADDIS ABABA- Apart from reconnecting second-generation Ethiopian Diasporas with their ancestral root, the extensive homecoming programs also aim to harnessing their contribution for the national economy, the Ministry of Tourism said.

In a press briefing he held here yesterday, Tourism State Minister Seleshi Girma stated that the programs serve as a push factor for the Diaspora to come and do business at home and benefit themselves and their people.

Various programs are underway with the aim of promoting the country's untapped tourism potential to foreign-born Ethiopians and also to the rest of the world. Moreover, such programs are of great significance to familiarize the Diasporas with local cultures and customs during their stay at home, Seleshi elaborated.

Accordingly, the nation is preparing different homecoming programs including Ethiopian Week, cultural handmade art show, traditional musical instruments display, musical performances, cultural clothes exhibitions, and fashion shows.



“The visiting program prepared for Ethiopian Diasporas who may come from all corners of the globe and the invitation aims to reconnect them with their ancestral roots and contribute to the nation's economic progress through exploring the vast market and investment opportunities.”

Noting the discount made by the Ethiopian Airlines and hotels in all parts of the

country, the state minister called for the overwhelming response from the second-generation Ethiopian Diasporas to come and visit their country of origin.

Approached by journalists at the sidelines of the event, Ethiopian Diaspora Agency Director General Mohammed Endris (PhD) noted that the invitation made to the second-generation Ethiopian Diasporas paved the way for them to strengthen their connection with their homeland.

The call is also vital for members of the Diaspora to properly discharge their responsibility professionally, financially and in other means.

Mohammed further highlighted that Ethiopian diplomatic missions have played due role for the success of the program in registering Ethiopian Diasporas in their countries of deployment and doing various campaigns to encourage the community to return to their homeland.

“We will use this great opportunity as a springboard that enables us to reach the Ethiopian community that we have not yet accessed and also help to empower, integrate, and enable them to be active in every activity that concerns the country.”



Metropolitan creates about 6,000 urban agriculture jobs

BY STAFF REPORTER

ADDIS ABABA- Addis Ababa City Farmers and Urban Agriculture Development Commission announced that about 6,000 jobs have been created in urban agriculture over the past five months.

Deputy Commissioner Rufak Jemal told the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) that his commission has achieved creating 5,981 urban agriculture jobs of the planned 10,000 to be created this fiscal year.

The jobs have been created in the areas of animal husbandry, backyard vegetable cultivation, and other agricultural activities that engage farmers based on their skills and interests in the form of regular practices, rehabilitation works.

According to him, the city has been working to create 36,000 jobs within three months in various vocations including urban farming skills. Of this, 10,000 youth and women would organize in associations to get benefited from urban agriculture job opportunities.

To achieve this, he said, the citizens would engage in poultry, dairy farm, animal fattening, vegetable cultivation, seedling preparation and other activities after taking the needed skill-based training in technique and vocational training colleges.

To this end, Rufak noted that the city administration together with partners facilitates working space, machineries, market linkage, and financial loans.

As to him, the job creation incorporates allinterested citizens living in the capital once they are able to provide resident IDs or any evidences that assure they are living in the city and are unemployed.

Citizens especially the youth must utilize the lucrative urban agriculture business which transformsthem to becomeinvestors in a short period of time, he stressed.

The commission has been promoting urban agriculture in the capital to create jobs thereby transform livesand improve access to healthy food.

Ethiopia's economy resilience continues, albeit to internal, external challenges

BY YESUF ENDRIS

ADDIS ABABA- The International Monetary Fund (IMF) forecasted Ethiopian economy in 2024 to grow at 6.2 percent. The forecast is a pretty strong indicator as the economy has been resilient for the past three years, according to an Economist.

In an interview with CNBC Africa, the Global Fairfax Africa Fund Chairman Zemedeneh Nigatu said that the Ethiopian economy will grow with better rate as government resolved several domestic challenges seen in the past years.

“IMF has forecasted Africa's economy including the Ethiopian. It shows that Ethiopia is the second fastest growing country in Africa next to Côte d'Ivoire. So, this is a pretty strong indicator as the economy has been resilient over the last three years,” he said.

Like any other country in the world, Ethiopia was hit hard by COVID-19 and then subsequently has internal challenges. The Russia-Ukraine war has also its own effect too. But, the Ethiopian economy is still the world's resilient and fast growing while surviving all these challenges. To grow by 6.2 percent in 2024 is a good indicator that shows agricultural and industrial sectors will drive the growth, he noted.

He, however, indicated that the inflation



tastes the economy in the past 15-17 years. “Actually it was about 15 percent for the last 15 years so that certainly been the target of the central bank to bring it down to a manageable level.”

Speaking about the debt sustainability, he also described that Ethiopia is still capable of having further debt agreements.

The percentage Ethiopia's debt[compared to its GDP] is actually lower than many other African countries . But, Ethiopia's ability to generate sufficient hard currency

is not there yet; that is what is creating the debt sustainability issue, according to Zemedeneh.

It needs to look at [the ongoing reform] holistically when the reforms come in; the hard currency comes in, and then economy will continue to generate sufficient foreign exchange, he said.

“I think the pressure on the Birr will reduce and hopefully will reach its own problem. And, this is one thing that the economic reform is to liberalize,” he added.

Ethiopia's long diplomatic journey testimony to amicable foreign relations: President Sahlework

• MoFA launches Diplomacy Week

BY YESUF ENDRIS

ADDIS ABABA- Ethiopia's 116 years successful diplomatic journey is the testament to its ability to forge amicable approach in international relations, President Sahlework Zewude said.

The President made the above remark yesterday while opening the prestigious Diplomacy Week.

SahleWork stressed in her speech that the Diplomatic Exhibition displays some of key

events happened in the past 116 years and could help the current policy makers to learn from history.

She also noted that the Ethiopia's diplomatic history is a history of how values work deeply in relationships.

“I was impressed by this exhibition. It depicts the rich history of the Ethiopian diplomacy in different eras and under the history records. Everything whether it is good or bad, whether we are proud or ashamed of it, but I remain convinced that without facing our past or without knowing our history, we will not be

in a position to solve our existing challenges.”

Like other policies, Foreign Policy needs to be known, it has to be studied and discussed especially by who are experts in the area, she emphasized.

The President also invited Addis based diplomatic community to visit the exhibition.

Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Demeke Mekonnen also stated that Ethiopia has been pursuing good diplomacy with countries from all cores of the globe.

The country has also substantial contributions

to the information development and always adhere for international law. “This event is also highlight of Ethiopia's vast and rich diplomatic history.”

The Ethiopian government values every relationship it has with International partners and the country's long and successful diplomatic path is the testament for this, the Deputy Premier remarked.

The Diplomatic Week is being celebrated to commemorate the 116th founding anniversary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1907.

EEU puts in place 2 bln Birr electricity infrastructure in Tigray

Addis Ababa (FBC) – The Ethiopian Electric Utility (EEU) confirmed that it is undertaking an electricity facility improvement project in the Tigray state, with a projected cost of two billion Birr.

Tigray State Electric Utility Communications Head Girmay Gidey stated that the project aims to upgrade and enhance the electrical infrastructure within the state.

He asserted that the electricity power supply infrastructure enhancement project is expected to proactively forestall power disruptions in the state.

The intricate measures involve the substitution

of archaic wooden utility poles with cutting-edge concrete counterparts, concomitant with a comprehensive refurbishment and renewal of transformers, Girmay indicated.

Notably, 1,500 youthful individuals, strategically organized into 14 occupational associations, have been enlisted to lend their expertise and labor to the project.

This multifaceted undertaking seeks to fortify the reliability and robustness of the local power infrastructure, thereby mitigating the vulnerability to power interruptions stemming from issues such as the degradation of wooden poles and the malfunction of transformers, it was learned.

The project has generated employment opportunities for a total of 1,500 youths who are organized into 14 occupational associations.

According to Abraham Kebede, a senior engineer at EEU North District, a significant undertaking is underway to replace wooden utility poles with concrete utility poles along a stretch of 950 kilometers.

With approximately 90 percent of the project already accomplished, Kebede emphasized that the newly installed utility poles are expected to serve for an extended period of 30 to 40 years.

IPDC, investors...

sectors such as agro-processing, textile and garment, pharmaceutical, and plastic production. While Mekelle, Jimma, and Bole industrial parks have taken three investors each, the remaining two will capitalize on the Bahir Dar and Kilinto industrial parks.

Noting most of the companies signed the agreements are domestic ones, Akililu indicated they have received a total of 31,000 square meter land of manufacturing shades and 4.5 hectares of farm land.

The CEO further stated that the agreement helps to form direct market linkage for more than 50,000 farmers and over 5,000 jobs for local communities. “This agreement is unique in its kind as it comes when Ethiopia struck the deal that provides it a sovereign access to seaports in the lease base and the port accord is of great importance to the manufacturing industry.”

The manufacturing industry was significantly affected by the Tigray War and COVID-19 pandemic over the past years that forced some of the investors to abandon their business from different hotspots particularly from Mekelle.

Due to the IPDC's close collaboration with relevant stakeholders and the restoration of enduring peace in Tigray, the Mekelle Industrial Parks is getting back to operation following the conclusion of the restoration activities, he remarked.

Approached by *The Ethiopian Herald*, Birtukan Abebe, who is one of the investors signed the agreement stated that the accord would play a significant role in bridging the investment gap through joint effort. “We are engaged in the production of bottle caps and previously, our company had been challenged by lack of adequate shades and the agreement solved the problem and we obtained 10,000 square meters of land at the Bole Lemi Industrial Park.”

The businessperson also said Ethiopia's recent port deal with Somaliland would have a paramount importance to address the manufacturing sector's setbacks and would help to facilitate the import-export trade.

EU extends 43.5 mln...

Ambassador to Ethiopia Roland Kobia stated that the three-year program would provide sustainable support to persons displaced by conflict and natural hazards and their host communities in Afar, Amhara, Benishangul-Gumuz and Tigray states.

Ambassador Kobia further noted that prolonged internal conflicts and natural disasters resulted food insecurity, increased incidences of gender-based violence, and widespread displacement and limited access to basic services.

The intervention will benefit populations directly, focus on communities and target marginalized groups such as female-headed

households, elderly persons, persons with special needs and people with disabilities, he elaborated.

In each state, the target zones will be areas mostly affected by conflict and with the highest concentration of IDPs or returnees, and those with highest needs of access to basic services and livelihoods. “The EU continues to provide developmental support to the people in times of need and the action is a timely contribution to complement humanitarian support and ensure the humanitarian, development and peace work is reinforced.”

According to him, the program will improve

livelihoods through skills and vocational training in agriculture and other sectors, access to financial services and better access to jobs. It also supports Sustainable Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) services, including infrastructure rehabilitation/construction, adequate management and maintenance of WASH services, capacity building and improved hygiene and sanitation practices.

For his part, IOM Ethiopia Chief of Mission Abibatou Wane said that the program is essential for IDPs and host communities for the recovery of crisis-affected populations by enhancing the very difficult situation.

Ethio-Somaliland...

to ensure mutual benefit through establishing enduring relationship, Former U.S. Ambassador to Ethiopia said.

In an interview with the Somaliland Chronicle, Ambassador Tibor Nagy stated that Ethiopia's decision about the need for a port has no harm other than benefiting neighboring countries.

Nagy, who is also the Former U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Africa, further stated that the agreement is an important phase for the two sides to jointly expand infrastructure, increase economic ties, realize peace and stability and ensure common prosperity.

The career diplomat pointed out that the accord signed by Ethiopia and Somaliland has gone through several stages and is well thought out. “There may be many areas that the two sides could work together in the future.”

The MoU will provide Ethiopia a sovereign access to seaport that could greatly support its economy, and its role is important in ensuring economic benefits for Somaliland and creating ample jobs for many of its citizens.

He also said that the pact will also avail the opportunity for other African countries to work together.

Tibor Nagy served as the U.S. Ambassador to Guinea from October 1996 to July 1999 and to Ethiopia from August 1999 to July 2002. The retired Foreign Service officer was also the U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Africa from July 2018 to January 2021.

It is to be recalled that Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) and Somaliland President Muse Bihi Abdi signed on January 1, 2024 the MoU for Partnership and Cooperation. Among other benefits, the MoU said to pave the way to realize Ethiopia's aspiration to secure access to the sea for both military and commercial purposes and to diversify its seaport alternatives.

Opinion

Ethiopia's Political, diplomatic move from ancient to present

BY GETACHEW MINAS

Ancient Ethiopia had rich culture and systematic political developments. The people of the country have lived together through waves of changes that characterized and shaped their unity. These developments have great influence on the geopolitics of the country.

Ancient Ethiopia had been characterized by a rich history that spans thousands of years. During this period it had faced foreign invaders and intruders that influenced the reign of various kings and queens. Such intrusions could not threaten the existence of Ethiopia as the only independent country in the African continent. Its various kingdoms made their peculiar contributions to the structure of the continent.

Similarly, its cultures have expressed the special identities of Ethiopians. Its historical and political structures have contributed to the region's diverse political landscape. Its independence has made Africans suffering from colonial atrocities aspire for their freedom from the yoke of hardships under foreign rule and tyranny. Thus, Ethiopia has become a guiding star to the freedom of Africa at large.

Very short views of the key historic developments about ancient Ethiopia that have influenced its future are presented here. These are: kingdoms and empires; Christianity and politics; medieval political structure; Islamic influence; Oromo migrations and political changes; colonial challenges; Emperor Haileselassie; the Derg Regime; and the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF). Besides, its diplomatic relations mostly based on trade, that go centuries back have put their mark on the country's political landscape.

Kingdoms and empires comprise the country's colorful past. The Kingdom of Axum was an empire with its hub in Eritrea and northern Ethiopia. The Kingdom was the first sub-Saharan civilization to create its own currency. It established its own written language. It became the center of Ethiopian Christian Church. It has been dominated by agrarian communities similar in culture to those in Southern Arabia. It prospered due to its agricultural lands, monsoon rains and control of regional trade.

Yodit Gudat, after her father was killed in a battle with the Axumite Empire, defeated and retaliated the Axumites. She was the banished princess of Axum. However, Axum was a major political and economic power in the region. It controlled trade routes and played a significant role in the spread of Christianity.

Following the fall of the Axumite Empire, the Zagwe Dynasty, which ruled from the 10th to the 13th century, succeeded the Axumite Kingdom. It was known for the construction of rock-hewn churches in

Lalibela. The dynasty was a medieval Agew Orthodox Christian monarchy that ruled the northern part of Ethiopia and Eritrea.

The Agew are Cushitic ethnic group native to the northern highlands of Ethiopia and neighboring Eritrea. Mara Teklehaimanot was the founder of the dynasty. Under the dynasty, the order of succession was that a brother succeeded his brother as king based on the Agew laws of inheritance. The Agew dynasty had been succeeded by the Solomonic Dynasty that claimed descent from the biblical King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba. It has played a central role in Ethiopian politics. It traces its roots back to the 13th century and continued for many centuries.

Christianity has played great role in the political development of Ethiopia. Conversion to Christianity was a key part of the politics of the country. The Kingdom of Axum was one of the first regions to officially adopt Christianity in the early 4th century. This made Ethiopia one of the earliest Christian nations in the world. This has defined the State and Church relations in the country.

The Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church has historically played a significant role in politics. It has been very influential in the Ethiopian kingdoms. The ruling monarchs have also been influencing the Orthodox Church. They in turn have been closely tied with the Church. The Solomonic Dynasty's legitimacy, for example, has been closely tied to its relationship with the Church.

Any dispute between the Church and the ruling dynasty has to be amicably settled before it has been transmitted to the followers of the Church. The medieval Christian followers have been devoted to their religion who would not have hesitated to commit their lives to save their religions from any domination.

The medieval political structure comprised of the feudal system. During the medieval period, Ethiopia had a feudal system characterized by regional rule. They have their regional boundaries the residents of which have been their subjects. The nobles held considerable power over their people. They had absolute authority in their respective territories.

The medieval politics had been dominated by the Zemene Mesafint. It was known as the "Era of Princes" (18th-19th centuries) which was a period of internal strife. Each prince ruled his domain with absolute power. But, this arrangement had caused the political fragmentation of the country. The regional lords vied for power, trying to dominate any contender within a given region. In their ambition to extend their power to neighboring regions, they conducted battles for more ownership of territories. As a result, they weakened the central authority and divided Ethiopia into several dominions. They conducted battles

with neighboring regions for extending their domains.

These battles have been influenced by religious denominations. The Islamic influence has been strong in different parts of Ethiopia. The Adal Sultanate, with its capital in Harar, posed a significant political and military challenge to Christian Ethiopia in the 16th century. The conflicts with the Adal Sultanate had lasting impacts on Ethiopian history. Added to these were the Oromo migrations and interactions with other ethnic groups, including the Amhara and Tigray. It played a role in shaping the political landscape of Ethiopia.

Following that, in the 17th century, the establishment of Gondar as the capital marked a period of political reorganization and centralization under Emperor Fasiledes. The Ethiopian political landscape has been influenced by internal forces. However, external forces have tried to play a role in the political economy of Ethiopia in the past centuries. Colonial powers have invaded and occupied nearly all the African countries with the goal of controlling the natural resources of the continent.

The colonial challenges have been immense and beyond the military capacity of Africa. However, Ethiopia, under the leadership of Emperor Menelik, successfully resisted Italian colonial attempt to invade it during the First Italo-Ethiopian War of Adwa in 1895-1896. It maintained its independence for millennia. This achievement was so exemplary that it even shocked European colonialists that dominated the rest of Africa.

Its resistance of the colonial system enabled the country gain recognition from the foreign world, especially from the Western countries and due to that; they began to make diplomatic relation with Ethiopia. This diplomatic relation has continued better to date safeguarding its national interest, according to Demeke Mekonnen, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Speaking to the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) in connection with the Diplomacy Week that kicked off yesterday at the science museum, he said that meticulous diplomacy has guided Ethiopia for 116 years with little or no hiccups and its Foreign Policy, which is inextricably fastened with its national security, has brought tangible results to protect its interest.

As to him, the event is of paramount importance to draw lessons from past diplomacy to today's and tomorrow's engagement. In its 116 years existence, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has been spearheading Ethiopia's national interest and the diplomacy week is instrumental to uphold results that have been gained and address the shortcomings.

Ethiopia has remained a symbol of African resistance to colonization. In the modern

age, there was attempt to modernize the country. Emperor Haileselassie implemented modernization efforts during his reign in 1930-1974, with a brief interruption during the Italian occupation. However, his rule faced challenges, including internal opposition. He was severely opposed by student movements that unfortunately culminated in military rule, the Derg regime.

The Derg regime was known for its human rights abuses and economic challenges. It was dismantled by the cooperation of liberation movements that dominated Ethiopia after its fall. One of the dominant powers was EPRDF that overthrew the Derg. The EPRDF, a coalition of rebel groups, overthrew the Derg regime in 1991. It introduced a federal system and emphasized ethnic representation in government.

The short review or the brief observation of the long history of Ethiopia is presented here for those who are new to its political, economic and social history and developments in the past. For those interested in the details of the history of the country may refer to books written on various issues. As presented earlier, the politics of ancient Ethiopia reflect a complex history of kingdoms, empires, and political changes. Its history has been accompanied by various factors such as religion, regionalism, and external threats influencing the nation's development.

Religion has played a significant role in the development and direction of the history of the country. Regionalism has also been a major factor that determined the shape and size of the country. Regional powers fought for the control of the country, but a few succeeded. Others have been subdued by dominant forces.

Apart from religion and regionalism, Ethiopia has been challenged by external threats that wanted to colonize it, but failed. Ethiopia's ability to resist external pressures and maintain its independence is immense. Its people cooperated to defend their country every time alien forces tried to dismantle it. They have navigated internal dynamics that have contributed to its historical significance on the African continent.

The modern political landscape of Ethiopia is shaped by its rich historical achievements. Economic, multilateral and citizen-centered diplomacy are pillars of the current Ethiopia's foreign policy and the country has moved quickly to integrate the East African region with infrastructure and embrace its neighbors. Ethiopia's foreign relations preponderantly focus on ensuring national interest and sovereignty, the Foreign Minister elaborated.

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

Editorial

Nation's 116 years of diplomatic achievements have stood the test of time

Ethiopia, being a towering figure in international relations and diplomacy stages, has recently launched diplomacy week. The weeks will preview the unique charm and distinct feature of the country in its diplomatic ties with the world. The country celebrates its standing as one of the biggest diplomatic hubs in the world. Being the founding country of the African Union and United Nations, Ethiopia's diplomatic clout stands shoulder high and the test of time. The country also remains one of the most reliable and trusted partner. The track record of the country proves its years of resilience and perseverance in its diplomatic relations with the rest of the world. It previews and celebrates its 116 years of successful diplomatic achievements.

Considered as a neutral player yet a friend in need, Ethiopia also continues to be vanguard and anchor state in maintaining regional peace and stability. The country's diplomatic path is worth-celebrating. It leaves an indelible mark in world stage in establishing international blocs and contributing to global causes. Also being the seat of dozens of regional, continental and international organizations, Ethiopia still wields mammoth diplomatic leverages in world stage playing a part in redefining international values working towards a more inclusive and fair world.

Leading by example, the country is a staunch Pan-Africanist and vocal critics of unfair representations of Africa. In terms of working for global cause, the country also is a frontrunner in redressing global challenges. Besides being peacemaker in the Horn region, the country is the largest refugee hosting, major peacekeeping force contributor nation. Over a century now, the country's diplomatic charm continues undiminished. Its years of unwavering dedication to global causes are supported with concrete actions. This has earned the nation enduring reputation and international recognition. The diplomacy week in this regard will help showcase the age-old and glittering success in the country's diplomacy. Previewing the path will help the nations to capitalize on the good things and overcome the challenges faced.

The warm diplomatic relations have its sovereignty and national interests respected, and gave the nation a stronger voice. Ethiopia's current foreign policy is based on economic, multilateral, and citizen-centered diplomacy. The nation has made rapid progress in embracing its neighbors and integrating the East African area with infrastructure. Suffice it to mention its recent deal with Somaliland. Diplomacy Week offers the chance to confront shortcomings and strengthen the achievements. Devoid of its internal woes, Ethiopia is an indispensable actor in world diplomacy. Given the country's huge geopolitical importance and rich history, nations have been keenly desirous to forge string ties with Ethiopia.

The path, however, was not without odds, there were times when the country was confronted with diplomatic showdown with other nations as observed in the times of the conflict in the northern part of the country. Yet, its resilience has helped her initiate a reengagement and normalization. Ethiopia's administration has continued strengthening its diplomatic relations with allies by adhering to the inclusive diplomacy agenda. The Ethiopian government is also actively pursuing large projects in the fields of science and technology that reinforce the diplomatic endeavors.

The diplomacy week will give the public and diplomatic community a better understanding of Ethiopia's past, present, and future diplomacy thereby enabling the public to contribute its fair share to the country's diplomatic endeavors, so said MoFA Spokesperson Ambassador Meles Alem (Ph.D.)

"The government strives to provide necessary services and take commensurate practical measures in order to further enhance the country's reputation as one of the world's largest diplomatic hubs."

Emulating lessons from the past, Ethiopia will continue to maintain a win-win approach and an inclusive diplomacy policy. And, its values that stood the test of time will be a vital recipes in pursuing another years of successful diplomacy in bilateral and multilateral levels.



The Ethiopian Herald

Established in 1943

Published daily except Mondays
By The Ethiopian Press Agency

Office of the CEO

Tel. 011-126-42-22
Fax. 251-011-156-98-62
email- epa@press.et

Advertisement and Dist. Department

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

Editor-in-Chief: Worku Belachew

email- workubelachew@press.et

Address- Nifas Silk Lafto Sub-city

Woreda - 05, House No----

Tel- +251 111 26 41 98

Managing Editor: Wakuman Kudama

Email: wakuma220@gmail.com

Deputy Editors-in-Chief:

Alem Hailu
Elizabeth Mengistu
Zekarias Woldemariam
Desta Geberehiwot
Daniel Beyene

Website: www.press.et

email: ethiopianherald@press.et

Fb//Ethiopian Press Agency/

The Ethiopian Herald

Opinion



Diplomacy week exhibition as springboard for future diplomatic endeavors

BY EPHREM AND ARGACHEW

Ethiopia has always been an important actor in international affairs due to its strategic location at the crossroads of Africa, the Middle East, and Europe. As a result, Ethiopian diplomacy has a long and rich history dating back to antiquity.

The country has maintained diplomatic and commercial ties with the Roman Empire, Persia, and India, among other historical civilizations. The leaders of the empire showed a profound awareness of international politics by entering into alliances, commercial deals, and diplomatic contacts with other nations.

Ethiopia's diplomatic endeavors expanded during the medieval period as the Christian kingdom of Ethiopia attempted to forge relations with European nations. Ethiopian monarchs dispatched envoys to Portugal and other European nations in the 15th and 16th centuries, requesting military support against the advancing Muslim powers. Portuguese missionaries and military advisors arrived in Ethiopia as a result of their diplomatic efforts, and several treaties and accords were signed.

The diplomatic history of modern Ethiopia has been defined by the country's struggle for independence and its engagement in regional and global events. Ethiopia became a founding member of the United Nations (UN) and actively participated in international diplomacy after attaining independence from Italian colonialism in 1941. The country was instrumental in the formation of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the forerunner of the African Union, and has participated in peacekeeping operations across the continent.

Ethiopia has a long history of diplomatic ties with many countries around the world, making it one of the oldest countries in the international system. However, the introduction of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other ministerial systems in Ethiopia in 1907 may have marked the beginning of the nation's modern diplomatic relations. The goal of Ethiopia's foreign policy at the time was to advance the nation's independence. Ethiopia has so successfully evaded European colonization.

Although the practice of diplomacy is unpredictable due to constantly changing technology, state-dynamic domestic and foreign policies, the impacts of globalization, and so forth, Ethiopia has been engaging in stable diplomacy that upholds equality, hospitality, fraternity, and peace. This has established a cornerstone for Ethiopian diplomatic activity in the past and present as well as for the next generations.

Ethiopia, for example, has acted as a beacon of independence for Africans in the past as an

ancient state that protected its sovereignty and territorial integrity, and it was also the only independent African country represented in the League of Nations and a founding member of the UN. The country has played an important role in African unification by bridging the gap between the Casablanca and Monrovia groups. It had a significant role in forming and guiding the IGAD. At the moment, the country is also playing an important role in climate diplomacy. These and other significant African countries, host a huge number of foreign missions and international organizations.

In light of these facts, the Ethiopian Ministry of Foreign Affairs hosted a Diplomacy Week exhibition at the Ethiopia Science Museum from January 11 to February 12. The exhibition gives the public and diplomatic community a better knowledge of Ethiopia's history, present, and future diplomacy, allowing the public to contribute a fair amount to the country's diplomatic activities.

Throughout history, trade, culture, religion, and security concerns have all had a significant impact on Ethiopia's foreign policy. Ethiopia's international relations have grown in scope in the contemporary period to protect the interests of the nation by utilizing modern technologies. Furthermore, the nation has shown its citizens the respect they deserve in the wake of the political change that took place in the middle of 2018. Hence, citizen-centered diplomacy becomes the core of the diplomatic endeavor.

Although Ethiopia has encountered diplomatic hurdles in recent years due to internal political upheaval, human rights issues, and confrontations with neighboring nations. However, the government continues to engage in diplomatic measures aimed at addressing these challenges and supporting regional peace and development.

In general, Ethiopian diplomacy has evolved over millennia to reflect the country's unique geopolitical location, historical experiences, and cultural heritage. As Ethiopia navigates complicated global dynamics, diplomatic interactions will remain a critical component of its foreign policy.

As a result, the exhibition not only records Ethiopia's diplomatic journey since the establishment of the Ethiopian Ministry of Foreign Affairs but also showcases the country's historical diplomatic engagements. As a consequence, it is advantageous to learn from past and current attempts and to use the lessons acquired as a springboard for future diplomatic endeavors. It is also imperative to highlight Ethiopia's diplomatic efforts to promote economic development, foster regional integration, and address transnational challenges such as climate change and security threats.

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

Business & Economy

Significance of access to the sea for Ethiopia

BY LAKACHEW ATINAFU

Access to the sea holds immense importance for landlocked countries, and Ethiopia is no exception. Situated in the Horn of Africa, Ethiopia, the second-most populous country on the continent next to Nigeria has long faced the challenges of being landlocked. This article explores the multifaceted significance of sea access for Ethiopia, especially in the economic arena, drawing upon reliable sources and documents to provide a comprehensive analysis.

According to the African Development Bank, access to the sea is vital for Ethiopia's trade and economic development. Being landlocked, limits Ethiopia's ability to engage in international trade, significantly affecting its economic growth and potential.

Developing countries' access to the ocean and shorelines allow them to develop and attract foreign direct investments and direct industry production within the state. Additionally, 80% of tourism happens in coastal areas.

A World Bank report highlights that proximity to ports and maritime infrastructure can significantly reduce transportation costs and facilitate the movement of goods. Access to the sea would provide Ethiopia with new trade routes, enabling it to diversify its export markets and import essential goods efficiently.

The United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) emphasizes that access to the sea is crucial for Ethiopia's integration into regional and global markets. It enables the country to participate in regional trade agreements, foster economic cooperation, and strengthen regional integration efforts such as the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

The African Union's Agenda 2063 underscores the importance of enhancing connectivity between African countries. Access to the sea would enable Ethiopia to connect with neighboring coastal countries, fostering cross-border cooperation, and promoting regional stability and development. Ethiopia's access to the sea would enhance its energy security. The country has significant hydropower potential, and access to coastal areas would facilitate the import and export of energy resources, attracting foreign investment and bolstering the development of renewable energy projects. According to the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, "Marine Resources for Africa's Development", Ethiopia's potential access to offshore resources in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden could unlock new opportunities for resource exploration and extraction, contributing to the country's economic growth and energy diversification.

The significance of access to the sea for Ethiopia cannot be overstated. It holds the key to unlocking economic growth, trade diversification, regional integration, and energy security. Reliable sources and



Sea access is a crucial element in Ethiopia's development agenda

Developing countries' access to the ocean and shorelines allow them to develop and attract foreign direct investments and direct industry production within the state

documents from organizations such as the African Development Bank, World Bank, United Nations, and the African Union provide a comprehensive understanding of how sea access can transform Ethiopia's socio-economic landscape, paving the way for a prosperous and interconnected future Ethiopia primarily earns foreign currency through various sources to import commodities.

Ethiopia exports a range of products, including coffee, oilseeds, flowers, textiles, and livestock. Revenue generated from these exports contributes to the country's foreign currency earnings.

Remittances from Ethiopians living abroad play a significant role in the country's foreign currency reserves. These funds are sent by Ethiopian Diaspora communities to their families and contribute to the foreign exchange reserves.

Foreign companies investing in Ethiopia bring in foreign currency as part of their investment. These inflows are utilized to develop industries, infrastructure, and other sectors, contributing to the country's foreign currency reserves.

Ethiopia is known for its rich cultural heritage, historical sites, and natural attractions. Revenue generated from tourism activities, such as accommodation, transportation, and entrance fees, contributes to the country's foreign currency earnings.

The possession of a port and its impact on a landlocked country like Ethiopia can be substantial. Here are some key points to consider: Having direct access to a port significantly reduces transportation costs for imports and exports. Currently, Ethiopia relies on neighboring countries' ports, such as Djibouti and Sudan, which can be more expensive and time-consuming. Owning or having guaranteed access to a port would reduce these costs, making imports more affordable and boosting the country's competitiveness in the global market.

A port allows a landlocked country to diversify its trade routes and partners. The opportunity gained to access to port as the result of memorandum of understanding signed between Ethiopia and Somaliland opens up more opportunities for Ethiopia to explore new markets, expand its export potential, and import goods from a wider range of countries. Enhanced trade diversification can contribute to economic growth, job creation, and the development of various industries.

The presence of a port can attract foreign direct investment by providing an efficient logistics infrastructure for businesses. Access to a port facilitates the movement of goods, reduces trade barriers, and enhances connectivity, making Ethiopia a more attractive destination for foreign investors.

A port can serve as a gateway for regional integration, allowing Ethiopia to participate more actively in regional trade agreements and initiatives. It promotes economic cooperation with neighboring countries, fosters the development of regional infrastructure projects, and strengthens political ties, leading to greater stability and shared prosperity.

Upon the realization for Ethiopia accessing to the port, it will potentially import energy resources more efficiently. This is particularly relevant for landlocked countries that rely on imported oil and gas. Direct access to a port would enable Ethiopia to diversify its energy sources, attract investment in energy infrastructure,

and enhance energy security.

As history has that the country had three ports and used to be the conqueror of the world and influential state in the Horn of African region and Asia Minor. The possession of ports appeared to be strategic input to establish strategic partnership along with maintaining robust diplomacy across the world.

Ethiopia had signified and dignifying history in doing so establishing strategic partnership with the ancient civilization starting from the most known human history. The history of the country which was depicted by the Greek and the Arabs clearly shows that the truth that the country had long experienced trade ties with ancient civilizations most notably with the Eastern Hemisphere even probably having bonds of long ties with the emerging states of the west.

Amid all these, the significance of port which presumably deliberately demarcated by the post-colonial agreement is believed to be a vengeance for one of the most populous country and beacon for African independence.

As one can see the map of Ethiopia and the regional demarcation of the Horn countries, it is almost ridiculous and contradictory logic may also be dangerous conspiracy of revenge. As the world witnessed the country had been one of those to build strong naval forces and a gate way to the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden.

Furthermore, documents unveil that over three billion people depend on marine and coastal resources for their livelihoods. In addition, oceans are crucial for global food security and human health. They are also the primary regulator of the global climate, an important sink for greenhouse gases and they provide us with water and the oxygen we breathe.

In conclusion, the possession of a port by Ethiopia would have significant economic, political, social and diplomatic implications for the country. It would reduce transportation costs, promote trade diversification, attract foreign direct investment, enhance regional integration, and improve energy security. These factors collectively contribute to economic growth, job creation, and overall development in the country.

Art & Culture

A love triangle

(Short Story)

BY ALEM HAILU G/KRISTOS

After lunch break when I opened my office door which was normally evacuated at that hour of the day I saw Christina waist upward and face downward half asleep on her office table.

Nudged by the key-and-lock sound effect, quickly coming back to her normal self, “We can’t work in the same organization anymore. Either Thomas or I must leave,” Christina uttered unintentionally.

As I know the unglamorous affair between the two I didn’t pose the question why. But I advised her to rather ask a transfer to other branch of our organization found at the extreme corner of the city.

“I want you to inform Tomas he and I can’t continue to be intimate any more. Of course, we could be on bowing terms. Nothing less and nothing more! I intend to write a letter for him. I must ask my husband Joseph for forgiveness,” she got up from her chair and rubbed her wedding ring continuously.

Joseph was a well-read and middle-aged man that had the power of convincing people. He was tall and handsome. Always he was clean shaven and never forgot to put on three pieces.

Tomas, who liked to put on tight clothes to display his shape, was our workmate. He often stood before the lifts or the rest rooms’ mirror to check his posture in a way that betrayed his physical appearance over concerns him. “Aren’t I in good shape?” he never failed to put questions to the onlooker expectant a “wow awesome” tip. To make up for the desertification of his head, more often than not, he got his profuse sideburns and beard cut in a u-shape.

As IT expert, he used to come to our office regularly to fix our overused computers often hit by virus. Repeatedly ahead of time, he asked Christina “Does your computer give you a hard time? Does it need troubleshooting? It was this way he endeared himself to Christina, a secretary in our organization’s communication bureau, where I was a senior literature expert.

Christina who got her long brown hair done in phony tail style always liked to put on a jeans trouser that hugged her colossal bottom magnificently. She wore a tee-shirt in a way making sure the rift valley between the breast-mountains, which sported a gold necklace bearing the capital letter C, is open for the interested to feast their eyes on. Her chocolate skin that made a color match with her hair was also one of her attractions. Her boomerang dense eyebrows circle her eyes that seemed to outgrow the eyelids. She was sure to get sprinkled with a perfume that exuded a biscuit-like aroma which was deadly seductive.

Unlike foolish husbands angry who divorces their dear wives or who beat them to death Joseph fought back to salvage his marriage. The knowledge he got about marriage reading the book Fireproof Marriage, among other marriage counseling webs, did wield such influence on him.

Upon knowing his wife’s affair with a coworker firsthand seeing things in her office while on a surprise visit Joseph run away from home for two days. But sleeping over the matter, exercising patience, understanding his marriage is salvageable and summoning his courage he returned to Christina’s office to declare truce and win back his much-beloved wife.

“It is because of my mistake you stooped to affair. I must not make you a scapegoat. I failed to accord you the necessary attention. Busying myself in work and books also showing much tenderness to my parents I was absent from home for long. Fatuously I neglected you. Please forgive me. Distancing myself I made you harbor suspicion of affair on my side which could compel you to seek revenge. Like a double-edged sword you were subject to wooing on one side and feeling of neglect on the other side.”

“Yes you are right Joseph. You read my mind. That was the harrowing situation I went through.”

“Please try to forgive my failure to extend to you the proper affection you deserve. Do not replace me by somebody else! I think you know very well it is you I placed in the heart of my hearts though I was remiss in articulating it. It was foolish of me. Dearest Christina... love of my life,” he knelt down and saw her with beseeching eyes true to the advices of Kamasutra, author of the perfume garden. He succeeded in restoring her pride.

“I will forgive you. Anyways I can’t evade the blame that could be hurled against me, for I should have thought twice before I went physical with a coworker,” she ducked her head.

“I understand situational factors such as opportunity coupled with alcohol could have made you low in your guard,” he tried to downplay the matter with his hands.

“Yes, it was in a get-together day held in our organization’s auditorium the mistake was made,” Christina sobbed a bit and by way of confession kept on talking “When blood began gushing down from my friend Martha’s nose who consumed too much alcohol and danced for long somebody gave her a tissue paper. Afraid it might not be enough I headed to our office to fetch her more tissues. Thomas tagged along having in mind an opportunity for a blitzing kiss. We were lonely...”

She sobbed again with anguish posted up

face, while Yoseph wiped her eyes tenderly.

“It was after the consensual intimacy was over I started blaming myself. But, when similar incidents offered themselves then after I became inured to the pit I succumbed to. He and I continued to seek each other out for two months whenever our organization got deserted.”

She resumed her sobbing while Yoseph reverted back to soothing her.

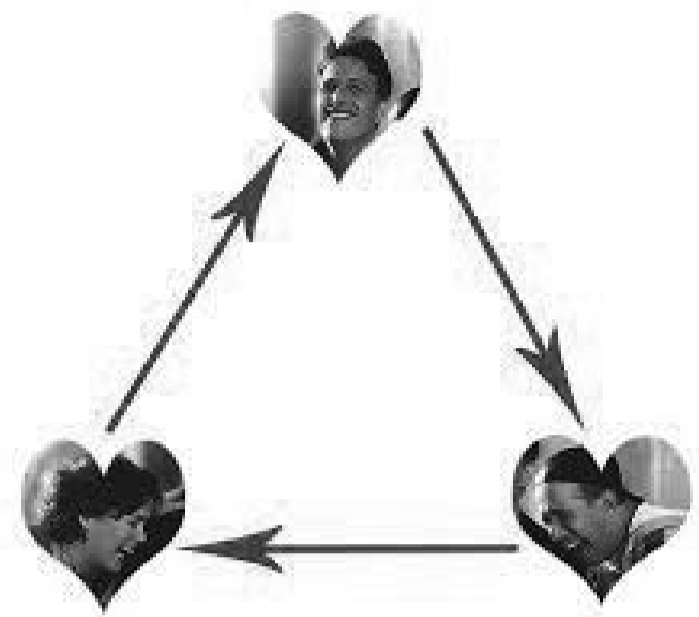
“I was determined to stop the affair frightened by the frowning faces of coworkers and their gossip when you came to my office to surprise me with gifts on my birthday and caught Tomas and I red-handed while lip locking forgetting locking the door. A shockwave cruised my entire being. I was about to faint. You see I partially saw you while opening the door,” Christina wistfully gazed out of the window and resumed her confession “I was afraid a car could knock you down when you ran away throwing the door shut. I was expecting revenge on your side by way of filing for a divorce. But you proved to be wise not seeking divorce a way out, which is to the benefit of our lovely little daughter too. You didn’t inflict a physical harm on me even driven by the spur of the moment which imparted your genuine love to me. You distanced yourself for three days to blow off steam. If you are willing to forgive the emotional pain I forced you to go through I’m once more yours for the taking,” she got up from her chair and embraced him.

On his turn sobbing “Are you determined to quit the affair?”

“I’m sure as sure can be. Rest assured on that score.”

“Whom do you love more?”

“Talking to me playing with my hair and seeing me straight into my eyes by way of probing into my soul Tomas drew me in. Rejecting calls from his wife he was listening to me attentively. That was how I fell prey to his trap. Once, when I gave him a call his wife picked up the phone and dressed me down. Filing out a form for a transfer to other branch of our organization I will soon leave this place to avoid any form of contact with that womanizer. I was not that type of women he reduced me too. How could I disturb somebody else’s home not to mention that of mine?”



Joseph gathered Christian into his arms. Reclining her head on his chest she sobbed. He probed up her chin with his right hand and smeared her lips.

Tomas entered into the selfsame office while husband and wife were lip locking.

Dropping a keyboard he fetched from store to replace that of Christina’s which failed to type the letter T, banging the door shut, Tomas left realizing beyond any shadow of doubt Yoseph had dislodged him from Christina’s heart to reoccupy it and never ever to miss it. What revenge!

Late at night when they returned home attending a church ceremony the welcoming gesture they received from their daughter hammered home to them the marital bliss they were about to miss. Clang together they once more wept imitated by the house servant.

After two decades this event took place, I picked up my pen to make a short story out of it. What made me to recall that event is the dropping down of a piece of paper from my old Album. The paper in a form of a letter was one written by Christina to Tomas which I was supposed to handle to Tomas. I photocopied the paper and handed over the original one to Tomas in an envelope. The letter handwritten and signed by Christina reads as follows.

“Bro Tomas You know I’m a married woman with a lot of responsibilities. Besides my husband and I are raising a daughter, the flesh of our flesh, together. She needs us terribly as much as we need her. Worse, I’m suffering from the pricks of conscience from shattering my marital vow. Though you are a good person and we had a quality time I have decided to abort our unholy relationship and ask for my husband’s forgiveness. I know he has a big heart. Also, I am receiving criticism from every corner. As I talked you yesterday and the day before yesterday, I plan to leave this organization. We could click as siblings occasionally. Please let me be if you don’t want me to delete you from my memory altogether.”

Christina Abrham

Last Christmas when I gave Christina a call she, Yoseph and her daughter were at Langano Resort. The couples were celebrating their 23rd wedding anniversary.

Science & Technology

Multi-purpose robot by a young student with a creative knack

BY DARGIE KAHSAY

Benyas Wondwesen is a grade 12 student. He is among the talented youths embraced by the Information Network Security Administration's (INSA) Cyber Talent Center. Benyas is proving his mettle at the center by coming up with different innovation-worthy works. Benyas has ignited different ideas of creative touches and he has tried to translate his innovational ideas into products. Before he joined INSA Cyber Talent Center, Benyas had already two inventions. And currently he has produced a robot with multipurpose tasks.

Benyas's robot is designed to tackle the drudgery of household tasks and security surveillance service in the house. Benyas produced the robot to solve the problems he observes around his residency. Understanding the problems that households are experienced round his environs, he has decided to produce a robot that handles household tasks replacing human beings. The idea of creating a robot was stuck in his mind since he started understanding the toughness of handling household tasks and after he got the opportunity to translate his idea into practice. Then after Benyas started producing the product.

Benyas has designed the robot to provide security surveillance service in the house with the aim of managing security issues including buglers. Benyas said that he joined INSA's Cyber Talent Center with a lot of innovational ideas, adding that the opportunity he received to join INSA's Cyber Talent Center is helping him to strengthen his talents and to realize the innovational ideas into practice.

Benyas reiterated that before he produced his current robot, he had innovated two robots and the current one is his third robot, which he said is more developed than the previous ones. As to him, the production of current robot was started and developed within Cyber Talent Center after he joined INSA.

Benyas' innovational talent has been putting down roots since his childhood and he was interested in producing gadgets from simple things he found in his surroundings. Benyas said that "since my childhood, my focus was producing and creating simple products from used materials and I showed them to people in my surrounding."

As Benyas was passionate about innovation, he continued coming up with new gadgets in his school since his elementary school days. His innovational products were praised by his teachers and classmates in his school. Understanding his passion and his unique talent, his school administration and teachers appreciated

him to continue honing his creative knacks and skills, Benyas told EPA.

Benyas said after he joined the Cyber Talent center, he got professional trainings and supports that helped him to develop his talent and to produce his ideal innovations into real products. Using the opportunity he got from the Cyber Talent Center, Benyas was able to produce a multi-task robot. According to him, the robot was designed to provide household assistance service and security surveillance at the same time and the robot was produced from different materials including used products.

The young innovator noted that a security camera is installed at the front of the robot so that it can capture people's picture. As the robot is capable of rotating, it can easily take a picture of its surroundings and provide security surveillance for the intended area. In addition, Benyas said, it can control and report every activity at home, especially when a robber encroaches on the compound of the house or if it senses any dangerous or irregular activity, the robot can report and send messages to the person who controls the system and sends message to security persons.

In addition, the robot has additional functions, according to its inventor. "The robot can communicate with people in Amharic language. It also repeats the voice heard from people and it responds to the questions asked," Benyas added. "For example, if anyone provides the amharic greeting word 'selam', it reciprocates with 'selam'," he noted. Not only that, the robot can protect the security of selected products or things it is instructed to protect and discharges the duty efficiently.

"The robot can also protect the security of radio waves," Benyas stated adding that a radio jammer has been installed on the robot. Hence, if the system of a radio stations faces a problem or if it is jammed and if it is broadcasting unnecessary information, the robot's radio jammer system will immediately control the issue by downing the radio stations from the air.

As to Benyas, the robot can cut the unnecessary information being broadcasted by the jammed radio and broadcast information it wants or programmed by the owners of the station. In the meantime, the people listening to the radio will hear the information released by the robot. According to Benyas, the robot can foil any attack on radio stations and manage the information broadcasted at that time. This way, it can help to address the crisis during difficulty. Benyas further noted a voice spot is installed in the robot that helps the robot to record voices around its surroundings.

As to him, the robot can record speeches of people gathered in a conference hall and



Benyas Wondwesen and the robot he invented

report it to the person who controls it. This system helps people to listen the recorded voice through voice spot using the robot. To fulfill its tasks, the robot can move from place to place by itself and a controlling mechanism is installed in the robot to manage its movements. The controlling system of the robot is managed by people who have the permission to do so.

"Anyone who wants to manage the activity of the robot must have the permission to control it," Benyas noted adding that "to get the permission, anyone has to own the name password of the owner of the robot." Unless the person owns the given name and password of the owner, it is impossible to command the robot. When a user finds the user's name and the password and s/he commands the robot, it immediately starts its task instructed to do so.

"When the robot starts its task, the light bulbs installed around its eye emit green light. This is the sign that the robot is ready to discharge the task. It is a language that it communicates with its users," the innovator reiterated.

Generally, as to Benyas, this robot has all types of radio jamming, voice spot and different types of security devices. Hence, to secure the usage of these sensitive security functions and to control the admittance into the system by unauthorized people, a software controlling system is

installed within the robot.

In addition, in terms of hardware, the robot is locked by key and when the key opens, it has a system to report to the owner of the robot. The system is directly connected with the phone of the user and sends a voice message to the user.

For Benyas his innovational robot has its unique features compared to other robots. As to him, most robots are designed and produced to fulfill a single task, but his robot can fulfill multiple tasks at the same time. "By instructing the robot, it is possible to make it manage multiple tasks simultaneously," he added. Compared to the imported robots, its price is also cheap. He noted the production cost of the robot to be 50 thousand birr.

After he completed the production of his robot at the talent center, he has invited people in the center to see and evaluate his product. As to him, viewers got surprised and appreciated his product. Then the product was professionally tested. After the test, the robot was verified for usage.

Benyas' next plan is producing the robot for market consumption and is striving to develop his skills in the technology sector. He has the plan of producing robots that act fully like people and he is using the opportunity he got at Cyber Talent Center to develop his talent.

Society



Meal sharing program at Tesfa Birhan No. 5 Feeding center

Festivals, occasions for belongingness, beyond cultural, historical importance

BY LEULSEGED WORKU

Extending a helping hand for the underprivileged segment of the society is not only a morally obligatory act one should carry out but also a fundamental aspect of building a compassionate and inclusive society. This is especially true in times of holidays where most societies in our community often face greater challenges and hardships.

Helping one another and showing belongingness in times of needs and in special times is one of the cultural values of Ethiopians; they have been practicing it for long. No matter what or in what economic challenges they may be in, or what their cultural and religious differences that exist among them, Ethiopians know the art of sharing.

All holidays have special meaning to Ethiopians. They are not simply special days to feast. They are also moments where Ethiopians show sympathy and belongingness to others.

'Gena' which is one of the special festivals for Ethiopians, is a day where they extend their helping hands to the underprivileged members of the society in any possible means, either by sharing meals, donating materials or other way.

As part of this age-old culture of the community, and in relation to the Ethiopian Christmas (Gena) holiday, last Sunday a number of government and non-government institutions and individuals were seen stretching their hands to low income families, elders and the indigent people.

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) and First Lady Zinash Tayachew also marked the day by sharing meals and distributing holiday gifts to the needy, including edible oils and

other materials that are needed to celebrate the holiday.

The Premier also handed over 110 houses and 52 shops that were built on two storey modern buildings, to the underprivileged members of the society residing around Aware area.

In the same manner, the Ministry of Health along with its affiliated organizations delivered houses located in Kolfe Keraniyo and Lideta sub-cities to low-income people. The houses are said fully refurbished by the Ministry and its affiliated institutions. They also undertook meal sharing program.

Speaking on the occasion, Health Minister Lia Tadesse (MD) said that the Ministry, concurrent to its core activities undertaken to improving the overall health and wellbeing of the community, it is executing a number of undertakings to discharge its social responsibilities joining hands with affiliating institutions and stakeholders.

"Beyond its primary role of protecting public health, the Ministry is also actively demonstrating its solidarity and togetherness to low-income sections of the society by taking practical strides. This endeavors and commitment will continue in the future too," the Minister reiterated.

This initiative is aimed at addressing the housing needs of underprivileged individuals and improves their living conditions, she added.

According to her, at this Ethiopian budget year, the renovation activities of a total of 24 houses across different sub-cities are ongoing through the joint efforts of the Ministry and collaborating institutions and stakeholders. Of which six fully refurbished houses were handed over to beneficiaries for Christmas.

The Minister also congratulated beneficiaries

and extended her heartfelt thanks to administrators of Kolfe Keranio and Lideta sub cities.

Expressing his satisfaction to see the collective humanitarian efforts accomplished by the Ministry and other stakeholders, Alert Comprehensive Specialized Hospital, Director General Shimelesh Gezahegn (MD), said that Alert Comprehensive Hospital in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, has taken the initiative to address the local community's problems through the housing project.

Speaking on his part, Kolfe Keraniyo Sub-City, Chief Executive Officer, Negatu Dangchew, commended the Ministry of Health and Alert Comprehensive Specialized Hospital for their active involvement in resolving community challenges. According to him, the dedication of the Ministry and the Hospital is an exemplary to other institutions and serve as a model to improve the lives of the less fortunate members of the society.

It is learnt that the housing project is part of the Ministry's ongoing volunteer activities, initiated on July 14, 2023, to support low-income individuals.

The holiday season is traditionally a time of joy and celebration, but it can also exacerbate feelings of loneliness and despair for those who are struggling. By reaching out and providing support, we not only alleviate immediate hardships but also send a powerful message of compassion and solidarity.

The act of helping the underprivileged during the holiday season goes beyond charity. It is a reflection of our shared humanity, reminding us that we are all interconnected and have a collective responsibility to uplift those in need. It is a moral duty that enriches both the recipients and the givers, fostering a sense of empathy, gratitude, and social cohesion.

By building new houses and renovating the exhausted ones and delivering as well as providing food assistance to low-income individuals, the Office of Prime Minister, Ministry of Health, other responsible institutions and individuals are actively addressing the pressing needs of those less fortunate Ethiopians. This act of kindness demonstrates government's commitment to ensuring the well-being and dignity of all citizens.

Moreover, helping the underprivileged during the holiday season has broader societal benefits. When individuals and families have access to stable houses and nutritious meals, they can focus on other areas of their lives, such as education and employment. This, in turn, contributes to stronger and more resilient communities.

Supporting the underprivileged members of the society is moral obligation. Problems associated with poverty cannot be solved in a single day or through sporadic acts of charity. It requires long-term commitment and sustainable solution. This could only be done by combined hands of government, nongovernment organizations and individuals. A one day charitable act might give a relief to beneficiaries; but if it could not bring sustainable change, it may develop a sense of dependency syndrome. In this regard, the effort of the government to bring a sustainable change in the life of underprivileged members of the society by building houses or renovation projects is worth appreciation.

Therefore, it is crucial that the effort should be continued in sustainable manner, not only during the holiday season but throughout the year. Together, we can work towards a more equitable and compassionate society where everyone has the opportunity to thrive.



Genna celebrated colorfully, *Timket* awaits more tourists' inflow

BY TEWODROS KASSA

Lalibela, a small town located in the northern part of Ethiopia, is not only known for its ancient Rock-hewn churches but also for its vibrant and lively cultural celebrations. One of the most anticipated and colorful event in Lalibela is the *Gena* celebration, the celebration of the Birth of Jesus Christ. This unique festival brings locals and tourists together to experience the rich cultural heritage of Ethiopia. Attendants of the recent *Gena* festival in *Lalibela* expressed their happiness with the traditions, rituals, and joyful atmosphere that makes this event so special. In addition, they were also fascinated by the ceremonial process of the *Gena* celebration in *Lalibela*.



Genna celebration, *Lalibela*

While *Gena* is a joyous celebration, it is deeply rooted in religious beliefs. The focal point of the festival is the midnight mass held at the rock-hewn churches of Lalibela. These ancient churches, carved from a solid rock, provide a majestic backdrop to the religious procession and prayers. The chanting, incense, and candle-lit atmosphere create a spiritual ambiance, immersing participants in a deeply religious experience.

Amhara State Culture and Tourism Bureau Public Relations Head Abebe Embiale told local media that numerous international tourists have attended the *Gena* celebration in Lalibela.

"The colorful celebration of the festival was successful in showcasing the real image of the state and its efforts to restore peace and stimulate the tourism sector," he said.

Accordingly, more than 500,000 local tourists also attended the festival in Lalibela. The successful completion of the festival gives impetus to promote the tourism sector and repeat such experiences during the upcoming *Timket* festival.

What is more, the *Gena* celebration in Lalibela is a truly unique experience that immerses locals and visitors alike in the vibrant culture and religious traditions of Ethiopia. From the colorful attire to the lively processions and spiritual ceremonies, this festival offers a glimpse into the rich heritage of the Ethiopian Orthodox Christian community. So, anyone who aspires to have a memorable and culturally immersive experience can mark their calendars for the event and make way to *Lalibela* for the *Gena* celebrations in the next year.

Timket is crucial in attracting tourists from across the world and paves the way for them to visit the country's world-famous attraction sites

In the upcoming week, Timket, festival, the Baptism of our Jesus Christ in the River Jordan by John the Baptist, will be celebrated colorfully across the country. However, among others, the festival is celebrated more colorfully and warmly in Gondar, Addis Ababa (Jan Meda), Ziway. These areas have gained momentum through colorful Timket celebration with a huge get together of local and international tourists. These areas are also the top tourist destinations during the celebration.

Timket is one of the leading street festivals that is celebrated throughout the country with a huge gathering of the Christianity followers. Ethiopian *Timket* has gained more attention among the local and international tourists to attend. Hundreds of thousands of international tourists cross thousands of kilo meters to attend the *Timket* festival annually.

Currently, it is widely known that the festival is among the leading opportunity to showcase cultural assets and attract more tourists to the country. *Timket* is crucial in attracting tourists from across the world and paves the way for them to visit the country's world-famous attraction sites.

More importantly, *Timket* festival will have significant contribution to the country's economy through attracting more international tourists if utilized properly. The Ethiopian government is also doing its level best regarding this. Concerning stakeholders, the government, investors, and hotel- owners need to work together for the promotion of the festivity and benefit the country and its economy.

Timket festival is more colorful in the ancient capital of Gondar. Gondar is an ancient Ethiopian capital city in the north of the country. It was particularly important during the reign of Emperor Fasilides and Iyasu the Great in the 17th century, during this time palaces, castles, and a royal bath were built. It is at the royal bath that is filled with water once a year that *Timket* is colorfully celebrated.

In Gondar, *Timket* starts with smaller ceremonies at many churches, followed by colorful parades of choirs and priests, accompanied by the entire populace converging at the piazza. Their final destination is Fasilades' Bath, a stonewall-enclosed complex where Fasilades (the founding Emperor of Gondar) had built a large royal pool and a place where the *Timket* celebrations occur.

Timket festival celebration in Addis Ababa becomes more colorful with a huge get

together of the faithful. Decoration and cleaning of streets and paths through which the *Tabots*, (replicas of the Arc of Covenants) pass are part of the main preparation which starts few days before the main event. The streets of Addis Ababa will be festively decorated in green, red and yellow, the colors of the Ethiopian flag. Believers dressed in all white gather from all quarters of the city to celebrate *Timket* by singing, dancing and drumming together. On the eve of *Timket*, known as *Ketera*, the actual celebrations begin with a procession to *Jan Meda*- a sporting field and celebration quarter for *Timket* for over a century. Young people from respective church lead the procession, followed by priests in colorful robes. Congregates from all corners of Addis Ababa converged to *Jan Meda* accompanying the priests of respective churches to the field. *Timket* is unbelievably colorful and full of religious and cultural dancing and songs. *Jan Meda* explodes with excitement of the mass for two days that it is hard to miss the festival.

Meanwhile, *Timket* celebration is also more colorful in Ziway, Oromia State, where the faithful and priests travel by boats from the monasteries to the temporary resident of the *Tabot*. Located 160 km south of Addis Ababa, Lake Batu or Ziway is the home of the monastery which once served as exiling spot for the Arc of the Covenant during conflict around 9th century.

This year's celebration will be marked at the same level of pace and momentum on 20th of January.

Timket festival was inscribed as one of the World's Intangible heritage by UNESCO.



Timket celebration, *Gondar*