



The Ethiopian Herald

Vol LXXX No 098 3 JANUARY 2024 - TAHISAS 24, 2016

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Ethiopia, Somaliland set to enact port access deal in month

BY YESUF ENDRIS

ADDIS ABABA- Ethiopia and Somaliland are set to complete the detailed process of their Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in port access and translate the agreement into implementation within one month, Prime Minister's National Security Advisor disclosed.

Briefing the media yesterday, the Advisor Ambassador Redwan Hussein

stated that consensus was reached to start the implementation of the MoU signed by leaders of the two countries within a month. "The agreement allows Ethiopia to have a commercial port and military base in the Red Sea coastline of Somaliland."

Redwan explained that Ethiopia needs access to the sea and diversified ports to support its growing economy and protect its national interests. "The country is keen for mutual

See Ethiopia, Somaliland...page 3

BRICS membership fosters Ethio-Iranian ties: Ambassador

BY TSEGAYE TILAHUN

ADDIS ABABA – Ethiopia and Iran's official admission to the BRICS economic bloc would avail a great opportunity to both parties to boost relations in social, economic and political spheres, Iranian Ambassador to Ethiopia said.

In an exclusive interview with *The Ethiopian Herald*, Iran's Ambassador to Ethiopia Samad Ali Lakizadeh stated the two countries' accession to the BRICS family is of paramount importance to further strengthen bilateral cooperation in areas of mutual benefit.

"BRICS is a two-way cooperation between member states and it gives ample opportunity for both Ethiopia

See BRICS membership ..page 3



Amb. Samad Ali Lakizadeh

Photo: Gebabto Gebrie

Residents hail Ethio-Somaliland accord

BY DESTA GEBREHIWOT

HAWASSA- Residents of Hawassa town back the growing quest by Ethiopia to gain a sea outlet while praising the country's agreement with Somaliland to develop a port and station a naval force in the Red Sea.

The residents comment came days after Ethiopia penned a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Somaliland that gives the former the opportunity to develop

See Residents hail...page 3



Ethiopia could break glass ceiling to port aspiration: *Panelists*

• *Landlocked status puts nation at back foot in global commerce*

BY DESTA GEBREHIWOT

HAWASSA- Social science experts explored Ethiopia's potential recipes to turn its sea access ambition

to realization while casting perspectives on the geopolitical, legal and historical scenarios the country could rely on.

Hawassa University held a panel discussion yesterday

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News



Beriso Amelo (PhD)

ESL praises agreement to access seaport for invaluable benefits

BY MESERET BEHAILU

ADDIS ABABA - The agreement reached between Ethiopia and Somaliland to facilitate access to seaport would address economic bottlenecks, said Ethiopian Shipping and Logistics (ESL).

Briefing Journalists yesterday, ESL CEO Beriso Amelo (PhD) said that Ethiopia's economic growth and international reputation has been low for centuries due to absence of seaport.

For this reason, the country's negotiating power has been reduced with regard to the growing price to seaport rental fees and the likes, he stated.

Therefore, the agreement between Ethiopia and Somaliland to pave ways to possess seaport will facilitate the cargo system, assure the development of the national economy, and improve Ethiopia's international reputation and influence, according to the CEO.

As to him, the agreement is attributed to the peaceful diplomatic effort in which that benefit the nation in terms of job creation and other economic advantages as the country is an international trade actor.

Therefore, he said, Ethiopia will develop the Somaliland's seaport to reap invaluable economic benefits.

The seaport will have numerous significances regarding achieving rapid economic growth which in return ensures unity among the people and consolidates the national defense force and embodies the nation international reputation, Beriso noted.

He further stated that his institution is working hard to produce skilled human power in the field to ensure international competitiveness, construct infrastructure, and establish digital logistic system in a view to bring adequate benefit from the logistics sector.

It is to be recalled that Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) and Somaliland President Muse Bihi Abdi have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that would pave the way to realize Ethiopia's ambition to secure access to the sea and diversify its access to seaports.

Public raises over 383 mln Birr for Abbay Dam in three-month

BY MISGANAW ASNAKE

ADDIS ABABA- Over 383 million Birr has been secured from various income generating schemes for the construction of the Abbay Dam in the last three months, the coordinating office disclosed.

Office of the National Council for the Coordination of Public Participation to the Construction of Abbay Dam Public Relations Director Hailu Abraham told the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) that the stated amount of money was obtained from domestic bond sales, donation and lottery, SMS scheme and other fund raising activities.

The director added that pledges are still being made by the public to support the building of the dam financially, professionally and in other ways. "For instance, some 1.8 million Birr was collected from Abbay Dam Tour in Sidama State which was concluded on December 9, 2023 and the trophy was passed to Somali State.

He anticipated the public's overwhelming support for the Abbay Dam Trophy Tour in Somali State and called on the society to maintain the finance until the completion of the iconic project.

Hailu further revealed the office's plan to raise about 1.5 billion Birr from various income generating programs

and public mobilization campaigns in the current fiscal year.

"Ethiopians have been extending continuous support to the dam, which is expected to be the engine of the country's industrialization, and contributed over 18 billion Birr since its launching to last October."

Revealing the office's plan to hold a large-scale nationwide public campaign in March 2024, the director called on the society to keep the support till the completion of the mega dam.

Different experts expressed the opinion that the dam under construction by Ethiopia is laudable as it is meant to benefit all the stakeholders and integrate the region.



Scholar highlights indispensable role of accessing seaport

BY MISGANAW ASNAKE

ADDIS ABABA - Accessing seaport plays an indispensable role in expediting Ethiopia's overall economic growth for facilitating trade, maintaining trade balance and attracting FDI, so said scholar.

Haramaya University Assistant Professor of Economics, Habtamu Legese told the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) that pursuing a win-win approach enables Ethiopia accessing seaport which is crucial to achieve rapid development via facilitating trade activity, maintaining trade balance as well as attracting Foreign

Direct Investment (FDI).

He , moreover, noted that the country has been spending about two billion USD for port rent fees which could have subsidized the economy.

As to him, 71 percent of the world's trade is done via water transport as it reduces cost of transportation.

Citing a 2014 UN study, Habtamu stated that landlocked countries spend an average 3,204 USD for export transaction compared to those who expend only 1,268 USD for having seaport access.

Likewise, he pointed out that the

landlocked states that import products spend 3,884 USD for one container whereas nation with sea access spend only 1,443 USD.

Thus, absence of seaport creates bottleneck on the landlocked nations that decreases FDI, hinder their competitiveness and affect trade balance, that's why Ethiopia needs to apply a wise approach to find access to seaport to overcome these challenges, according to the economist.

The country is capable of accessing and utilizing seaport if it applies a give and take approach that ensures mutual benefit, he said.

News

Over 55 million Ethiopians benefit from health insurance: Council

BY YESUF ENDRIS

ADDIS ABABA - National Council for Community Based Health Insurance (CBHI) announced that the number of citizens that benefit from health insurance has reached over 55 million.

The Council expressed that the number of people benefiting from the community based health insurance service has reached over 55 million at individuals or 12 million at household level in 2022/23.

The National Council that chaired by Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Demeke Mekonnen recently held a discussion with regional states.

During the discussion, Demeke said that health development is one of major focus areas that the government is working on.



Photo: Gebaba Gebrie

As to him, his government has been subsidizing the CBHI program taking into account of beneficiaries' economic status to cover membership payment.

Citizens living in the areas affected by drought and conflicts will be incorporated in the insurance service with potential discounts or for freemembership payment in accordance with assessments conducted

to this purpose, he said.

Health Minister and member of the National Council, Lia Tadesse (MD) also stated that the federal government and regional states have subsidized the CBHI with 1.3 billion Birr and 837 million Birr respectively.

She also asked the National Council and state officials to reset the fee per household as the cost for healthcare facilities is

growing through time.

To make the insurance sustainable, the amount of contribution of beneficiary household should be raised in consideration of their income level, she said.

Over 4.27 billion Birr has been collected from CBHI beneficiaries last Ethiopian fiscal year, it was mentioned.

According to the Council, the annual rate of health service utilization for CBHI beneficiaries is assumed to grow by 10 percent each year based on the trend observed during the past two years for the general population.

The National Council has also set a plan to expand the Community Based Health Insurance service program that was launched in 2010 as a pilot project, *The Ethiopian Herald* learnt.

Ethiopia,...

growth and it is trying to work together with its coastal neighbors to achieve its aspiration only through a peaceful and constructive means."

According to him, Ethiopia's Foreign Policy prioritizes cooperation with neighboring countries and to forge partnership through a give-and-take approach. Hence, several diplomatic agreements have been struck with Somaliland.

It is to be recalled that Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) and Somaliland President Muse Bihi Abdi signed on Monday a MoU for Partnership and Cooperation that is intended to serve as a framework for the multisectorial partnership between the two sides.

The MoU is said to pave the way to realize Ethiopia's aspiration to secure access to the sea and diversify its access to seaports apart from bolstering its role in maintaining regional peace and security.

Residents hail...

a port and have access in the Red Sea.

In exclusive interview with *The Ethiopian Herald*, residents of the Hawassa town, which is also a seat of Sidama state, praised incumbent's desire to secure ownership or access to seaport.

"I feel excited to be part of this historic move. I believe being landlocked nation costs us dearly with the country paying big sum of forex to coastal nations," Habtamu Tadele said.

The issue has galvanized public sentiment and residents of Hawassa received it wholeheartedly though some try to politicize it.

"Genuinely speaking, having access to port or sea outlet is a national interest and should be viewed from its economic and political significance. We incur hard currency for port services and it damages our competitiveness in global transaction."

The question of being a coastal nation has been lingering for generations and, now that the government is pushing for it boldly and peacefully, there is increased public sentiment, opined the resident.

"Having access to a sea outlet may prove a mere wish but for me it is attainable so long as a win-

win approach is followed," he said.

"I have received the news of Ethiopia and Somaliland agreement with utmost excitement. Having a direct access will surely ease commercial activities of the nation. And, a direct access to the sea catapults the nation to a new height of economic and political position," said another resident, Getachew Munib.

"There has long been a great deal of remorse from the public and the people are delighted that the country has become bold in its interests in having a direct access to the sea. Ethiopia is situated nearer to the Red Sea and this has pained the people for long.

Gaining direct access to the sea is tantamount to Abbay dam as it bears significant benefit to the country, he indicated.

The issue of sea access is not a product of political game, it is of a national matter that everybody needs to support. If realized successfully, this generation will be part of a precious legacy.

"The quest for a sea access may feel a fantasy at face value but is timely and imperative step. That is at least what Ethiopia and Somaliland did this week."

BRICS...

and Iran to consolidate their bilateral relationship in every possible arena. I was being informed about Ethiopia's plan to reopen its embassy in Tehran."

The Ambassador further highlighted that BRICS was established to move towards multilateralism and to avoid a unilateral world order. Many countries including Ethiopia and Iran are

severely affected by a unilateral world order and greedy policy approach and values and their admission to the bloc is an important step to improve multilateralism.

"The multilateralism approach will give more chances to emerging countries because it makes an alternative. BRICS is not for confrontation, it is for cooperation in a multilateral way. It is in the benefit of every country, especially the emerging one."

According to him, member states would have more opportunities to increase their bilateral ties. Within BRICS, there are systems to overcome shortage of hard currency and other setbacks. In this regard, the New Development Bank is instrumental to forge commercial cooperation among member countries and also with non-member states.

Apart from its noble contribution in advancing countries' role in international politics, Ethiopia and Iran's official admission to BRICS is a milestone in paving the way for solidifying bilateral-level cooperation and partnership. The two countries would employ the bloc to lift their multifaceted relations to new heights, the Ambassador remarked.

It is to be recalled that Ethiopia, Egypt, Iran, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) officially became BRICS members on January 1, 2024.

Ethiopia could break glass ceiling to...

whereby the scholars signaled the potential areas in which Ethiopia can take advantage to assert its aspiration in the Red Sea and beyond.

In the half-day panel discussion that came on days after Addis Ababa inked MoU with Hargeisa, the academicians examined the competitive legal, historical and geopolitical advantages Ethiopia can make use to have either an alternative port or sea access. The MoU is said to pave the way for Ethiopia to develop a port and station a naval force in the Red Sea.

The panelists also comment on the areas in which the country takes advantage of translating its people's aspiration for seaports into reality.

Being landlocked costs the nation dearly in terms of economic and political leverages; the panelists stated, emphasizing that the quest for sea outlets and port diversification is no longer a luxury for the once coastal nation.

There are past and contemporary factors and noble causes that oblige the largest, most populous and ancient nations to look for access to a sea or port ownership in international water bodies, stated Nigus Belay, Good Governance Studies Instructor at Hawassa University.

"Ethiopia ticks all the boxes to secure its access to a sea and can find a means to have a port alternative through peaceful and diplomatic means."

Nigus also said that the area being a nexus to various corridors and continents is a must use resource for Ethiopia to satisfy its ever-growing economic and political demands.

For Awel Ali, Political Science and Philosophy Instructor at Hawassa University, Ethiopia cannot afford to be a bystander in the region where global powers and interest groups near and abroad contend for presence. "The country should not succumb to any pulling factors to materialize the long-held dreams of

its generations."

Albeit being landlocked, Ethiopia carries a mammoth leverage in regional and global stages and having a direct access to the sea will consequently cement its bargaining chip,

"It is regrettable that a nation with once multiple ports and long coasts remains landlocked for decades. Ethiopia shall not turn a blind eye to the bonanza that the strategic Horn region has," Awel emphasized.

It was learned that Ethiopia incurs 1.6 billion USD annually and experiences barriers in its import and export process. Landlocked nations face precarious situations in becoming a competent actor in world trade.

As to the panelists, international laws back Ethiopia's claims and it is up to all partners and citizens to communicate the country's genuine quest for a sea outlet rightfully and properly.

Opinion

Question for access to sea outlet not luxury: A developmental, security issue

BY ABEBE WOLDEGIORGIS

Ethiopia's legal and historical question for access to sea outlet should be considered as a matter of development and security. It is not a matter of luxury, hegemony, threatening the other party or showing power. In an ever changing geopolitical environment like the Horn of Africa, though it is highly beneficial and the nation's export import trade is underway smoothly, depending on a single port which is under the full control of the owner feels not comfort. Thus, the memorandum of understanding signed last Monday between the Ethiopian government and Somaliland is a good beginning for the mutual benefit among the region's countries and an eye opener for the remaining nations around to think over the matter openheartedly and show willingness for more cooperation.

The nation's economy had registered double digits growth in the last two decades with the attribution of the subsistence agriculture sector. The increasing utilization of agricultural inputs such as fertilizer, pesticides and herbicides which are imported from abroad played pivotal role in raising the sector's production and productivity. Ethiopia earns more than 75% of hard currency from the importation of these inputs.

This clearly shows that how import and export business is crucial for attaining sustainable development. The sector also encompasses 70% of the nation's labor force and is a means of living for about 80% of the population. Hence, to change the living condition and income of the rural population and attaining food security, improving the sector through technology and inputs is essential which again needs more importation.

The government has taken various measures to modernize the sector through expanding irrigated and commercial farms and the venture enabled to create job opportunity to thousands and boost export which enhanced the nation's foreign currency earning capacity. Commercial and irrigated farms also need the utilization of technology and inputs such as machineries, generators, water pumps, chemicals and fertilizers which are not locally produced and imported from abroad. The traditional export product such as coffee, oil seeds, minerals, live animals and horticulture contribute a lot for the nation's foreign currency earnings and yet exported through the neighboring countries' ports which cost of services is frequently rising.

As it is understood, attaining sustainable development is highly attached to expanding viable and high productivity sector such as manufacturing whereas relying on rain fed agriculture leads the nation to nowhere. Considering the vitality of the sector, the government underlined the expansion of the manufacturing industry in the ten years perspective economic development plan. The sector plays pivotal role in attracting

foreign and local investors, creates job opportunities to hundreds of thousands, creates linkage with the agriculture sector, boosts export, and helps knowledge and technology transfer. Moreover, it plays pivotal role in attaining structural economic transformation from agriculture led in to the manufacturing industry led one.

In order to host manufacturing companies, the government constructed industrial parks in various parts of the country investing large amount of hard currency for the importation of materials which furnished the parks. Though the manufacturing industries use local inputs to some extent, they import substantial amount of inputs which again increases the nation's importation cost. Most of the manufacturing industries are located to the nearest places of the Ethio-Djibouti rail way line to transport their products rapidly to the port of Djibouti. It is obvious that whenever the nation's economy is growing, it coerces the nation to import more to meet the industries' input demands.

Currently, Ethiopia uses ports located in the neighboring countries for its import and export businesses. It is clear that the usage of foreign ports has its own demerits and whenever the port owners impose additional port service fee, the competency of Ethiopia's commodities will be lowered in the international market. Other countries which have their own ports have better advantage in the world market because they do not pay any port service charges. The port owning countries also can impose additional tariffs on imported goods by imposing additional port service charges this again coerces the land locked countries such as Ethiopia to import inflation which destabilizes the local economy.

We can understand from these realities that a country's economic growth and development depend on the nation's import and export volume. Whenever the country's involvement into the world economy is increased, obviously its import and export volume will be increased, but its vulnerability to economic shake will also be increased because of being landlocked.

The ongoing war between Ukraine and Russia has critically shaken the world economy and poor African countries which are dependent on the importation of Ukraine wheat, fertilizer and edible oil are highly suffered from the brunt of the economic shake. One of the factors that contribute for the price hike of the Ukraine products is the blockade of the ports due to the war and the transporting of goods with ships in a lengthy sea routes from other ports located in far places. Land locked African countries have suffered more than the countries which owned their own ports Because the land locked countries pay additional port fee to their fellow African countries ports.

Currently, the outbreak of war between Israel and Hamas is threatening vessels transporting oil from the Gulf countries towards Europe on the red sea routes.

Importing goods from Europe via the red sea routes is interrupted. The Yemeni based Houthi rebels attack ships transporting goods on the red sea routes in order to retaliate the western pro-Israel countries. It is inevitable that in the future, the poor African nations including Ethiopia might feel the economic pain which occurs due to the vessel transport disruption on the red sea routes.

As the result of the Houthi rebels' attack against ships on red sea, some European ships have changed their sea transport line from Mediterranean Sea via Suez Canal to the Middle East and Asia in to the Atlantic Ocean via Cape of Good Hope line located in South Africa which makes the transaction of goods very expensive. This route served European merchants to trade with Asia in the 19th century before the opening of Suez Canal. These all indicate the vitality of owning port and how landlocked countries are vulnerable to the economic shake due to the disruption of sea transport because of political instability.

Ethiopia is bordering all the Horn of African countries and all have their own ports except South Sudan. Geographically Ethiopia is characterized by mountainous and diversified agro ecology. Because of its landscape, its entire rivers flow radial which means it gives water to the neighboring countries. It has cultural, linguistic and religious ties with these countries. Populations residing in the border areas conduct cross border trade. Pastoral communities cross borders in search of forage and water for their cattle. These all testify how the Horn of African countries' peoples live integrated irrespective of their artificial border formulated by colonial powers.

Formally, Ethiopia has trade relations with all countries and supply energy to Sudan and Djibouti and when the Ethiopian economy grows; their relation will be further strengthened. Hence, demanding sea corridor through give and take principle is legally, historically and morally authentic which the neighboring countries should take positively by considering the mutual benefit.

Recently, Atnafu Gebremeskel, an economist Addis Ababa University, said that Ethiopia's quest for sea port and access to alternative port is not a luxury but a morally and legally appropriate demand consistent with the principle of international trade.

Presenting his perspective at a joint workshop on the strategic interest of Ethiopia on the Red Sea organized by Samara, Dire Dawa, Addis Ababa, Jijjiga and Mekelle universities which was conducted last week in the Afar region's capital, Samara, the economist said that logistics and product supply chain have become instrumental in modern global trade activities. A port is key instrument in accelerating global trade and it enables countries to participate in international trade and ensure their economic growth, he elaborated.

According to the economist, among the

trade barriers Africans face is sea port. Some 80% of the world's trade passes through ports. The economist stressed that maritime transport has remained one of the major bottlenecks for African countries to facilitate their trade activities. Africa, a continent with 17.8% of the world population, has only 2% of the global trade share.

Atnafu pointed out that the annual GDP of landlocked countries is lower by 31% when compared with countries that have coastal access. Their inflation rate is also bigger by 26%. Therefore, building standard port and producing quality produces as well as developing surrounding areas is vital in order to become competitive in export-import trade.

He further said that global trade and investment cannot be met without regional integration. In a similar manner, Arbaminch University scholars said that Ethiopia has historical, geographical and economical rights to demand access to sea and alternative ports.

During the discussion conducted in the campus recently under the theme "Access to Sea, Path to Development" Arbaminch University President, Damitew Darza stressed the need to intensify diplomatic efforts to realize Ethiopia's interest on obtaining sea outlet. He also underlined the importance of strong stance among all Ethiopians, including scholars, on the need to have access to the sea and alternative ports.

Noting that Ethiopia had enjoyed its own sea outlets 33 years ago, he said geopolitical instability of the region forced the country to lose its access to sea. Thus, Ethiopia should pursue all available peaceful mechanisms with a view to realizing its interest in the region, the president underscored, stressing the need to carry out intensive diplomatic efforts.

A scholar in hydrology, Abdela Kemal, on his part, said that depriving a country with a population of 120 million to sea access is injustice. As a result, it has been encountering challenges in its economic development due to the high cost of port services.

Noting that Ethiopia's population is expected to double after 30 years, the scholar pointed out the urgency of response to the nation's quest for access to sea. He urged scholars to play their role in promoting the country's interests.

On the occasion, scholars also discussed wider ranging issues, including the importance of shared development in the region, Ethiopia's quest for access to sea in relation to international laws, geopolitical and foreign relations.

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

Editorial

Cooperation for reciprocal benefits

Last Monday, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for Partnership and Cooperation was signed between Ethiopia and Somaliland.

The MoU was intended to serve as a framework for the multi-sectorial partnership between Ethiopia and Somaliland; and allow them to work cooperatively in various spheres.

According to information obtained from the Office of the Prime Minister, the agreement will pave the way for Ethiopia to materialize its aspiration to secure alternative access to sea and diversify its access to seaports.

Owing to this, the agreement apart from opening a new chapter of cooperation, it plays a vital part in further strengthening the ties between and among countries of the Horn. In addition, it will create an improved opportunity for Ethiopia to play a role in upholding the region's peace and security matters.

Ethiopia, as the second most populous country in the African region and the biggest economy in East Africa, aspires to sustain its economic progress, realize its development plans and improve the lives of its people. In this respect, endeavoring to create a favorable condition that enables it to maintain its rapid economic progress and benefit its ever growing population is the call of the day.

In actual sense, being landlocked has its own undesirable impacts on the overall activities of countries, mainly causing immense economic costs. Ethiopia, as a landlocked country, spends a huge amount of foreign currency to facilitate its import-export trade.

According to documents, almost all of Ethiopia's import-export trade activities are conducted through Djibouti Port. However, following the challenges associated with the capacity of the Port; in most cases, freights are forced to stay for a longer period of time, even for months; which results in additional costs on the nation.

To alleviate such problems, carry out the activities effectively with reasonable fees, pursuing the issue of reliable, cost effective, alternative ports is not only a must; but also a subject that cannot be overlooked.

Essentially, having port alternatives has tremendous benefits not only for Ethiopia but also for Horn countries, the continent and beyond. Aside from allowing the nation to facilitate the import and export trade at reasonable cost and support its economy, it improves national and regional integration, promotes cooperation and partnership and ensures mutual benefit.

It is a widely known fact that Ethiopia always prioritizes smooth and peaceful relations with neighboring countries and beyond. At the same time, it strives to realize its quests peacefully and works for mutual benefits.

And, Ethiopia's pursuit for seaports clings on at this core idea- "give and take" principle, and a friendly approach in a way serving the common interests of all.

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed once stated Ethiopia's nonviolent move saying that Ethiopia's claim to access the seaport cannot be a cause for discontentment or hostility. Instead, it will be carried out on, amicable manner with peaceful options and on the basis of mutual benefit.

The MoU signed with Somaliland reaffirmed Ethiopia's unwavering stance in this regard. The signing, in addition to expanding Ethiopia's long sought for ports, would strengthen cooperation between the two countries in the political, security, social, economic and diplomatic areas.

The country will further work to realize its aspiration for sea by peaceful means, adhering to the principles of win-win cooperation, partnership and mutual benefits.

Opinion

The remarkable role of Ethiopia in providing shelter and aid to refugees

BY ADDISALEM MULAT

Ethiopia's emergence as a prominent and crucial player in providing vital support and resources to displaced individuals and refugees is remarkable. In its proactive response to the complex reality of human migration, the country has become a beacon of support unwavering in its commitment to confront the multifaceted challenges faced by individuals compelled to leave their homelands.

The nation's significant role in offering shelter and aid to those affected by displacement and seeking refuge within its boundaries can be attributed to its unwavering dedication. The country has emerged as a compassionate host providing a safe haven to those escaping conflict, persecution, or economic turmoil in their countries of origin.

Throughout the years, Ethiopia has solidified its position as a leading force in extending essential aid and resources to countless individuals who have experienced displacement or have been compelled to flee their homes for diverse causes. The country's extraordinary commitment to humanitarian endeavors not only sets it apart but also exemplifies one of the most extensive and influential initiatives witnessed across the entire African continent.

Fully aware of the magnitude of the task before them, Ethiopia has displayed remarkable foresight by implementing proactive strategies to create refugee camps and settlements across various regions within its borders. These specially designated areas stand as temporary abodes offering essential amenities and granting access to vital services crucial for those seeking refuge.

Through close collaboration with international organizations and dedicated partners, the Ethiopian government demonstrates unwavering commitment in ensuring the well-being and safeguarding the rights of refugees throughout their stay within these camps.

Ethiopia goes above and beyond providing shelter, adopting a holistic approach that prioritizes the development of social harmony between local communities and refugee populations. In its efforts, the nation actively implements a range of innovative initiatives aimed at fostering peaceful coexistence, promoting cultural exchange, and facilitating economic integration.

By creating an inclusive environment, the country establishes a foundation wherein refugees not only rebuild their lives but also actively contribute to the betterment of their newfound communities. This comprehensive approach serves as a testament to the country's unwavering commitment to the well-being and successful integration of all individuals seeking refuge within its borders.

While acknowledging the commendable endeavors undertaken by the Ethiopian government and its collaborators, it is pivotal to recognize the persisting hurdles

that accompany the task of hosting vast quantities of displaced individuals and refugees.

Through collaborative partnerships with various organizations and governments, Ethiopia seeks to identify and implement sustainable solutions that can withstand the pressures imposed by limited resources. Embracing innovative approaches is another cornerstone of Ethiopia's response recognizing that traditional methods may not suffice in addressing the complexity of the situation.

By doing so, Ethiopia underscores its commitment to finding lasting solutions that prioritize the welfare and integration of displaced individuals and refugees. Operating with a firm determination and a spirit of collaboration, the country strives to overcome these obstacles and create an environment where individuals seeking refuge can rebuild their lives with dignity and resilience.

The strategic location of Ethiopia has contributed to its prominence as a host country accommodating and providing sanctuary to a significant number of individuals displaced due to conflicts or economic adversities in their home nations. This multifaceted role of being a crucial crossroads for migrants underscores the immense responsibility shouldered by Ethiopia as it becomes a beacon of hope for those who have had to flee their homes in search of a better future.

Situated in close proximity to nations like Somalia, Eritrea, Sudan, South Sudan, and Djibouti, Ethiopia has inevitably emerged as an accessible destination for individuals yearning for safety and stability.

In a remarkable display of determination and compassion, the Ethiopian government collaborates closely with international organizations and partners to ensure the well-being and protection of refugees residing in these camps. Efforts are made to create an environment where individuals cannot only find physical safety, but also receive the necessary support and assistance to rebuild their lives.

Ethiopia's commitment to promoting social cohesion between host communities and refugees is exemplified through the implementation of various initiatives aimed at fostering peaceful coexistence, cultural exchange, and economic integration. By facilitating an environment that encourages the rebuilding of lives and the empowering of refugees to contribute positively to their new communities, the country is nurturing an atmosphere of inclusivity and acceptance.

Ethiopia's role as a safe haven for those fleeing neighboring countries has been deeply ingrained in the nation's history. Drawing on this legacy, Ethiopia has become a pivotal humanitarian hub facilitating the efforts of international agencies and local organizations in providing crucial support for refugees. The influx of displaced people and refugees has undeniably had a profound impact both positive and negative on Ethiopia as a whole.

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



The Ethiopian Herald

Established in 1943

Published daily except Mondays
By The Ethiopian Press Agency

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email- epa@press.et

Advertisement and Dist.

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The Ethiopian Herald

Business & Economy

Marketing value added precious minerals

BY BACHA ZEWDIE

Ethiopia is rich in many types of minerals; among them are opal, emerald, ruby, sapphire, aquamarine, tourmaline, amazonite, quartz and other precious minerals. Information indicates that the minerals are found in different areas of the country. The recent Mining Expo has shown this.

When it comes to precious minerals, it is impossible not to mention jewelry made from precious minerals. Especially recently, jewelry made of precious minerals have been widely produced and offered to the local and foreign markets. Currently, the mineral suppliers are adding value to the precious minerals and exporting them to America, India, China and other countries.

One of these mineral exporters is Sozo Trading Plc. According to Banchialem Maru, the owner of the organization; The Company adds value to precious minerals and turns them into jewelry and supplies them to the local and foreign markets. It has been 15 years since the company started exporting value added precious minerals. It has been three years since the company began the business. It markets these value added minerals and jewelry to USA, China, Canada, India and similar countries.

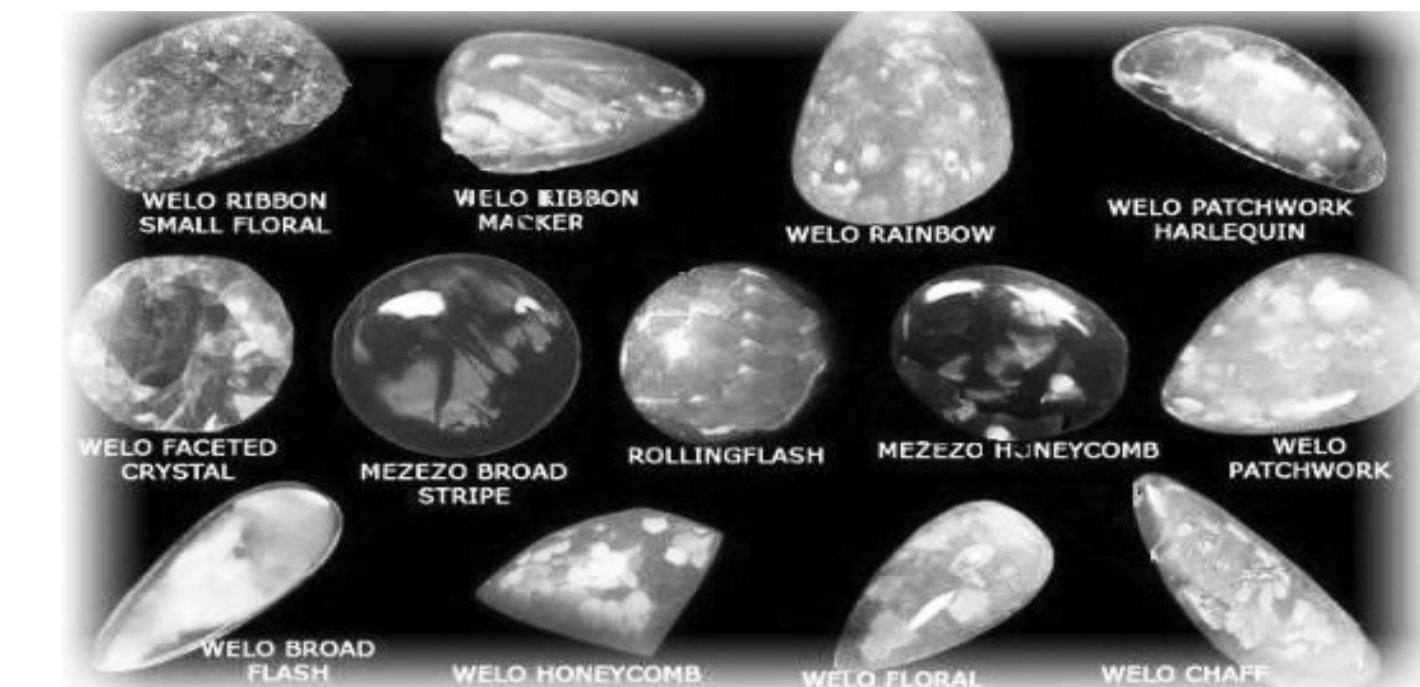
Banchialem mentioned that, Ethiopia is rich in both industrial and precious minerals. She stated that, their company takes over these minerals from producers located in different parts of the country and processes them for various purposes by adding value.

The jewelry made from the mineral is placed on the neck, ears and hands. In a different way, the company makes and markets wedding rings. Opal, emerald, ruby, sapphire, aquamarine, tourmaline, amazonite, quartz, sapphire, garnet and many similar minerals are used to make the jewelry.

Banchialem pointed out that seven of the nine most precious minerals in the world are found in Ethiopia. She said that the company manufactures bracelets, necklaces and earrings made of gold, silver and other precious minerals. Sozo Trading plc has two production sites where it produces its minerals; it has created job opportunities for many citizens and currently has 70 permanent and several temporary employees.

Banchialem said that the company also markets its mineral and jewelry products in various places in the country. The domestic market is constantly improving. "Jewelry minerals are worn for any occasion and they can be precious gifts to express our happiness, respect and love to our loved ones." She also said that the precious minerals are precious gifts that are handed down to generation in the foreign world and treated with respect.

Banchialem added that the mining sector



was not given much attention until recently. "I believe this sector can feed up to 20 million Ethiopians; this is not just wishful thinking, but a proven fact. The sector is able to embrace a lot of manpower in the chains starting from drilling to extracting, beautifying, shaping and organizing and marketing the product," she explained.

As to her, precious minerals' jewelry production is worth more than nine billion Dollars in the world. The amount of Ethiopia's share will be determined when more investors enter the sector. It is when young people have the knowledge and experience.

Stating that jewelry minerals are reasonable in terms of price and do not harm the society's pocket; Banchialem said that the price of the jewelry starts from 500 Birr depending on the type. But now, it is being done in a different way to prepare and provide jewelry for children at a lower price. The reason why the price of the minerals is high is because the materials used to make the jewelry are bought from foreign countries at high prices.

She mentioned that it is becoming common to buy and use artificial jewelry in our country. Instead of buying and using these jewelries regularly, she suggested that we should use precious mineral jewelries which are a gift of nature. Doing this can be useful in promoting our country's minerals, she suggested.

She said that they participate in various exhibitions and other places to promote these mineral products. In the past, the buyers of precious metals were foreigners and rarely Ethiopians. Now Ethiopians are showing interest in buying these products and learning about the minerals.

Banchialem suggested that many investors should be involved in the sector. Their investment will create an opportunity to strengthen the sector. She also mentioned that there are only a few who are at the top in the field. The sector can create job opportunities for many young people, and the society should give great value to the precious minerals, which are trans-generational resources. "With our own

wealth, we should adorn ourselves and shine and introduce our wealth to the rest of the world," he emphasized.

Another exporter of precious minerals is Sebahan Gemstone Empire Plc. The company has been in the jewelry business for many years. It has been in the business of decorating the precious minerals for about four years.

Hana Yohannes, the owner of the company, said that the company produces precious minerals and jewelry and supplies them to the local and foreign markets. There is no difference in using precious minerals as jewelry compared to the previous jewelry works. Hanna explained that turning precious minerals into jewelry requires special knowledge and education in carving, cutting and decorating.

As of her, there are more than 300 minerals used for jewelry in Ethiopia. All kinds of precious stones like opal, emerald, sapphire, ruby, peridot and so on can be made into various jewelry using gold, silver and similar accessories. Different types of ornaments can be produced according to the needs of the people.

Stating that her company takes over these minerals from miners organized by association in the region and uses machines to beautify and embellish them (adding values) and produce jewelry, Hanna pointed out that she manufactures jewelry for neck, ear, hand and finger rings and so on for both men and women.

The company has stores in the country where it promotes and sells its products. It markets its products in Europe and other countries. The jewelries made from minerals are in demand in the world market because of their high quality. The products range in price from expensive, medium and low price. There are also low-cost types that anyone can buy and use. These are products made from precious minerals. As they are designed for the society to beautify with its own mineral wealth, awareness creation towards the society is underway.

She also pointed out that there are precious metals' jewelries that are sold below the price

of other jewelries. There are people who are suspicious when the jewelry is said to be made of precious metals but upon looking closely, people's attitudes and purchasing conditions are improving, and many people buy jewelry for gifts and for various events.

Mentioning that there is enough wealth of precious metals in the country to beautify by adding value, she announced that the minerals can be obtained from different areas as needed. Hanna pointed out that there is a problem with the materials/accessories used to make the jewelry, and most of the materials are not available in the country and are difficult to find.

Currently, the price of the jewelries is estimated from 2,000 to 25,000 Birr, excluding the expensive ones such as opal, emerald, and sapphire. Knowing that she would be proud to buy locally made precious minerals' jewelry at a lower price; she asked the public to buy the jewelry. "We have to buy and use our products and introduce them to the world. As this happens, the sector is gaining attention and growing. We can do better," she stressed.

Minister of Mines, Engineer Habtamu Tegegn said in November when he had a discussion with mineral exporters, precious minerals and jewelry suppliers, producers and exporters association; although Ethiopia is a major exporter of precious stones and minerals, the foreign exchange earnings from the sector are small compared to other countries.

He mentioned that, one of the reasons for this is the inability to provide value added precious minerals to the foreign market, and pointed out that all exporters should focus on adding value.

The Minister also mentioned that there are problems arising from the mineral exporters. The problems are obstacles to their work, and it is possible to achieve better results if the lack of skilled manpower and machinery in the sector are solved. He announced that the government will focus on creating finance, skills and market linkages to import machines needed to add value to products.

Art & Culture

The other me

BY DESALEGN DAGNE

One bright day, a man bumped on another human being that is almost his mirror image. Their legs, their bellies, their heads, their hands displayed congruency. The coincidence made him excited, panicky and satisfied simultaneously. He didn't have an experience of looking his replica even in his nightmares or daydreams before.

"I am here and how am I supposed to be found there?" He murmured for a while baffled. He questioned himself "Have I repeated myself in the universe? How could that be? Or am I subject to illusion?"

He smiled the first historical human smile in the universe. He had an experience of exchanging smile-like gestures with other creatures before. But he smiled the real one for the real human; he got closer, his eyes fluttered for a while upon beholding a new guest.

Upon seeing her more he said "She is the bone of my bone, the flesh of my flesh,... let her be called a woman,"

He was surprised by the new guest who was already his second self.



"I go by Adam. I'm the first human in the universe," he said looking at his flesh comparing it with the guest's flesh.

"I'm the first member of the fair sex in the universe," the smile she tipped him with warmed his body like the rays of the sun.

The phrase *a first member of the fairsex* made him to ponder for a while. Then he decided she should be called a woman. He had named every animal on the land before the woman came.

"I Christian you with the name Eve," he

grabbed her hand.

She unzipped her lips to portray shiny teeth.

Adam added "Wo" on his name of "man" and it became "woman", the prefix "wo" is the unconscious exclamatory utterance of Adam up on beholding Eve's sight.

Adam wished to hold her shoulder and feel her whole body. He wanted to explore the geography of woman.

They were both naked, and were not ashamed. He called her Eve (a woman) as he called all creatures by their name before.

Her physical structure was a little bit different from that of his, and the body that he didn't have and that she had, made him to gaze on strange parts for a moment not ashamed. Days and nights came and went. The chilly nights made them to sleep closer. Her body heat by conduction warmed his body.

Then the first man and woman shared at eventide record moments of happiness. Adam made Eve his wife. They spent days and nights together. Adam cherished the time he spent with Eve. Both became eager to live a lot. Step by step they gave birth to a child.

Adam got a child, totally another version of him in every image which is programmed. Gradually, they became three, four, five... Life continued. His children got the other of their images—the bones of their bones, the fleshes of their fleshes. This way, the number of human beings across the globe exceeded the billion marks. They have kept the word of God to be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth.

All the people you come across in this universe are the other you, who are created in the image of the first woman and the first man—the other of me, the other of you and the other of human race that share the same root.

A lesson from Russian field of food security

BY GETNET TESFAMARIAM

When the Soviet Union disintegrated in 1991 due to various internal and external problems, Russia continued to be another influential force in world politics. The main manifestations of its power are its military and economic capabilities.

Journalists from various African, Arab countries, Turkey and other countries had the opportunity to visit the tractor manufacturing, machine assembly and Novorossiysk port wheat storage plant in Russia.

The main purpose of the visit is to introduce to members of the media what has been done in the field of food security in Russia. Russia is preparing for a major summit in the sector in 2024. The visit is also a part of the preparations for this conference.

I also had the opportunity to visit this great nation and traveled to Moscow with two Ethiopian media partners from Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation. After a short stay in Moscow, we headed to the port city of Saint Petersburg by train with a group of visiting journalists. St. Petersburg has a cold climate that reaches -7 degrees Celsius like Moscow.

The port of St. Petersburg is one of the seven major ports through which Russian ships transfer goods to Europe and other countries.

The city is not only a political and commercial center, but also a center of various huge industries. The main visiting target of the group was Kirovets Tractor manufacturing Factory (JSC Peterburgsky Traktorny Zavod), a huge center where

tractors and various machineries are manufactured.

The factory manufactured and assembles 4,300 different horsepower tractors a year. It also produces not only the engine, but also each screw for the tractors. Which is one of the earliest in the history of tractor manufacturing industries in Russia, and it supplies products to different countries.

We were told that Ethiopia is buying tractors from the factory. Kenya, Egypt and other countries are supplying the products to different countries.

They manufacture and assembled huge tractors with up to 460 horsepower. From the small parts of the tractor to the big wheel and the whole system, it is tested in the laboratory.

Five hundred machines on which each unit of tractor is manufactured are equipped with computerized system. In addition, the factory also manufactures and uses bulldozers and snow plows.

The factory is undergoing an expansion project at a cost of 50 billion Russian rubles.

A day after visiting the center, we had the opportunity to visit Taurus-Fenix - Packaging and filling machinery, a factory where various packaging machines are manufactured and assembled. The factory, which has more than a thousand modern machine used to manufacture packaging machinery.

One of the machines manufactured in the factory is a computerized soft drink packaging machine. The machine produces bottles, washes and dries the bottles, and then helps to package beverages effectively.

The factory has 800 employees and produces 900 machines of various sizes annually. And



Novorossiysk Grain Plant, JSC

it also uses a developed expertise mechanical design department.

After visiting the Taurus-Fenix our next trip was to the city of Novorossiysk. We had traveled for four hours by plane to reach the city of Sochi, which is remembered for hosting the Winter Olympics in 2014. After eating delicious fish and vegetable dishes in Sochi, we took a six-hour bus ride to the ancient city of Novorossiysk on the Black Sea coast.

In the city, there is an important port where wheat production is transported to different countries. Novorossiysk Grain Plant, JSC transports wheat to different countries of the world every day.

According to the Russian President Vladimir Putin's orders, 25 thousand to 50 thousand tons of wheat is distributed to Zimbabwe, Burkina Faso, Somalia, Eritrea, Central African Republic and Mali. This wheat is mainly transported from the Novorossiysk grain plant.

The grain plant has various modern warehouses and storages, each of which can hold 40 to 100 thousand tons of grains. There

are different railway lines that transport the wheat from the warehouse to the vessels using Modern elevators.

According to the deputy general director of the production of Novorossiysk Grain Plant, JSC, Sutchenko Evgeniy; Eight million tons of grain products from the plant center are transported to various countries annually.

An average of 25 ships per month make their journey on the Black Sea carrying wheat and other grains from the plant.

After completing the visit of Russia's economic and industrial activities, we took a bus trip to Sochi, with overlooking the Black Sea.

And finally I can say that the Russians changed their country by working hard in a climate where it seems difficult to survive, where it snows for months. This strength of Russian manufacturing and supply is a result of the cooperation of its people, investors and government.

And I returned to Ethiopia with expectation that Russia will effectively host the big conference of the sector to be organized next year 2024.

Global Affairs

Trade rules and climate change: Africa stands to lose from proposed WTO policy tools

The new tools offer opportunities for countries to mitigate the climate change effect of their trade practices. The tools align with the Paris Agreement, the 2015 legally binding United Nations Treaty on Climate Change.

But the global contribution of African states to climate change remains very low: 4%. African states' contribution to global trade stands at 3%. There are socio-economic inequalities between African states and their western counterparts. The wider historical context of these inequalities means that the WTO's Trade Policy Tools for Climate Action will have different impacts on developing and developed countries.

The World Trade Organization's new Trade Policy Tools for Climate Action, launched at COP28. Supplied

Notwithstanding Africa's low contribution to global trade and climate change, the new tools offer some avenues for African countries to take modest climate action. There are trade facilitation measures that can improve infrastructure, information and communications technology, the business environment, and border and transport efficiency. This will reduce energy consumption and greenhouse emissions from freight transport.

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What difference can green government procurement policies make?

Green government procurement policies refer to decisions by governments to buy environmentally sustainable materials, supplies and services. These policies also look at the present and future impacts of purchases based on their consumption and eventual end-of-life stage.

The impact of green government procurement is yet to be seen in developing countries like those in Africa. Generally speaking, these policies spur innovation and result in improved employee health and safety. They also reduce greenhouse gas emissions, hazardous and toxic substances, plastic waste and pollution.

The new tools say tariffs must be reduced on green products. Won't this mean that low-cost, imported green energy components will flood into Africa, and undermine local manufacturing?

Trade-related changes are required to address the climate change deficits of international trade. But those changes should not jeopardize African economies. The new tools raise three important concerns.

First, if most imported elements of green energy systems are imported, African states may become dependent on these components. The new tools promise to optimize innovation around green technologies. But lowering tariffs on imported green energy goods may undermine the development of new green



technology manufacturing companies in Africa.

A handful of African countries such as South Africa and Kenya may be able to set up companies to manufacture these imported elements. But they will not be able to compete with their foreign partners, who are more adept in producing and exporting the materials at cheaper rates.

Second, the pivot to importing low-cost imported components of green energy perpetuates Africa's poor status as a raw material generating region only. It reduces Africa's capacity to take advantage of the global value chains connected to critical raw materials being used in the energy transition. Unsustainable exploration and mining of critical raw materials further damages the environment in many African countries. This deepens Africa's vulnerability to climate change.

Third, debates about green transition in the trade context are inextricably linked with debt exposure and the capacity of African states to attract climate friendly investments. Without increasing their net trading quota contribution, African states have a much smaller chance of building a green industrial base for a greener future.

But all is not lost. This is a moment of renewed industrial policy in international trade. African states have the opportunity to re-orient their national industrial policies to take advantage of the moment. They can aim to attract investments that will allow them increase their global trade quota by prioritizing green industrial development projects.

African countries can also connect their new policies with opportunities that the African Continental Free Trade Area Agreement offers in greening their trade projects.

The new tools propose removing government subsidies from fossil fuel

industries and redirecting them to renewable energy. Isn't this a good thing?

Unlike their western counterparts, many African states are heavily dependent on fossil fuel investments. Oil and gas, for example, are often the primary source of their foreign exchange earnings. These fossil fuels are also resources used to generate economic growth and development.

For these African countries, redirecting subsidies from fossil fuel industries to renewable energy may not provide an apparent advantage. A period of transition may allow for such redirection. For developing countries it will need to be a long period. African countries who receive subsidies to invest in renewable energy may be hampered by the poor state of physical infrastructure in their countries.

They will also face competition from rich countries, and the high cost of investment and generating renewable energy products in Africa. To be a truly winning idea for developing countries, the historical and contemporary social, economic, political and financial challenges of African countries must be taken into account.

Overall, the new policy tools offer modest ways that African countries can change some of their trade practices to address climate change mitigation and adaptation goals. Other frameworks such as the Villars Framework for a Sustainable Global System offer pathways to addressing climate change and transition to a climate-friendly global economy.

Yet, without taking advantage of the renewed industrial policy era to re-envision how critical raw materials and other resources can be harnessed and developed in Africa, the continent stands to lose more.

(SOURCE: THE CONVERSATION)

Trade-related changes are required to address the climate change deficits of international trade. But those changes should not jeopardize African economies

Law & Politics

Ethiopia's access to a sea port: A boon to regional wellbeing

BY FITSUM GETACHEW

Many people may ask why Ethiopia is asking for a sea port now and how can it obtain this objective without encroaching on its neighbors' sovereignty. They say that the Horn of Africa and the Red Sea area is already teeming with several critical security issues and there are so many powers trying to have a strong foothold in the area given its important strategic position. Records show that forty percent of the world trade passes through that route and that alone tells us how vital that area is for the world at large and not only to the countries directly adjacent to it.

Historically we know that Ethiopia used to have easy access to several ports on the Red Sea including Massawa, Assab, Berbera and Zeila and others in its trade relations with the outside world. Then it had a much less population than today and as recently as thirty years ago with a population of less than half it has today it used to own two ports on the Red Sea namely Massawa and Assab, but due to various political and diplomatic developments Ethiopia now is listed among the forty four landlocked countries of the world. But the most surprising of it all is the fact that it is landlocked with the closest of all landlocked countries to the sea. In fact there are only sixty kilometers between the sea and Ethiopia. And yet on the Red Sea coastline there is enough space to accommodate the requests of forty countries as experts in the trade state. What then does it take for a country such as Ethiopia to be a beneficiary of a sea port on negotiated and advantageous conditions for both parties?

Scholars in the trade say that this is the right time to raise the issue of Ethiopia's access to the sea because of what sort of economy Ethiopia is developing into and what sort of implications this condition may give birth to when we consider the conditions in which it is placed. The current growth of the population of Ethiopia and its continuous economic growth will not match and end up creating a huge crisis to the entire region as well without a possible sea outlet to manage the crisis. If Ethiopia secures a sea outlet it can continue to grow even faster than the current pace and that will definitely benefit the economies of the countries that are its neighbors.

Exchanging trade with Ethiopia will be an impetus to their economy as well because there will be a market for their merchandizes and products just as Ethiopia as well will be able to export its products to these very close countries readily. The more integrated these Horn of Africa countries are the more rapidly they can grow and this in turn will have positive

effects even on other African countries that interact with them and this is one of the dreams of the African Union. Political union or integration can only be achieved through first economic integration and stronger diplomatic ties in areas that are near each other.

Many people have tried to manipulate this request of Ethiopia to access the sea as a threat to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of its neighbors. There are undoubtedly several interest groups who try to create obstacles to the growth and economic independence of Ethiopia and others in the subregion. These are powers that have their own long term strategic interests to see a Horn of Africa that should never exert the kind of influence their strategic position allows them to including its eventual economic muscles. It is widely recognized that Ethiopia is the second most populous country in Africa and enjoys a huge reputation in the history of the struggle of Africa against all forms of colonialism and its historical records are glamorous seen from this point of view. It is hence a country with a huge potential on the entire continent in terms of influence and credibility and its reputation for its service to international peace and security is also glorious because it has always been ready to pay all the sacrifices necessary for the goals the United Nations and other international bodies have devised.

Ethiopia hence has the right to bring to the attention of the world its quest for access to sea in a legitimate and peaceful as well as negotiated manner abiding by all relevant international laws and practices. It cannot be seen as a declaration of war against any one nor can it be considered as a threat to the security of any one of those involved in this quest. Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) has given a full picture of Ethiopia's case when he first proposed this idea of Ethiopia asking for a negotiated solution to its quest for access to a sea port. Ethiopia needs an alternative sea port to be used independently than it is doing now with Djibouti with which it has excellent relations. However, Ethiopia has little say on what is happening in Djibouti port and practically the entire economy of the country relies on this outlet. It is easy to imagine what would happen if one day a problem arises on this port and Ethiopia loses its only outlet to the sea to transport essential goods to the outside world and import all the necessities to its people's livelihood. It is hard to imagine such an eventuality.

Ethiopia's quest for access to a sea port should not be seen as a political issue because here the main point is one of economic survival which could then easily turn to economic and security issues as well.

Ethiopia's quest for access to a sea port should not be seen as a political issue because here the main point is one of economic survival which could then easily turn to economic and security issues as well

No neighbors of Ethiopia would benefit from its impoverishment or instability due to economic crisis caused by not being able to address all its economic problems alone. It should be taken into consideration that Ethiopia is a rapidly growing country not only economically but also population wise. It's GDP as well as its population is likely to double in a few years and there are no limits to these developments unless proper long term planning is adopted and implemented meticulously.

The threat of a bottleneck to the steady and fast economic growth of the country is real because it could severely be handicapped by the absence of an independent access to the sea and this would stifle the economic growth while the population growth however would continue unabated. This could sooner or later create a kind of explosion because a crisis in Ethiopia would spill over to neighboring nations and eventually and relentlessly to the outside distant world as well. We have seen in recent years how many people become economic migrants even more than the ones who flee dangerous zones, conflict areas and dictatorial regimes that suppress

the fundamental rights of their people. We have seen recently the caravan of people migrating from the Latin American countries through Mexico to the United States. This is more than those who enter the country legally and remain behind in search of better economic opportunities.

Illegal migration is now one the major crises of the day and nations are trying to address it by trying to resolve the root causes of these factors. Ethiopia is among the nations that have been doing all it can in terms of refraining from encouraging illegal migration although even now there are many who try to migrate using dangerous routes to other nations. But Ethiopia also realizes that if its economy reaches a certain level and everyone who needs a decent job finds one, the probability of leaving its native place is very low. Economic growth and stability, better economic prospects are a major incentive for any one from looking to leaving one's native land and going in exile or migrating to other beaches.

Economic stability and wellbeing is also a source of political stability and this has its own positive effect on other nations particularly on neighbors. That is why Ethiopia maintains the argument that if it is given access to a sea port and its economy can exploit fully all its potential the dividends reach also to its neighbors and that is why they must believe in the suggestion of give and take and establish this good relation with Ethiopia. The leaders of the Horn of Africa must be far sighted and not feel threatened by the sheer talk of certain powers who do not have at heart the wellbeing and independence of African countries particularly with respect to sharing a part of the influence in the strategic area.

Africans must wake up and think of their long term economic and strategic interests to be achieved only through more and more integration not only politically or socially but also economically and trade more freely among themselves. This is also a part of the spirit of the African Free Trade Continental Area agreement that discourages barriers and tariffs and encourages more and more integration so that the Agenda 2063 project can be the light of day as per the schedule. Hence beyond being short sighted and fearing to engage with ideas such as Ethiopia sharing some access to the sea in exchange for a sizeable benefit for these countries, they should think in terms of the benefits leaving aside political considerations because Ethiopia has repeatedly assured the international community that it will not entertain ideas such as trying to encroach on the security or sovereignty of any neighboring nation. Its suggestion is only and purely peaceful, legal and based on the principle of give and take.

Planet Earth

Salt as an all-round mineral in Ethiopia

BY GIRMACHEW GASHAW

Salt, a natural resource, has been used by humans for centuries. It is still used as a seasoning, animal fattening, and even as a skin softener. In addition to being used as a seasoning, people have got various results via experimented with it. Examples include light-colored clothing to prevent discoloration by salting, relieving pain by applying beeswax on the body of a bee, extinguishing oil spills, dipping some salt in water to identify spoiled eggs, and preserving dry foods such as shrimp, pepper, and other foods for a long time.

Such discoveries are supported by both culture and science. There is also debate about the dangers of salt in terms of human health. Therefore, even though careful use of salt is imperative, avoiding salt from food is not advisable. Not to be overlooked is the fact that such a multi-faceted, or sodium chloride, salt-rich commodity was a valuable commodity in ancient times.

According to historical sources, it was used as a valuable spice in China, Greece, the Middle East, and even Africa. In the Mediterranean, as well as in the Roman Empire, salt served as a bar. Sources indicate that it is also used as a currency in Ethiopia. Bar salt is said to have been favored by a number of reasons for easing travel problems, heavy taxes, and far from its sources and others.

According to sources, the bar, which was to be excavated free from Afar, would be expensive and rare when it reached the city and palace. Evidence suggests that when the gold coin was purchased at a bar production center of 120 to 130 bar, Showa province could not afford to buy more than five ounces.

During winter, it is more popular because of the inconvenience of transportation. History has it that the fluctuating, melting and disintegrating nature of the bar made it difficult to use it as a bargaining chip, and that side-by-side businesses were also influenced by it.

According to the sources, the money was used throughout Ethiopia. Salt is also said to have been used as a weapon of war during wartime. It is worth noting that the benefits of salt resources are multifaceted, sometimes leading to conflict of interest and the issue being politically motivated. We would like to remind you of the historical background of the use of salt.

Jamal Ahmed, a professor of Geology at Semera University, says "Salt is classified as fuel, geothermal energy, and other geological resources" Bar and the lake are a resources of salt resources. The resources are divided into upper and lower. The resource of salt and the service it provides are vary.

Salts, such as, Potash are used for a variety of industrial inputs. This rock is called rock salt and is found in Dalol. In ancient times, it was called a bar. Bar salt is dry. It is shaped like a square by traditional salt producers. Only the upper part of the apex is estimated to have a depth of 180 m.

Another type of salt is found in lakes. It is produced by evaporation. The water is left over and the salt is used. The salt left over from the well is used for man-made drilling and extraction with traditional labor. About 95% of the country's salt is sourced from



Afdera in the Afar region.

Regarding the natural content of lake water that makes it salty, Jamal explained: The source of the Afdera salt has different characteristics. The soil around it is salty in itself. The surrounding tributaries wash away the area into the main lake and contribute to the salt reserves when it rains. All of these factors make the area salty.

In the current situation, it is unlikely that wealth will spread. The presence of feeder rivers reduces the risk. There are about 750 small and large scale producers in Afdera. These generators use a generator to draw water from the lake; they draw a lot of water out of the lake.

The lake is more likely to have salt water. It is also found underground. As long as there is a lake feeder river, the source of wealth will continue. According to Professor Jamal, this geological salt contains industrial resources, such as potash, salt, and gypsum. Although he is not sure about the wealth in parts of Ethiopia outside of the Afar region, he said the presence of salt is not the only requirement.

But the product is up to date. According to sources, the production will take place in the Somali region outside the Afar region. Jamal does not believe that this salt wealth, which is historically important and important, has been given as a national priority. In this age of technological innovation, salt is traditionally produced in Ethiopia. The trade is also traditional. According to him, Semera University has conducted a survey of salt resources at three major locations in the region, including Afdera.

He does not think that salt has any economic value. According to him, salt has never been used as a seasoning. Salt is one of the most widely used chemicals in the world. Soda-ash is a product of salt inputs used by factories, such as soap. Leather factories are also in dire need of salt. Other parts of the world that is

prone to frostbite also use salt as a means of dissolving asphalt.

In addition to using this salt resource domestically, it is possible to grow the country's economy by earning foreign exchange as one of the inputs in foreign trade. The Middle East, in particular, is in dire need of resources. It is possible to benefit from the inputs from the production to the marketing.

Semera University has taken this into consideration and is accessible to both the producer and the community in the sector. It is in the process of designing a demonstration project that will be accessible to the community. The university will implement the project with the relevant executive institutions of the region.

According to the instructor, salt is important in many areas, but it is almost neglected. It is safe to say that the country as a whole has benefited from the fact that the manufacturing process has not been updated and its benefits have not been properly utilized.

Evidence suggests that salt products for industrial use are purchased in foreign currency and used locally. It is the research and development of higher education institutions and the dissemination of research findings to policy makers. The transfer is expected from the executive branch in the sector.

If the researcher can be turned into a benefactor by reading and practicing, there is a chance that it will be able to contribute to the weakening of the economy during the war and for various reasons. Evidence from various sources indicates that the salt produced in the Afar region faces various challenges.

It is also known that there were complaints about the salt used in the leather industry. There were also gaps in the production of salt that was good for human health. It will be recalled that the government has made various efforts to resolve the issue.