



# The Ethiopian Herald

Vol. LXXX 108 14 January 2024 - Tir 5, 2016

SUNDAY EDITION

Price Birr 10.00

## Wanchi Lodge achievement proves Ethiopia's project execution excellence

• AUC Chairperson, U.S. Ambassador call project "exemplary" for Africans



BY BILAL DERSO

ADDIS ABABA- Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) said the successful execution of the Wanchi- Dandi Eco-Tourism Village and Lodge is the testimony for Ethiopia's excel in conducting projects with different size and complexity.

The Premier made the above remark yesterday while inaugurating the eco-tourism project, which is part of the Dine for Ethiopia's Initiative in the presence of senior government officials and members of the diplomatic community.

Speaking at the occasion, Abiy stated that the country has registered significant successes in the project and it has drawn significant lessons from it. The Wanchi lodge also showcases the level Ethiopia has reached in project execution and its ability to conduct future similar projects with more size and complexity.

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Photo: Berihun Tadele

## Ethiopia's 2023 diplomacy accomplishments, challenges in review

ADDIS ABABA (FBC) – The annual meeting of Ethiopia's ambassadors, mission leaders, and management of affiliated institutions of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) kicked off yesterday on the premises of the Ministry.

The meeting will last two weeks, assessing the results achieved, reflecting on problems encountered during the fiscal year 2023, and discussing what lies ahead in 2024.

In his opening remarks, Demeke Mekonnen, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Ethiopia, stated that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia has accomplished much in advancing the country's interests in 2023, despite the multifaceted challenges the country faces at the regional and international levels.

He cited the conflict with the TPLF and the enormous international pressure on the

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Photo: Gebabho Gebre

## Ethiopia's non-aligned diplomacy rewarding: IFA

BY DANIEL ALEMAYEHU

ADDIS ABABA: Ethiopia's non-alignment approach enables it to withstand the emerging of multiple global waves and to play the middle ground while ensuring its national interest, the Institute of Foreign Affairs (IFA) said.

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## Indian company to utilize Ethiopia's soybean potentials

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Enhancing irrigated wheat initiative, advancing agriculture schemes for nation's development

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Calendars, cultures, 'Killing Time' and New Year resolutions

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Connect to your culture, know your history, leave your legacy

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International  
Labour  
Organization

## “Youth unemployment particular problem in Africa” : Richard Samans

BY ESSEYE MENGISTE

**ADDIS ABABA-** Youth unemployment rates continue to present a challenge for long-term employment prospects and it is a particular problem in Africa, said ILO Research Director.

Richard Samans, ILO Research Director, highlighted at the launch of the report in Geneva Wednesday “Africa’s unique issue of youth unemployment”, “Worldwide, young people that is people in the workforce of working age, but less than 24 years old they have an unemployment rate three-and-a-half times that of working age adults.

The number of working-age persons in Sub-Saharan Africa increased by 53 million in 2023 compared to 2019, and the ILO estimated that this number would rise by an additional 14 million in 2024, as ILO reported.

“Part of the problem here is that in Africa, the number of youths who are not in education, employment, and training is high and is going up quite strongly. So, this is also a worrying development in the case of Africa,” he said.

The ILO’s World Employment and Social Outlook Trends: 2024 (WESO Trends) finds Africa’s GDP growth is estimated to have been 3.8 per cent in 2022, following the turmoil of the pandemic in 2020 and 2021. In 2023, growth is expected to have slowed to 3.1 per cent due to various factors, including the conflict in Ukraine and its impact on commodity markets.

Job creation is keeping pace with the rising labour force but not all those in employment are in decent and productive jobs. Informal employment continues to dominate in Africa at 86.5 per cent, underscoring the urgency to improve job quality and reduce working poverty.

According to the statement bring together governments, employers and workers to drive a human-centered approach to the future of work through employment creation, rights at work, social protection and social dialogue should give attention.

It also pointed out that a significant portion of the global workforce remains in informal employment, while stressing that key concerns include worsening income inequality and the impact of inflation on real incomes, especially in G20 countries.

## Competing parties keen on port access agreement effectuation

BY MISGANAW ASNAKE

**ADDIS ABABA -** Contending political parties disclosed readiness to contribute fair share in the implementation of the agreement reached between Ethiopia and Somaliland on port access.

Speaking to Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA), the contesting parties stated that the accord safeguards the national interest of Ethiopia thereby all bodies must stand together for its implementation and effectiveness.

Ethiopian Citizens for Social Justice Party Communication Head, Mulualem Tegegnetwork (PhD) noted that his party supports the agreement reached with Somaliland as it helps to keep the national interest of Ethiopia.

He said that Ethiopia with a large population shouldn’t continue facing many hindrances for not having a sea-gate.

Hence, the agreement plays a great role through ensuring national security, decreasing the huge amount of money spent on port rents, and achieving economic development for accelerating import and export trade, he mentioned.

For him, the agreement would ensure economic improvement at regional level through strengthening close cooperation between these nations via discussion and negotiation.

In association with this agreement, he believed that there are potential risks issues that need to be addressed meticulously.



Ethiopia has to pursue diplomatic, peaceful and legal approaches to deescalate tensions with the African Union, United Nations and other organizations elaborating that the accord ensures mutual benefits of the two parties and doesn’t harm others, he indicated.

What Ethiopia does to protect its national interest should continue as long as it does not harm other states but what other nations feel about is not a fundamental enquiry for the country, he underlined.

He pointed out that it is the responsibility of the people to stand together for the national interest, notwithstanding the political and ideological differences.

Deputy Chairman of Oromo Liberation Front (OLF), Kejela Merdasa on his part said that the agreement made with Somaliland is timely and appropriate as it secures the national interest of Ethiopia.

For him, Ethiopia’s access to seaport is vital for economic development, foreign trade and national security thereby OLF provides the necessary support for the

implementation of the agreement.

The accord elevates the economy and diplomacy of Ethiopia and this will bring great opportunity for the country to create better international relations, Kejela said.

He also called on the people of Ethiopia to provide support to the implementation of the accord.

Executive member of Ethiopian Political Parties Joint Council, Mebratu Alemu (PhD) on his part said that the council has held emergency meeting and discussed the issue with members.

The council will support the agreement as it is beneficial for Ethiopia and for its implementation the government should work hard its diplomatic approach in wise manner to translate this accord into practice, he noted.

“Political parties should work faithfully with the government on national issues and the access to seaport is basic for our country that all the people of Ethiopia should collaborate for its implementation,” he stressed.

## Summit stresses expanding broadband dev’t

BY STAFF REPORTER

**ADDIS ABABA -**Huawei Ethiopia, in collaboration with Ethio Telecom and the Ministry of Urban and Infrastructure, held a summit that focused on broadband development, Fiber to the Home, Huawei Ethiopia said in a press statement sent to FBC.

Urban and Infrastructure State Minister Fenta Dejen acknowledges a global transformation driven by advanced technologies such as artificial intelligence and the Internet of Things. Ethiopia is actively pursuing digitalization in economic, social, political, and environmental domains through the 2025 Digital Ethiopia program, aligning with the evolving technological landscape.

He also stated that taking advantage of these digital opportunities requires a new mindset and leadership style from the government.

The State Minister highlighted the Ministry’s commitment to digitize services at all levels, emphasizing citizen satisfaction and effective governance. A smart city strategy is being implemented in selected cities.

The Minister stressed the importance of



fiber policies to drive home broadband development, contributing to the vision of achieving a digital Ethiopia by 2025, especially in urban areas.

For his part, Huawei Ethiopia CEO Liu Jifan, highlighted Ethiopia’s entry into a new digital era, emphasizing the fundamental role of fiber to the room in digitalization. He underscored Huawei’s enthusiasm to support Ethiopia in its journey toward full digitalization.

Ethio telecom CTO Tewodros Hailemeskel, stressed the importance of broadband infrastructure for Ethiopia to harness the benefits of the digital economy and technological revolution.

He highlighted the significant role played by the Ministry of Urban and Infrastructure in advancing broadband development, emphasizing its wide-ranging impact in a

digital world where remote work, learning, and business activities are interconnected.

Tewodros emphasized the necessity for Ethiopia to enhance its broadband infrastructure to meet the evolving demands of a highly connected society.

Tewodros mentioned that, under the Urban and Infrastructure Ministry, Ethiopia aims to incorporate basic telecom infrastructure into buildings. Ethio Telecom is dedicated to collaborating with the ministry to establish a code of conduct for telecom infrastructure promptly.

The summit highlighted Ethiopia’s home broadband insight, fiber pre-deployment drive, HBB development, and the importance and application of broadband and fiber in every home to boost availability and accessibility.

# Editorial

## Hammering home, a win-win approach for common growth

Currently, Ethiopia is a landlocked country inhabited by over 120 million people. It is a country supporting so many people in such underprivileged positions. It is scaled down to such a state due to the historic wrongturn made three decades back.

A country that used to boast the Assab and Mesewa ports is now relegated to a nation stripped of a port. It has to rely on a rent of a port which positions it to an anxious state.

Following Eritrea's independence had Ethiopia properly raised a port question, it would have been entitled to go ahead to legally access a port. The historic mistake is ascribable to the then government that was conspicuously negligent of national interest, about which its bent was underwhelming. Following the sad episode, the country had no other option than going astray from the right path.

For over 30 years the country had to lean on the rent of the Djibouti port to handle import and export trade. Because of this, Ethiopia had to pay 1.6 billion Birr for port service. Had this money been channeled towards humanitarian issues and to the social sector the country's multifaceted growth would have been accelerated. Its position on the global scale could have bubbled up. The unhappy unfolding is regrettable.

Aside from preventing the country to access a port that helps it see to its advantages, the then government was brow beating and hushing up opposition party leaders who were raising the burning issue of the country pursuant to a just solution. The tragic scenario is still fresh in memory.

However, the incumbent, by popular support, that ascended to the power pedestal five years back imbued with the spirit of change has showed sagacity and courage to thaw the ice of silence on the issue.

Cognizant of the multipronged advantage of accessing port via a win-win approach the incumbent is striving towards the implementation of this objective. It has signed a MoA with Somaliland to such effect.

As change could not precipitate without a stirring up of dust Mogadishu and other countries have become vocal about it before the dust settles.

Yet, Ethiopia has pressed ahead with its stance of seeking a just solution with a win-win approach. It is also trying to show that its action is as per the framework of law.

Ethiopia's quest for port is part of its fight against the colonial legacy. That is why Ethiopia's quest has a just and historic foundation. That is also why it is full-throated about it.

It is to be recalled that Ethiopia has paid huge sacrifices fighting out colonialism manifested in different cloaks. The country's quest for port is part and parcel of this fight.

When the wind of injustice blows across the sky, history and hope come to the top position. It is through this prism we must view Ethiopia's quest for access to sea port. Always, the country has in mind the national interest which it must safeguard.

Ethiopia's access to the sea port not only benefits the nation but also promotes common perks. That is why its quest is gaining credence. The path it chose is calibrated in an amicable way—win-win approach—which it made clear to East African countries. Getting closer, it has conveyed its intention to Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania and Djibouti. Presumably, they know it. Observably, America, Saudi Arabia, British, United Arab Emirates could understand the case. That is the case of Ethiopia's recognition of Somaliland and a back scratching economy. It is after it made its dispositions clear to its partners, Ethiopia is dealing with kindred allies. This is a correct approach.

The claim Ethiopia should get access to the sea port in a peaceful way and logical discussion under the umbrella of international law holds water. It is being backed by many. Ethiopia's quest for a sea port isn't emotion-charged. Hence, knowing full well this fact those gravitating towards common growth should come aboard Ethiopia's push to change the fate of its people with eye-watering zeros.

Besides it is wise to remember the Red Sea is subject to the cross fire of super powers. International shipping lines are suffering bombardments to the disruption of commercial activities. The area has become a battlefield of proxy wars.

# Opinion

## Ethiopia wages foreign policy that favors mutual benefits

BY STAFF REPORTER

Ethiopia is commemorating centuries old diplomatic history out of which 116 years are carried out after the formal establishment of the Ethiopian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Throughout the years Ethiopia used the skills of her diplomats and the commitment of her leaders to build strong diplomatic relations with various countries of the world regardless of religious, political ideology.

It has contributed its share in ensuring the rights of black people, Africans and the developing in different times. One of the roles it contributed is to help found the League of Nations and the UN and played an extraordinary role in the founding of the former OAU and later on the AU.

Ethiopia's diplomatic relations and related efforts do not emanate from isolated quest for national interest. In fact, the principles of fulfilling the national interest of the country is closely linked with ascertaining mutual benefit with countries near and afar and promoting global issues like climate change, regional economic integration and the quest for global peace.

As a result, Ethiopia has gained due influence and significance to among various countries of the world. Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Affairs Minister asserts this as follows: "In various forums we have participated in history I have realized that many African countries have a great respect and regard for Ethiopia. Sometimes, when issues that test the world come up, positions are taken elsewhere in the United Nations, despite being busy in its own domestic agenda Ethiopia's stance and influence are multiplicative. They give us tip of ideas that they want us to resound like what position we have to take, or what action we have to take. By the way, in such cases many want to know "What is Ethiopia's stance?" Africans, Latin American countries and many countries of the world have a very high view of Ethiopia. This happens because they know Ethiopia's place through history and various experiences."

He further says cooperation frameworks that used to be known as frameworks are changing their appearance and are perceived differently. And in order to map the diplomacy of the future era, it is necessary to start from the current dynamic situation. When we say diplomacy, we need to face the changing situation in the future and stand competitively. With the advent of new technology, diplomacy has ended, replaced by another and many literatures show that. It means that as long as there are different fields of communication, world competition and countries, diplomacy will continue to change and prepare accordingly.

Even now, when we see it, it is not only the conventional diplomacy that we used to have, but now the struggle, digital diplomacy has been added to it. The landscape of social media has also changed. Simply scheduling long appointments and

face-to-face engagements are not enough right now. It's an age where all information is delivered simultaneously with the fast, mobile technology we hold in our hands, where every leader, ambassador of foreign affairs all tweets and communicates through different devices. If we do not manage this, the diplomatic work would slip out of our hands and others will continue to define it in the way they want. Therefore, it is necessary to build the capacity of a suitable digital diplomacy system and be competitive.

Ethiopia is conducting institutional foreign relations and diplomacy which is carefully planned and implemented. Career diplomats are being produced through intensive trainings which are tailored in the context of domestic and foreign policy objectives of the country. Ethiopia's ever growing diplomatic activities are closely connected with global values and interests in the conduct of foreign policy and diplomacy

The foreign policy objectives of the Ethiopian Government rests on four main pillars including ascertaining sovereignty and territorial integrity of the country, promoting national interest, economic diplomacy and citizen centered diplomacy.

The socio-political and economic reforms underway in the country for the last four years had added impetus to the effective implementation of the above mentioned diplomatic objectives.

It stands to reason therefore that Prime Minister Abiy has conducted shuttle diplomatic maneuvers starting with ascertaining stable diplomatic relations with the neighboring countries based on the four objectives mentioned above.

The Premier effectively combined his efforts in diplomacy with institutional approach through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the implementation of the foreign policy and diplomacy of the country.

Ethiopian ambassadors and senior diplomats across the world exposed the unverified news and reports on the situation in Ethiopia and exposed the truth to African leaders and countries which recognized the concerns of his government, creating awareness on the importance of promoting economic integration among African countries to ease the pressure of foreign debt on the continent, promoting economic diplomacy to reduce the devastating effects of COVID-19 pandemic Ethiopian and continental economy.

The Ethiopian Permanent Mission at the UN was able to withstand UNSC hosted 12 rounds of sessions in violation of the Charter discussing on issues that are legally under the competence of the Ethiopian Government. Today, with the support of the entire population in the country, the nation has managed to complete the 4th and final round of filling GERD and expects to generate hydropower from five more turbines this year.

**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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The Ethiopian Herald

# Indian company to utilize Ethiopia's soybean potentials

BY MESERET BEHAILU

**ADDIS ABABA** – Nirvana Processing PLC expressed that it is joining hands with 5,500 smallholder farmers to utilize Ethiopia's untapped potentials in soybean business.

The Indian company which has been operating in Uganda, Philippines and Nigeria has now joined Ethiopia's soybean business in Jawi district of Amhara State that benefits some 5,500 smallholder farmers through providing modern soybean production.

Nirvana Processing PLC-Ethiopia General Manager, Ripin Shome told The Ethiopian Herald that his company provides training on the knowhow of import-export, and

the likes so as to grow sustainable organic commodities like soybean seeds, sunflower, chickpea, and so forth.

As to him, the company is processing soybean seeds and planned to participate in planting different commodities in Ethiopia.

He added that the company planned to benefit over 5,500 farmers who keep growing soybean, he stated, adding that his company has also received over 5,000 square meters of land to run the business in that regard.

Jawi's farmers supply Nirvana Processing PLC with organic soybean in which the company export 100 percent of the product it has processed to Europe, North America, and some other countries.

The export was begun at the end of last April after the necessary activities have been carried out, he added.

Shome further stated that as Ethiopia's abounding potentials for soybean production and the favorable conditions facilitated by the Industrial Parks Development Corporation (IPDC) are among the main reasons of his company to invest in Ethiopia.

Mentioning the shortage of skilled human power, the General Manager said that there are also a number of versatile citizens who are willing to work.

Therefore, the company would continue providing training programs, transferring technology, and the like in a view to bridge the skilled manpower gap in the area, Shome stressed.



## Ethiopia's non-...

IFA Asian and Pacific Director General and Senior Researcher Anteneh Getachew (PhD) stated that Ethiopia always prioritizes its national interest from any partnership. For instance, its accession to the BRICS economic bloc does not mean that Ethiopia will disassociate itself with the West rather the nation works with both sides by keeping its national interest upfront.

Ethiopia has a long history of non-alignment with global powers and its unbiased stance was demonstrated even during the Zagwe Dynasty by standing neutral in the cross war. Also, Ethiopia has meaningful engagement with countries in different ideological blocs.

Anteneh further stated that the reform government's establishment of strategic partnership with multiple nations including China, Russia, and UAE demonstrate huge diplomatic success.

This time, citizen-oriented diplomacy is the new diver of Ethiopia's Foreign Policy and every citizen at home and in the Diaspora is responsible to participate in political and economic activities of their country.

"We evaluate our diplomatic success based on the challenges we encountered and solved," the director noted; adding that due to local unrest and Abbay Dam's daunting negotiation process, Ethiopia faced immense pressure from different parties.

According to him, in the present climate, there are multiple actors in the diplomatic sphere and the practice is transformed from the traditional way to a more complicated one including artificial intelligence, cyber, digital, sport diplomacy, and so on.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs should work to create a more advanced society that can understand all the ways and means in the diplomatic world as diplomacy will no longer be implemented only by assigned professionals.

"It is true that we have partners from all directions, but the most important thing is national interest. Diplomacy is a give and take game," the researcher emphasized.

## Wanchi Lodge...

According to him, the eco-tourism project is instrumental to address the area's infrastructural setbacks that had been affecting the local community living along the natural splendor for many years. "The project is carried out in a way to embrace the local community and ensure the latter's multifaceted benefits."

The PM further revealed the plan to connect the eco-tourism project with Ambo and Waliso towns and mentioned activities that are being carried out in this regard.

"The government is committed to the execution of the ongoing infrastructure projects and sees the private sector's active involvement in eco-tourism projects which are greatly equipped with the necessary facilities and amenities. Private capital is also expected to support the government's efforts towards the expansion of tourist destinations."

The Premier also invited second-generation Ethiopian Diasporas who are coming to their home country to pay the visit to Wanchi Lodge and other tourist attraction sites.

Wanchi – Dandi Eco-Tourism Village and Lodge General Manager and Defense Minister Abraham Belay (PhD) for his part said that the project employed 8,000-12,000 citizens during various construction phases. Also, over 500 local youth have been organized to provide boat services and other activities for guests.

Approached by local media, the African Union Commission (AUC) Chairperson Who is the Chairperson of the African Union Commission MoussaFakiMahamat, who attended the event, revealed his delight over the way Ethiopia preserves nature mentioned the eco-tourism project as an "exemplary" for the rest of Africa.

Eco-tourism is vital for Africa and the AUC is trying to promote tourism in the continent as well as to preserve its splendid ecosystem. "Promoting such a new kind of eco-tourism and involving the local community in the development and prosperity made in their vicinity is a very good choice made by the Ethiopian government," the Chairperson added.

For U.S Ambassador to Ethiopia Ervin Massinga, Africa could learn a lot from Ethiopia's success in terms of realizing tourism potentials. Tourism brings additional values to those living in the natural spender for many years and honey, tourism, hiking and so many opportunities are provided by small bits of infrastructure.

"From What I understand, this public investment is a small step forward to encourage the private sector both here in Ethiopia and internationally to come and follow this example."

## Ethiopia's 2023...

Government, GERD-related issues in multilateral forums, the Ethiopia-Sudan border issue, and others as some of the areas that tested Ethiopian diplomacy.

The Deputy PM stated that Ethiopia was able to address many of these challenges and even went beyond achieving successes, such as joining the BRICS, forging an all-weather strategic partnership with China, and normalizing and revitalizing relations with the European Union, among other things.

New geopolitical realities, as well as technological changes and the emergence of non-governmental international corporations, necessitate new thinking in advancing Ethiopian diplomacy, he said, adding that he expects the meeting to address such issues.

During yesterday's session, the Director Generals of various departments in the Ministry presented reports on the performance of missions under their purview, per MoFA Ethiopia.

Briefing the media, MoFA Spokesperson Ambassador Meles Alem said the annual meeting, which is part of the Diplomacy Week, will take place from January 13-27, 2024.

There will be discussion on activities being undertaken in diplomacy and field visits, he added. Ethiopian ambassadors from across the globe, heads of missions and officials of the ministry are attending the annual meeting, it was indicated.

# Opinion

## Cooperation has to prevail over confrontation, conflict

BY MENGESHA AMARE

The issue of cooperation among neighboring countries in regional public goods such as water basins, infrastructure, energy and the environment should come at the forefront if these countries are to bring about real change, indeed. National, regional as well as continental organizations can help generate cooperative outcomes by facilitating the solution to problems of trust, financing and expertise. Regional integration agreements may also be helpful by embedding the negotiations on regional cooperation in a broader institutional framework.

Undeniably, cooperation between/among countries can provide several benefits via promoting trade, investment, and technology transfer among countries, and it can lead to economic growth and development. This in turn can result in the creation of new jobs, increased productivity, and higher living standards.

The public goods such as water basins, lakes, rivers, underground water, and infrastructure like roads, railways, dams, and energy and the environment are instrumental in fostering change and prosperity. Hence, regional integration would optimistically play a pivotal role bringing the relevant countries to a cooperative equilibrium.

A major problem in reaching a cooperative solution is likely to be the lack of trust. If neighboring countries, because of past problems, do not trust each other, they may fail to reach a cooperative solution, with each trying to maximize its gain from the regional public good and losing because of the spillover effects which are not taken into account in the decisions of the various parties. Such a suspicious and skeptical gesture has to be avoided and countries need to develop collaboration by entertaining a win-win fashion.

Yes, regional integration agreements, though not necessary for regional cooperation, may be helpful by embedding the negotiations on regional cooperation in a broader institutional framework. Undeniably, nations can benefit greatly out of cooperation when they share common resources such as rivers, fishing grounds, hydroelectric power, rail connections or the environment.

Though regional cooperation is not the same as regional integration, finding equitable ways to share the burdens and benefits of regional cooperation can be difficult. The most important problem along this line is, though not common, countries are erstwhile grudging cooperating because of national pride, political tensions, lack of trust, high coordination costs among a large number of countries, or the asymmetric distribution of costs and benefits.

Besides, countries that are dissatisfied with the potential distribution of benefits may withhold their agreement on a particular issue. They can increase the credibility of

their threatened veto by making investments that would be useful if the agreement were not implemented. Next, regional cooperation agreements are typically harder to achieve than national ones because, given the absence of courts or higher authorities to which to appeal, the enforcement of property rights is ambiguous and weak at the international level.

Here, cooperation and close consultation has solutions as nothing could be out of the scope of advising one another or each other. To be implemented effectively, cooperation agreements usually need specialized institutions, including mechanisms to enforce the provisions, to deal with disputes on how to share benefits, and to deal with changes in situations that require the renegotiation of agreements.

Frankly speaking, without cooperation, lakes, rivers and seas are vulnerable to the 'tragedy of the commons' in which each user tries to maximize its own benefits from a resource without paying attention to the effects on other users. This leads to over exploitation—to depleted fish stocks, pollution or a lower water level—that harms all users.

Regional cooperation affects the everyday life of people. It helps to address cross-border challenges, such as trade and sustainable environment, and is a key to tackle peace and security threats.

For instance, landlocked Ethiopia as the most advanced economy has an interest in strengthening transportation links and access to the sea in order to foster its integration into the continental as well as the world market. Yes, the country wants access to the sea with a view to diversifying trade and production trajectories. The nation could also use ports to export goods and energy to its neighbors, for instance, from the new Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam.

True, creating a new regional body provides domestic elites with the opportunity to reshape the perception of their activities. They are enabled to introduce a narrative that lets the state or the incumbent regime take a lead in building a new regional institution and thereby a lead in addressing a particular security problem. The main thing in the Horn of African countries in particular and those of the entire continent in general would be bolstering security governance.

Obviously, the Horn nations increasingly seek to protect national prestige and state sovereignty in security affairs, and establishing an additional regional bloc certainly helps in this regard. Likewise, significant progress towards regional peace and development has characterized the Horn in recent years.

Domestic changes in Ethiopia, peace between Eritrea and Ethiopia, and burgeoning cooperation attempts in the region all are promising. Regional cooperation among African nations is urgently needed—also beyond the security realm. Moreover, such an audacious cooperation and unity could boost the prestige of all leaders and foster

regional trade and infrastructure.

No doubt, countries cooperate if they perceive it to be in their best interests, both economically and politically. Global cooperation in the aftermath of World War II—through a system of rules, shared principles and institutions—has delivered major economic and social progress, lifting millions of people out of desperate poverty.

Yes, there are understandable reasons for countries to question the continuing benefits of international cooperation today. Economic inequality within nations is widening, especially in advanced economies. Many households have seen little benefit from economic growth, and many communities have suffered from losing jobs and whole industries.

When technological innovation and growing global trade have helped drastically reduce inequality between people living in different countries, they are part of the reason for greater inequality within many advanced economies. In the eyes of the public, trade seems to get the lion's share of the blame, making people leery of expanding trade further through ever more economic integration.

The African continent is also brought together by some socially damaging forms of trade, such as human, drug, and arms trafficking, as well as anonymous cross-border flows of ill-gotten funds. Again, individual national authorities are hard pressed for solutions. Thus collective action is vital.

Building support for cooperation will also require a certain amount of humility. Regional cooperation has been critical to the impressive expansion of well being and opportunities over the past many years. Now it must deliver results for the challenges of the 21st century. Meeting these challenges will require new modes of cooperation, better communication, and a global policy agenda that resonates broadly with the public.

Regional cooperation brings many of the same benefits as multilateralism but on a smaller scale as it enables participating countries to overcome the small size of their domestic markets and achieve economies of scale and greater specialization in production, thus increasing the competitiveness of their products.

Besides, regional cooperation can enhance the capacity of developing countries to meet emerging challenges, including the application of new technologies and it is increasingly clear that regional trade facilitation measures offer significant benefits by reducing the costs of transactions across international borders and removing non-border obstacles.

Despite these advantages, finding equitable ways to share the burdens and benefits of regional cooperation can be difficult. Political tensions or mistrust obstructs cooperation and many countries may be unwilling or unable to meet high

coordination costs or to accept asymmetric distribution of costs and benefits.

True, regional cooperation will deliver the most benefit if it is geared to promoting long-term growth and development and is not simply a defensive short-term reaction to the state of the world economy. Whatever form of cooperation countries of a particular region adopt should also promote policies that facilitate trade and economic relations with other countries or regional groups.

The need to surrender sovereignty in a number of areas for the common good is still a sensitive and complex issue that first calls for the building of trust among regional players, strong political commitment, and also creativity and flexibility.

According to idealists, if the world were to create international organizations which promote peaceful change, disarmament and international laws, cooperation would be much easier to achieve.

These points towards the importance of closer intergovernmental cooperation enhanced multilateral coordination and improved policy coherence for national, regional and global development. The paramount importance of interstate consultation and cooperation as a basis for the formulation and implementation of migration policies, and the need for enhanced cooperation and coordination between the different multilateral international organizations working in the field of migration. Further, a set of principles for action was presented, including that such efforts must be based on a better appreciation of the close linkages among/between different nations in continents and in the planet earth in general.

Unequivocally, national strategies to address the impact of lack of cooperation need to be well framed and should be complemented by strengthened bilateral, regional and multilateral cooperation. Over the years, many states of the African continent for instance have engaged in constructive discussion around issues like common growth, win-win approach, Diasporas, remittances, strategies for addressing disfigurements, policy coherence and mainstreaming, among others.

The partnerships need to be forged around common goal, regional integration, with a view to facilitating change and progress with less costly both in human and financial terms, and is more productive labor force.

Thus the African countries would send a strong signal to governments and development actors, be they national or regional or continental, for bilateral or multilateral development cooperation agencies to combine efforts and resources to grow together.

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

# Business & Economy

## Enhancing irrigated wheat initiative, advancing agriculture schemes for nation's development

BY LAKACHEW ATINAFU

Ethiopia, a populous country in the Horn of Africa, has a rich agricultural heritage and is known for its diverse farming practices. In recent years, the Ethiopian government, in collaboration with various stakeholders, has been making concerted efforts to improve the performance of dry wheat cultivation and implement effective agriculture schemes to foster the development of the country including the pastoral community. This article explores the initiatives undertaken to enhance dry wheat performance and the broader agricultural strategies aimed at supporting the pastoral communities in Ethiopia, so said documents.

Ethiopian agricultural institutions have prioritized research and development programs to identify and breed wheat varieties that are adapted to the country's arid and semi-arid regions. These efforts aim to enhance drought tolerance, disease resistance, and overall productivity of dry wheat crops, according to reiterated stamen of the Ethiopian government.

Agronomists argue that, to combat soil erosion and improve water retention, conservation agriculture practices such as minimum tillage, crop residue management, and contour plowing have been promoted. These techniques help conserve moisture, maintain soil fertility, and enhance the performance of dry wheat in Ethiopia's challenging agro-climatic conditions.

Agri professionals further argue that ensuring farmers have access to high-quality and locally adapted seeds are crucial for improving dry wheat performance. The Ethiopian government, in collaboration with international organizations, has been working to strengthen seed systems, promote seed multiplication programs, and establish seed banks to provide farmers with improved seed varieties.

Recognizing the vulnerability of pastoral communities to climate change and other risks, efforts have been made to diversify livelihoods beyond traditional livestock rearing. Programs have been implemented to promote alternative income-generating activities such as beekeeping, horticulture, and agro forestry. These initiatives aim to reduce dependency on livestock alone and contribute to the resilience of pastoral economies.

Given the scarcity of water in arid regions, effective water resource management is crucial for agricultural development. The construction of small-scale water harvesting structures, such as ponds and reservoirs, has been encouraged to capture and store rainwater during the wet seasons. Additionally, the promotion of efficient irrigation techniques, such as drip irrigation, has helped optimize water use in dry wheat cultivation.

Strengthening agricultural extension services plays a vital role in enhancing the knowledge and skills of farmers. The Ethiopian government has invested in training and capacity-building programs to equip farmers with improved agricultural



Irrigation-based wheat production is a prospect for ensuring food security

practices, including dry wheat cultivation techniques, crop management, and natural resource conservation. These initiatives empower pastoral communities to make informed decisions and adopt sustainable farming methods.

Ethiopia's commitment to improving the performance of dry wheat and advancing the agricultural sector in pastoral areas is commendable. Through research and development, conservation agriculture practices, access to quality seeds, and various agricultural schemes, the country is making significant strides in enhancing dry wheat productivity and supporting the development of the pastoral economy. These initiatives contribute not only to food security but also to the overall well-being and livelihoods of the pastoral communities in Ethiopia. As these efforts continue, it is crucial to maintain collaborative partnerships, prioritize sustainable practices, and adapt strategies to the evolving challenges posed by climate change and other socio-economic factors.

Developing the pastoral economy in Ethiopia faces several specific challenges that need to be addressed to ensure sustainable growth and improved livelihoods for pastoral communities. Some of these challenges include:

Pastoral areas in Ethiopia are highly vulnerable to climate change, including prolonged droughts, erratic rainfall patterns, and desertification. These environmental challenges directly impact the availability of water and pasturelands, making it difficult for pastoralists to sustain their livestock and traditional livelihoods.

Pastoral communities often face limited access to essential resources such as water, grazing lands, veterinary services, and markets. Inadequate infrastructure, including roads and communication networks, restricts their ability to connect with markets and access basic services, hindering economic development.

Ambiguities and conflicts over land tenure and pastoral resource rights contribute to insecurity in pastoral areas. Insufficient legal frameworks and unclear land ownership often lead to land disputes, undermining

the stability and productivity of the pastoral economy.

Access to financial services, including credit, savings, and insurance, is crucial for pastoralists to invest in their livelihoods, manage risks, and adapt to changing circumstances. However, financial institutions often have limited presence in pastoral areas, making it challenging for communities to access these services.

Limited access to quality education and vocational training hinders the ability of pastoral communities to diversify their livelihoods and adapt to changing economic opportunities. Educational disparities, particularly for girls and women, further exacerbate social and economic inequalities in pastoral areas.

The pastoral economy has historically received less attention compared to other sectors in Ethiopia. Developing comprehensive policies that address the specific needs and challenges of pastoral communities is essential. However, the implementation of such policies has often been inadequate, leading to limited impact on the ground.

Pastoral areas in Ethiopia are prone to inter-communal conflicts over resources, particularly during periods of drought or scarcity. Conflict undermines stability, disrupts economic activities, and forces communities to migrate in search of safety and resources.

Addressing these challenges requires a multi-faceted approach that involves policy reforms, investments in infrastructure and services, improving access to education and skills training, promoting sustainable land management practices, and strengthening social safety nets. By addressing these challenges, Ethiopia can unlock the potential of the pastoral economy and improve the livelihoods of pastoral communities.

Ethiopia, a landlocked country in the Horn of Africa, has a rich agricultural heritage and is known for its diverse farming practices. In recent years, the Ethiopian government, in collaboration with various stakeholders, has been making concerted efforts to improve the performance of dry wheat cultivation

and implement effective agriculture schemes to foster the development of the pastoral economy. Ethiopia's commitment to improving the performance of dry wheat and advancing the agricultural sector in pastoral areas is commendable. Through research and development, conservation agriculture practices, access to quality seeds, and various agricultural schemes, the country is making significant strides in enhancing dry wheat productivity and supporting the development of the pastoral economy. These initiatives contribute not only to food security but also to the overall well-being and livelihoods of the pastoral communities in Ethiopia. As these efforts continue, it is crucial to maintain collaborative partnerships, prioritize sustainable practices, and adapt strategies to the evolving challenges posed by climate change and other socio-economic factors.

The funding for policies aimed at supporting pastoral communities in Ethiopia comes from various sources, including the Ethiopian government, international organizations, donor agencies, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The funding is typically a combination of domestic resources and external assistance. Here's an overview of the funding sources and the role of international organizations:

The Ethiopian government allocates its own budget to support initiatives and programs targeting pastoral communities. This may include investments in infrastructure development, education, healthcare, and social protection programs. The government's financial contributions are essential for the sustainability and long-term success of these policies.

International donor agencies play a significant role in supporting policies and programs for pastoral communities in Ethiopia. Donors provide financial and technical assistance to address the specific challenges faced by pastoralists. These agencies include bilateral donors (such as the United States Agency for International Development, Department for International Development, and European Union) and multilateral organizations (such as the World Bank, United Nations agencies, and regional development banks).

# Planet Earth

## Ethiopia streamlining transition to biogas as alternative energy

BY FIKADU BELAY

Ethiopia's biogas revolution is a remarkable shift in the country's waste management practices, turning organic waste from agriculture and livestock into a valuable source of renewable energy. This innovative approach showcases Ethiopia's commitment to sustainable development and marks a significant step towards a greener future.

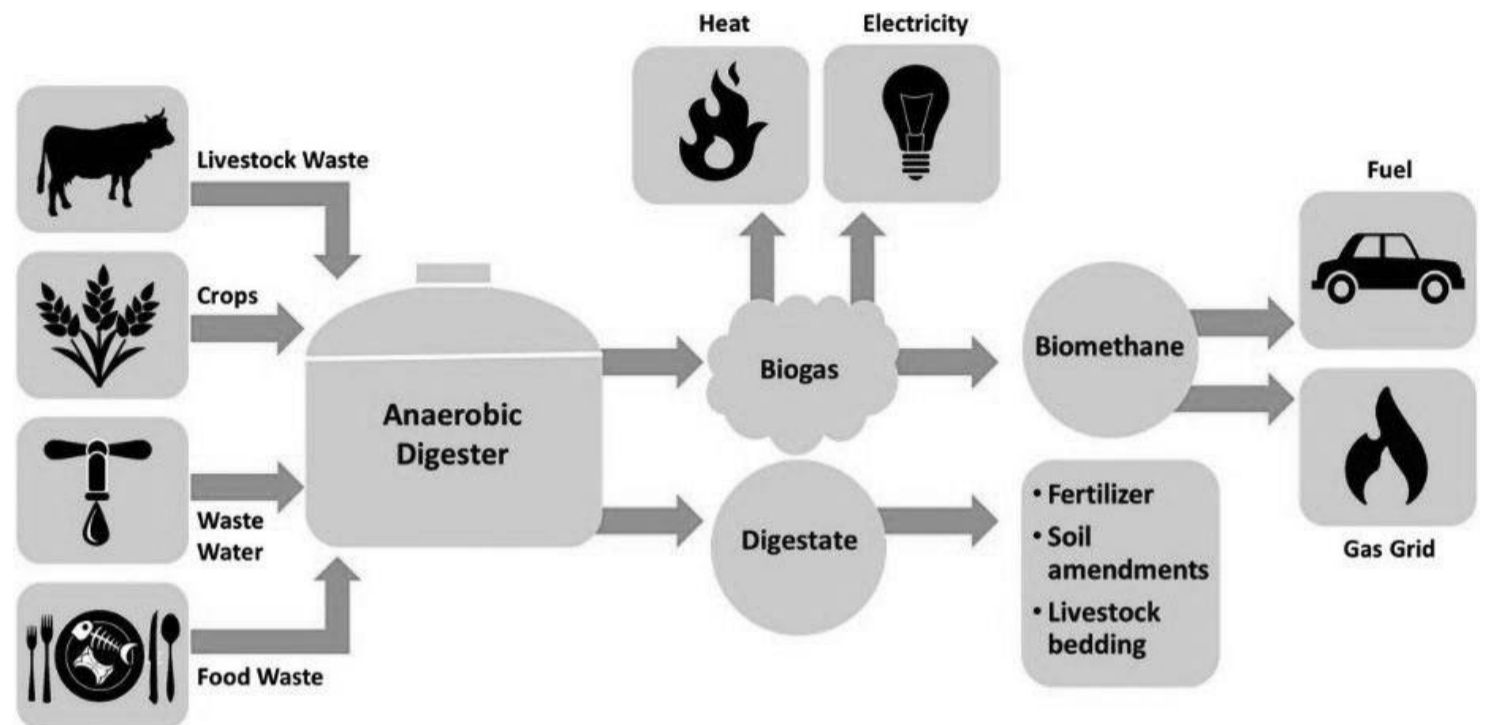
Through implementing biogas technology on a large scale, Ethiopia has not only addressed the challenge of organic waste management but also unlocked new economic opportunities. The transition to a biogas-based economy has created jobs in skilled labor for setting up and maintaining biogas facilities, contributing to community development and economic expansion. Moreover, the generation of biogas can provide by products like organic fertilizers that improve agricultural productivity and raise yields and farmer revenue. The advantages of biogas energy are guaranteed to benefit every sphere of society through an all-encompassing approach to sustainable development.

In recent years, the Ethiopian government has played a crucial role in promoting the widespread adoption of biogas systems. Through supportive policies and financial incentives, they have attracted investments and facilitated research and development in the biogas sector. This support has not only attracted investments but has also fostered a favorable environment for research and development. The government's dedication to renewable energy is evident in the substantial increase in the number of biogas plants and the rapid development of biogas infrastructure across the country.

Ethiopia has enormous potential for biogas energy capable of completely changing the ecology and economics of the country. According to the Minister of Water and Energy, data shows the government's dedication to renewable energy, with biogas playing a major role in their plan. Furthermore, the commitment shows the notable rise in the number of biogas plants around the nation as well as the quick development of biogas infrastructure.

The benefits of biogas in Ethiopia are diverse. It has provided a sustainable source of energy for rural communities, and access to clean and affordable energy is crucial for improving livelihoods and reducing poverty. Biogas plants can be established at the community or household level, providing a decentralized energy solution that reduces dependence on traditional biomass fuels like firewood and charcoal. This shift not only improves air quality but also saves valuable time spent gathering fuel, particularly for women and children.

Ethiopia has a lot of energy resources available for energy development and by making use of these resources, efforts are being made to ensure that rural communities



*It has provided a sustainable source of energy for rural communities, and access to clean and affordable energy is crucial for improving livelihoods and reducing poverty*

in Ethiopia benefit from renewable energy.

The ministry of water and energy data indicated that Ethiopia has potential to generate up to four million biogas stoves. Of which just 48,000 have been installed in the past ten years. Lead Executive Officer for Technology Development and Transfer in Rural Energy at the Ministry of Water and Energy, Birhanu Wolde, told the Ethiopian Press Agency that the ministry is attempting to raise this quantity through raising awareness of the process, its operation, and its training.

According to him, efforts underway to raise the number of biogas stoves in Ethiopia to 165,000, which will help the rural community. Currently, 48,000 biogas stoves are functional in Ethiopia. In this fiscal year, 6500 biogas stoves were scheduled to be installed; among them, over 3500 have already been completed, with the remaining stoves to be finished in the upcoming months, he said.

Biogas systems, which convert organic waste into methane gas, are now being installed in households, schools, and healthcare facilities across the country. This has improved energy access, reduced indoor air pollution, and enhanced the overall quality of life for thousands of Ethiopians.

Furthermore, the biogas revolution has had a significant impact on the agricultural sector. Farmers are now able to convert animal manure and crop residues into biogas, which can be used for cooking, heating, and even electricity generation. This not only reduces the environmental contribution of agriculture but also provides additional income streams for farmers through the sale of surplus biogas and organic fertilizers.

It is noticeable that the biogas by-product, which is extracted from the soil during composting, is appropriate for use as natural fertilizer. Not only does biogas provide energy, but it also greatly enhances the use of natural fertilizer, he added.

By diverting organic waste from landfills and open dumping sites, the country has significantly reduced greenhouse gas emissions and mitigated the risk of groundwater contamination. Biogas production has also presented an opportunity for sustainable waste management, with the byproduct of the process, known as digestive, serving as a nutrient-rich organic fertilizer that can enhance soil fertility and crop yields.

Additionally, Ethiopia has long been recognized for its commitment to environmental conservation and tackling climate change. Biogas energy aligns perfectly with these objectives by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and promoting sustainable waste management. By capturing methane, a potent greenhouse gas, and converting it into energy, biogas plants help curb emissions while also preventing the release of harmful pollutants into the atmosphere.

He stated that by significantly reducing the methane and carbon dioxide that biogas

users send into the atmosphere, the ministry has been able to put forward carbon trade that has benefited the country's economy.

Ethiopia has put in place a number of knowledge-sharing and capacity-building projects to guarantee the biogas industry's sustainability. The goal of these initiatives is to provide biogas system installation, operation, and maintenance training to technicians, engineers, and farmers. The country is promoting a resilient and self-sufficient biogas economy that will be able to flourish for many years to come by developing local knowledge.

He mentioned that Ethiopia's biogas revolution serves as a shining example of how renewable energy and waste management can go hand in hand, offering solutions to multiple challenges faced by the country. With its strong commitment to sustainable development, Ethiopia is emerging as a regional leader in biogas technology, providing an outline for other nations to follow, he added.

According to him, there has been a gradual rise in community understanding this year, and the majority of the beneficiary regions are working together with the Ministry and investors.

As Ethiopia continues to scale up its biogas initiatives, it is poised to secure the economic, social, and environmental benefits of this transformative endeavor. With the potential to improve energy access, reduce emissions, and boost agricultural productivity, biogas holds the key to a greener and more sustainable future for the people of Ethiopia.

Ethiopia's commitment to harnessing biogas energy represents a significant step towards sustainable renewable energy. The benefits of biogas extend beyond clean energy production, encompassing rural development, environmental preservation, and economic growth. By embracing biogas, Ethiopia is paving the way for a brighter future, where sustainable energy is a catalyst for progress and prosperity.

# Art & Culture

## Calendars, cultures, 'Killing Time' and New Year resolutions

BY MULUGETA GUDETA

We are barely emerging from the holiday season here in Ethiopia, a time with tens of millions of Ethiopian Christians celebrated the New Year and Christmas holidays while hundreds of millions of people across the world did the same in line with their traditions and their respective national calendars. Although the holiday season is a time of joy and festivities, it would not be out of place to shed some ideas on why holidays are fall on different days in the eastern and western parts of the globe.

This year, the celebrations of Ethiopian New Year and Christmas took place on different days and years while the event, in the case of Christ's birth, happened on a single day common to all peoples and cultures. Why is for instance Christmas celebrated on different days in different parts of the world while Jesus was born on a day that is common to all Christians? This is a question worth asking while the answer can shed light on one of the most celebrated historical and religious events that is observed on different days and months. For Ethiopians, the New Year falls on the 11th day of September while Christmas falls on 7 January (Tahsas 29 on the Ethiopian calendar) as the day of Jesus' birth.

It is also worth noting why many African countries are adopting the European calendar while they have different traditions of their own for welcoming the New Year and other holidays. The answer to this question is not however very complicated. The British and the French have introduced Africans to their calendars as they have done with many other things during colonialism. Although Africans have ancient civilizations that are older than the Western ones, they were forced to adopt the calendars of the colonial powers who did not bother to know how African were counting time before the colonial era. From this, we may perhaps infer that the concept of time is not common to all cultures and that historical events have a role to play in determining the division and management of time according to cultural norms.

Europeans have adopted none of the African traditions, while many African countries are still counting the years in accordance with the European calendar which, like anything in Africa, was imposed by Europeans. There are two major calendars known to humanity so far. The first is the Gregorian calendar while the second is known as the Julian calendar.

Why calendars are different from one culture to the other although time has a unique, common and linear dimension in all cultures or traditions. This is also another issue that needs to be clarified and the relationship between calendars and cultures needs to be clearly established. "Calendars are different from culture to culture because, "different people have different concepts of time and of measuring time."

The Gregorian calendar is "a system for determining the date that was introduced by Pope Gregory XIII in the year 1582 AD. It is based on the movement of the earth around



**E**thiopians of all shades of religions and faiths are keen to celebrate holidays on the days and times established by their long traditions

the sun (which means it is a solar calendar) and includes leap years." On the other hand the Julian calendar is defined as a solar calendar of 365 days in every year with an additional leap day every fourth year without exception. The Julian calendar is still used in as a religious calendar in parts of the Eastern Orthodox Church and in parts of oriental orthodoxy as well as by the Amazigh people (also known as Berbers). The Julian calendar was proposed in 46 BC by Julius Caesar as a reform of the earlier Roman calendar.

The Ethiopian calendar is based on the same astronomical calculations that lie behind today's Gregorian calendar and its predecessor, the Julian calendar. However the Ethiopian calendar is closely related to the Coptic and Julian calendars although it is not exactly the same. Ethiopia has thus its own calendar that is also known as the Ge'ez calendar. The Ethiopian calendar is a solar calendar that also depends on the birth of Jesus Christ as well as the Gregorian calendar and but it is eight years behind it.

Ethiopia is also the only country in the world where a year lasts 13 months according to the very popular tourism advertisement that invites visitors to come to Ethiopia with

13 months of sunshine. This was indeed a clever way of popularizing the country with something that could also be considered a brand name. The new Ethiopian brand name is "The Land of Origins" is broader and deeper as a concept than "13 months of sunshine" which is one dimensional so to say and indicates only the weather.

"The Land of Origins" represents not only Ethiopia but also Africa which is a continent where so many things originated from and spread across the world. Most importantly it is the origin of humanity thanks to the discovery of Lucy which is a 3.2 million-year old fossil skeleton of a human ancestor which was discovered in 1974 at a place known as Hadar in Afar region.

Ethiopians of all shades of religions and faiths are keen to celebrate holidays on the days and times established by their long traditions. While in Western culture the concept of time has a different implication in human activities, Ethiopians tend to downplay the importance of time as something that can easily be used and abused at will. In Western tradition, time is a precious reality that determines and shapes human life in many ways. Well-known Western adages about the value of time (Time is money), the precious nature of time, the rules against wasting time...etc. all add up to emphasize how precious time is in human endeavors.

On the contrary in Ethiopia, time is usually given much less importance so much so that many people do not even bother to know the time, day, month and year of their birth. That is why many people tend to define their ages in accordance with the age lines on their faces instead of referring to accurate data. There is also this notorious habit of giving wrong information on dates of birth to meet the age requirements while applying for certain jobs. This may be defined as adjusting your age to meet emergencies.

Ethiopian footballers and athletes for that

matter, are allegedly giving wrong dates of birth, in the hope that they would be selected by clubs for specific competitions or tasks. The sad fact is however that their real age is exposed on the football pitch when their performances fall lower than expected by their official age. That is often why their true age is determined by Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) tests that are usually used to prevent cheating. If you are over-aged, you are not going to performance at the top of your form and this can result in unnecessary burnouts or life-threatening injuries that are of course dangerous. The reason behind such mishaps can result from not knowing your exact year of birth.

"Killing time" is a famous pastime in our society. Many people do so many bad things just to kill time. Why should they kill time which is considered one of the most expensive assets in human life? Instead of "killing" time, they should perhaps read books, learn new skills or engage in sports activities to name but a few of the available pastimes. There is even a popular saying in Amharic about a man who allegedly said, "sira kemeftat lijjen lafatat" or "let me secure the divorce of my daughter instead of killing time aimlessly". The morale of the story is that even a wrong decision can be better than spending time without work.

There are so many "time killers" in our rural or urban communities who allow time to fly away while they are usually engaged in useless activities such as drinking, smoking and using narcotics all day long while they should have gone out and look for jobs that may be hard to come by for now. With persistence and efforts luck might one day knock on their doors to usher in a better life for them.

If you keep on killing time without interruption, it might kill you with boredom, lack of purpose, depression and the physical and mental symptoms when "killing time" a notorious habit, a hobby or a pastime. You keep on counting the years without realizing that your time would soon be up and when you wake up from killing time it may be too late to change course and adopt healthy habits. You may even forget counting your age and keep on living in limbo or like lifeless zombies.

A brand new year is generally considered a new opportunity for changing our conception of time which is a precious asset if properly used. For instance, we can make New Year pledges or resolutions at an individual or societal level. A New Year resolution can include such things as saving money, avoiding bad habits, hitting the gym or learning new skills. At societal level, New Year resolution can include working harder to increase one's income, establishing good relationships with friends and families, marrying the woman of your life if possible or living with purpose and discipline or building a good family.

A New Year may also be a good opportunity for "time killers" to shed their bad habits, take their time seriously and do better in the New Year. Unfortunately time flies but we are unable to fly with it, at least metaphorically, in search of a better life; but we can certainly do better with time within our human limitations.



# Society

## Connect to your culture, know your history, leave your legacy

BY LEULSEGED WORKU

The role of the Diaspora community in supporting the economic activities of the nation, promoting the nation to the outside world and in knowledge transfer is incalculable. Due to political and economic reasons, Ethiopians are seen leading their life in different parts of the world.

Despite their ideological differences or economic hardships, they are always happy and ready to use all the available resources they got to sustain the economic progress of their nation, promote their homeland cultural and traditional values and defend the interest of the country in global arenas. This is especially true for the first-generation of the Ethiopian Diaspora who went abroad in search of better living, escaping political instability and conflict, economic hardship or seeking higher education.

This first-generation Ethiopian Diaspora community is better known for their strong attachment with motherland, speaking local languages and preserving their identity.

What is more, the economic contribution and the political activities of the first generation are still visible. No matter what the political differences they have with the government or in what economic conditions they may be in, they are actively supporting the economic progress of the country, serve as ambassadors of their nation to the outside world and build its image.

As witnessed from the recent conflict in the northern part of the country, the Diaspora community had a vital role in uncovering the truth about the spread of misinformation and fake news as well as countering unfounded allegations. What is more, their active involvement in the investment and other areas has been huge.

By taking into consideration the government's commitment to bring economic shift, and accelerate Ethiopia's prosperity, the Diaspora communities have also been active in engaging in the investment sector, send remittance to family members, skill transfer, social development and community welfare programs, cultural preservation and promotion; and in tourism activities as well.

Seeing the multipurpose role of the Diaspora community, the government has invited the second-generation Diaspora to come to their root, visit their forefathers' homeland and to know their culture, reconnect to their history and leave their legacy in country's overall activities.

Taking into account the call, several family members of the second generation are flocking to Ethiopia. Using this as a ground, this journalist had approached individuals to know more about the second generations home coming initiative, the benefits it brings about for the second-generation Diaspora community, and the country.

Ethiopian Diaspora Association, Executive Officer and Public Relations Officer, Abraham Tilahun, told *The Ethiopian Herald* that the second-generation Diaspora community is different from that



***By promoting collaboration and partnership between the Diaspora and local communities in Ethiopia, the government seeks to harness the collective efforts and diverse perspectives of all Ethiopians towards the realization of the country's development aspirations***

of the first-generation in various ways. Unlike the first ones, the new generation was born and grew in foreign land. For that reason, they have no personal experience about Ethiopia, its culture and history. They were raised by experiencing the culture, history and lifestyle of the foreign land where they were born in. They only get information about Ethiopia and its culture either from families, mainstream Media or social media. In this respect, the invitation extended to the second-generation Ethiopian community has multiple advantages to them to know more about their country, its culture, and history and leave their legacy. What is more, it will also give them the chance to see investment opportunities in Ethiopia.

He also said that the country will benefit from the second-generation Diaspora community in the form of tapping their knowledge or experiences. Unlike the first generation that have spent most of their time laboring to support family members and its country, the second-generation Diaspora communities have an opportunity to focus on their education. This has given them the chance to compete in the business world and excel in other areas as well. Therefore, Ethiopia can tap this potential or the remittance they send for its development.

When asked to what extent the Association is prepared to host the second generation Diaspora communities, Abraham said that Ethiopian Diaspora Association is well prepared to win the satisfaction of its guests. "The Association together with the Ministry of Culture and Tourism is facilitating the ground to promote Ethiopia while keeping the taste of its guests. This includes receiving them at the airport; guiding them to tourist destinations and ensuring their security."

He said, several parks, lodges and tourist destinations are being inaugurated all over the country. These places are a living witness that Ethiopia is a land of diversity with unity and a place full of fauna and floras. Facilitating the ground for the second Diaspora generation will give them the opportunity to see the economic growth of the country and ample tourism opportunities. What is more, it will give

them first-hand information to tell the world about Ethiopian tourism potential.

They can serve as ambassadors to Ethiopia to promote tourism potential and investment opportunities in the country. "If the second Diaspora generation has tangible information about Ethiopia, they will be the one who will promote their country to the outside world. Providing them the true image of Ethiopia is the first step towards achieving other goals. In this regard, the Association is well prepared to meet the interest of its guests."

Board Member of the Ethiopian Diaspora Association Ermias Woldehana also said that as part of its goals to ensure economic progress, the government is doing its level best and working aggressively with local and foreign investors. The Diaspora community is one of its focusing areas to tap the economic opportunity of the nation and its tourism sector.

As part of its vision, the government has recently invited the second Diaspora generation to visit their motherland and several of them are coming home. In this respect, the Association has mobilized its resources to meet the interest of the Diaspora community and build the image of the country.

By promoting collaboration and partnership between the Diaspora and local communities in Ethiopia, the government seeks to harness the collective efforts and diverse perspectives of all Ethiopians towards the realization of the country's development aspirations.

It is learnt that during their homecoming, the second-generation Diaspora members are encouraged to fully immerse themselves in Ethiopian culture, history, and traditions. This includes visiting historical and cultural sites, engaging with local communities, and fostering a stronger connection to their Ethiopian roots.

What is more, during their stay in Ethiopia, the second-generation Diaspora members are expected to make a positive and sustainable impact on the country's development across areas such as education, healthcare, infrastructure, and entrepreneurship.

# Law & Politics

## Celebrating Ethiopia's glittering diplomatic journey

BY STAFF REPORTER

As a prominent figure in international relations and diplomacy, Ethiopia organized the first-ever diplomacy week. The country's distinguishing feature and unique charm in its diplomatic ties with the world will be showcased on the occasion. The event is organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs together with The Ethiopian Press Agency includes a photo exhibition and panel discussion and other programs.

Ethiopia being the hub of Africa takes pride in being one of the world's major diplomatic hotspots. Ethiopia has a strong diplomatic standing because it was a founding member of both the African Union and the United Nations. The nation is still regarded as one of the most trustworthy and dependable partners. The nation's history demonstrates how resilient and persistent it has been over the years in maintaining diplomatic ties with other countries.

The nation celebrates and gives a sneak peek at its 116 years of diplomatic success. Setting a good example, the nation is outspoken in its criticism of inaccurate portrayals of Africa and a devout supporter of Pan-Africanism. The nation leads the way in addressing global issues as well as advocating for global causes. In addition to fostering peace in the Horn of Africa, the nation is the greatest host of refugees and a major contributor to peacekeeping operations. The nation has maintained its allure as a diplomatic destination for more than a century.

Its years of unrelenting commitment to global problems are backed by tangible deeds. Due to this, the country has gained notoriety throughout the world and an enduring reputation. In this sense, diplomacy week will contribute to showcasing the nation's long history of sparkling diplomatic success. Seeing the route ahead will enable the countries to take advantage of their strengths and get past their obstacles.

Ethiopia is still the leader and anchor state in preserving regional peace and stability, despite being seen as a neutral actor and friend in need. Despite all the challenges, the nation's diplomatic journey is one to be proud of. By creating multinational blocs and supporting global causes, the nation leaves an enduring impression on the international scene. Also being the headquarters of dozens of regional, continental, and international organizations, Ethiopia still exerts tremendous diplomatic leverage on the world stage playing a part in redefining international principles and striving towards a more inclusive and fair world.

Leading by example, the country is a staunch Pan-Africanist and vocal critic of unfair representations of Africa. In terms of working for global causes, the country

**E**thiopia being the hub of Africa takes pride in being one of the world's major diplomatic hotspots. Ethiopia has a strong diplomatic standing because it was a founding member of both the African Union and the United Nations

also is a frontrunner in redressing global challenges. Besides being a peacemaker in the Horn region, the country is the largest refugee-hosting, major peacekeeping force contributor nation.

For 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 an enduring reputation and international recognition. Diplomacy week in this regard helps showcase the age-old and glittering success of the country's diplomacy. Previewing the path will help the nations to capitalize on the good things and overcome the challenges faced.

Warm diplomatic relations have its sovereignty and national interests respected and give 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 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 strong ties with Ethiopia.

In connection to diplomacy week, The Ethiopian Herald had a stay with Foreign Affairs State Minister Ambassador Birtukan Ayano who stressed the event's significance to learn from the past and current endeavors and draw the lessons emulated as a springboard for future diplomatic courses. "To be honest, the last one, future diplomacy, is not that predictable given the ever-evolving technology and diplomatic landscape. Otherwise, we have laid the foundation to embrace the next generation of diplomacy."

As part of the future diplomacy, Ethiopia is also working diligently to safeguard its national interest and the center of its diplomatic undertaking is ensuring the provision of citizen-centered diplomatic services at its missions abroad.

Ambassador Birtukan further highlighted that the theme, *From an African Hub to the World*, demonstrates the diplomatic stature of Ethiopia then and now. Ethiopia, as an ancient state that safeguarded its sovereignty and territorial integrity, has served as a beacon of freedom for Africans and it was also the only independent African country that was represented in the League of Nations and a founding member of the UN.

"Also, the unity of Africa could have been farfetched had it not been for the role Ethiopia played in bridging the gulf between

the Casablanca and Monrovia grouping... Ethiopia's profound role in establishing and leading the IGAD is quite notable... These and other salient issues position the country to be the hub of Africa and hosts a large number of foreign missions and international organizations."

Noting the event's unique opportunity for the members of the diplomatic and international community-based in Addis Ababa, she invited members of the community to come to the Ethiopia Science Museum and learn about the country's diplomatic history. "Indeed, we are also calling the second-generation Diaspora community to get connected to their origins. It is an important opportunity for them to learn about their country."

The new generation of the diaspora community would walk through the Ethiopian diplomatic path, which would seal a lasting memory in their minds, the state minister remarked.

On Friday, a panel discussion was held regarding the country's diplomatic journey. Speaking at the event Ministry of Foreign Affairs Public Diplomacy Director General Ambassador Dina Mufti said that the country has been struggling to make international diplomacy fair and equitable. "In peacekeeping, Ethiopians are respected in all mission zones and pressures from outsiders cannot be ignored in Ethiopian history."

Whatever happened in the modern history of diplomacy, Ethiopia has been struggling to mobilize Africans and its citizens to fight injustice, poverty, and climate change. And, continues to struggle to preserve the national interest.

The noted historian Prof. BahiruZewude for his part said that trade had been the major cause of ancient Ethiopian diplomatic history during the Aksumite Empire and Adulis was one of the biggest world ports during that time. Europeans were using trade as a tool to enter Africa.

To sum up, Ethiopia's diplomatic path was not without difficulties, though; during the strife in the country's north, for example, the nation occasionally faced a diplomatic standoff with foreign countries. However, its tenacity has enabled her to start the process of normalization and re-engagement. The administration of Ethiopia intends to uphold the inclusive diplomacy agenda in order to improve ties with partners on the diplomatic front. Additionally, the Ethiopian government is aggressively pursuing significant scientific and technological projects. 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 recipe in pursuing another year of successful diplomacy at bilateral and multilateral levels.



Ephrem Endale  
Contributor

# Between you & me

## “Public Opinion Polls! No, Thank You.”

You hear a lot of stories about this public opinion polls thing. Much of them seem to be about politics and issues closely connected to politics. (There was this friend of mine who, when people say to him they don't want to talk about politics he tells them; “But everything is about politics. The fact that you say you don't want to talk about politics is about politics too!” Of course, he seldom convinces others with such statements. On the lighter part I recently heard someone joking that all Liverpool fans are oldies still clinging to old and worn-out political and social beliefs. In less confusing times one might have wondered at hearing such a statement, “What is wrong with this guy? Why should supporting Liverpool be a so old politics affair!

Just to fill in the gaps, this writer has always been a Red's fan and it doesn't seem he'll have a change of heart any time soon when it comes to ‘minding other people's business,’ like haggling over league matches being held oceans and seas away! What's wrong with that? These days almost everybody everywhere on this planet of total chaos seem to be poking their noses in the wrong places. “All noses are created equal!” Aren't they? Ha!

So when you scan the net you don't fail to notice in some places there seem to be some sort of public opinion poll almost every other day. Yes, it's a lucrative business and also, people have to eat! That must be why there seem to be so many bodies collecting public opinion polls. But then are public opinion polls really that dependable? Recently I read an article someone wrote showering hell on the so-called public opinion poll gathers.

According to him the results are usually doctored to favor one side or the other. He says these days public opinion polls aren't about public opinions but political blueprints. Well as tough talk as it is that makes sense. Otherwise how can you see two completely different results about public opinion gathering conducted in the same place and the same time too by multiple public opinion gatherers? Say a couple of them would say, “About 60% of the respondents say so-and-so party would carry the election in landslide.” Well, that's good information.

But then wait a minute. What do the other results show? “More than 70% of the respondents say so-and-so party would lose heavily.” The margins are so wide you begin smelling fish without you being within a thousand kilometers of the nearest sea or river.

I don't know much about how they do these things. There is one aspect that always bugs me. How is that claims are made of millions embracing some thought while only a couple of thousands took part in the survey? You might wonder, “How could any body be so stupid to ask such a stupid question which could come only from the most mangled up minds?” Well looking at what's happening and what's not happening in these world; being aware of the fact that pole everywhere flip 1800 and that rational thinking is becoming a thing of the past that is the kind of question we could ask. The middle ground has slipped away so much that the ‘extremes’ have become the realities of the day. In the old days maybe, just maybe, a few thousand carefully selected people could more or less represent the

opinions of millions. It wouldn't be jumping to conclusions soon to say “That doesn't seem to work anymore!”

Here is a joke about a certain country somewhere in the world. “The election system in (country's name) used to be that people would vote “Yes” or “No” to the current president to determine whether election were going to happen or not. The day before the polls everyone would hang signs saying “Yes” to the president. But one man decides to vote “No.”

Later that night the man cannot sleep and fears he might have made the wrong decision. The next day he goes to the poll workers. “I believe I voted for the wrong options yesterday,” he says. “I want to change my vote to a “Yes.”

The poll worker smiles at him and says:

“No problem; we corrected it for you. But don't do it again.” Hmm....

Look, public opinion polls are about numbers aren't they? It's about how many people or what percentage of the population ascribes to your thoughts and beliefs on political, social or other topics throw numbers to any height without any second thoughts. Numbers and these phrases of “Everybody thinks so.” “Everybody does it.” “It's the opinion of everybody.”

“You know they say that a new law is about to be issued.”

“About what?”

“About repaying your loan; they say for every month you fail to pay you'd be fined 50% of the

total loan.”

“What! Where did you hear such and outrageous story?”

“Everyone is talking about it.”

That seems to be the magic word for many of us, “Everybody.” You don't mess with ‘everybody’ do you? If everybody is for it you should be too. It is the same with numbers. If five million are for some idea and only half a million oppose it you should fall in line with the five million!

“Who do you think you are something supported by five million people!”

Say a really frustrated wife whose husband seems to give her every ache in the medical books tells him. “I married you while there were hundreds of people begging for my hand. Our house was always people who came to ask for my hand in marriage. Do you hear me? I'm saying I have to dump hundreds to marry you!”

Hundreds! Really? I meant, the husband might be the wrong guy to any seeking to build a good family. But hundreds of prospective hubbies turned down is a little too much to digest.

Any ways talking about public opinion polls, these days it is hard to separate the grain from the chaff and you can't believe any of them. It's that bad. Look at polls about forthcoming elections in some western nations. The disparity in the actual results and the numbers that go with them are so much so you'd think, “I never thought mankind's brains have been mangled up so terribly!” Maybe the AI thing would sort out things. We've too many ‘maybe's’ these days, haven't we?

## ‘Nice’ or an “Outcast!”

Everyone wants to be nice. I mean it is much better to be referred to as a ‘nice guy.’ “He looks like he is a very nice guy;” rather than being cut to pieces with, “I don't like the look of him. He seems to be someone hiding all the demons inside him.” And all these before they even know your name. Don't be surprised to find out your reputation has been written in big fonts among the community even before you've even uttered a single word, and even before people have any idea of your ‘what,’ ‘who,’ ‘where,’ and the like.

A friend of mine a couple of years back relocates to a third floor two bedroom condo seeking to lead the quite life where you always lock your door and no one would bother you like it seems to be the case in those traditional villages. While we're at it living in traditional villages has all those wonderful experiences where you can see people's behaviors being played out in real time in front of your very eyes. The knock on the door could come at all the hours of the days and early evening even by villagers you never said “Hello!” to.

“Sorry, did I create any problem?”

“No! You didn't create any problem.” And the unwritten rule of the game seems to be you don't ask “What can I do for you?” You have to wait for the ‘guest’ (synonyms with ‘intruder!’) speaks.

“I came to you because I've got a little problem. Neighbors told me to ask you.” “Ask me what you #%^ intruder! Don't you know by coming to my door and knocking on it at this hour is trespassing!” No you can't be that rude.

“My wife has this health problem...” No

not again. Not again loans for medical bills of some family member. ‘This couldn't be happening to me!’ How you would have liked if you could say that! He goes on to narrate to his wife's medical history and draws nearer to the question of the day. The interesting part here is that of all the medical problems he claimed his wife suffers from are true she should be awarded some prize for making it through this far! And all the time under the care of a hubby who doesn't generate any sense of confidence in others. He seems to be in a hurry not to return to his home but to go somewhere. Then he swings the sledgehammer and when it lands it hurts really bad;

“Can you lend me thirty thousand birr which I'll return in a month?” All of a sudden every glimmer of being a nice guy just goes off and you don't have to think twice to answer. “I'm sorry. I couldn't give you the money.” Then the fellow who came in emergency mode to seek a loan of thirty thousand birr goes into a sort of bargaining game siding as low as two thousand birr! “Ok can you lend me two thousand birr?”

“Sorry, I don't have any money to lend.”

If curses from earthly mortals sent one to purgatory his unsaid curses could throw you all the way to the farthest corner of the place. Living in a village has all the experiences which could be studies in human interactions and also frustrations which could force you to conclude some wrong species of mankind which should have landed in another planet is amongst us. Yes, frustrations could lead you to all kind of conclusions from the trivial to the bizarre.

So this friend of mine finds himself in this condo. He does some facelift on it trying to give it the look of a modern apartment of the well-heeled. He indeed did a good work and once you are in the living room you'd feel you're in some moderate apartment. He was all set to lead the quite life with a fifty inch flat screen facing him, a good book in his hands and the bottle by his side. “Live and let live!” Hooray!

A couple of weeks later the rumors start seeping in. People were already talking about him. The stories kept on coming in all shades. The funny part is as he knew no one in the community, not even a single person the rumors reached him from friends who live in other areas. One of his closest friends tried to solve the riddle for him.

“You have to conform with the ways of the people living there.”

Now that coming from a very close friend got his attention. It might sound harsh on the surface. You have your life and they have theirs. But without going into details and without opening up one's privacy backroom simple greeting go a long way in making people change their attitudes towards him. He did that; and at present he's one of the nicer guys in the area and the only thing he does was greet almost everybody even when he doesn't get proper responses from some. It is odd that when people see you're not paying their game they seldom say, “Well that's his choice.” No. By not conforming he has committed some sin that could come very close to cardinal sin.

Aren't you fed up of people who try to put you on their side of things and when you

refuse treat you like you were some kind of an outcast?

Some guy comes and tries to fill you up with what he thinks is politics but actually is absurdity of the lowest kind. You're supposed to give a one-man standing ovation even when you have no idea what the hell he was talking about. Sometimes you feel such guys are trying to recruit you for some kind of yet to be announced ‘new’ religion. (So many of them seem to be around these days!)

At other times you think the guy is a very late rising Lenin fan who thinks Lenin still leads a quite life in some Siberia or wherever. After all, avid Elvis fans say he is breathing and doing well somewhere else, aren't they? You think he is telling you if the world just listened to Lenin all what's happening in our world wouldn't have happened. Sometimes you think that he is talking about business and he wants you to be part of it; You know, like buying shares and becoming a shareholder. Shareholder! Now, isn't that one hell of a wonderful music! I mean the very act thinking yourself as a shareholder must have some magic showing you all kinds of things despite all of them being hallucinations or daydreams.)

By the way that Lenin guy was smartly dressed wasn't he? So one day, so it's written somewhere else, one of those dreaming ‘to break the chains’ asks, “You're very well dressed. Why don't you dress like us?” And good old Lenin says, “I'm trying to raise you up to my level not to go down to your level.

So, being nice or an outcast, the choice is yours!

In Pictures

# Ethiopia Diplomatic Week opens in Addis Ababa

BY DARGIE KAHSAY

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia (MoFA) has organized a Diplomatic Week and Expo that showcases the 116 years journey of Ethiopia's Diplomatic history. The Diplomatic Expo touches the major events and developments in the history of the diplomacy of Ethiopia.

## President Sahle-Work opens Diplomatic week, expo

President Sahle-Work Zewde officially opened the Diplomatic Week and Expo of Ethiopia on Thursday afternoon. The expo organized at the Science Museum here in Addis Ababa is open for the public and will stay for the next 20 days.

During the event, President Sahle-Work stated that Ethiopia has a rich diplomatic history with historical achievements.



## PM Abiy welcomed heads of AUC, IGAD at Wenchi Ecotourism

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) welcomed the African Union Commission (AUC) Chairperson, Moussa Faki Mahamat and Inter Governmental Authority for Development (IGAD) Executive Secretary, Workneh Gebeyehu (PhD) at Wenchi Ecotourism Center.

Wenchi is one of the three 'Dine for Nation' projects of the initiative launched by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed. On Friday afternoon, heads of AUC, IGAD and other members of the diplomatic community arrived at Wenchi and upon their arrival there, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed welcomed the guests.

Wenchi Ecotourism site was inaugurated yesterday and opened for visitors.



## Welcoming guests of honor at the Diplomatic Expo

During the opening ceremony of the Diplomatic Week and Expo Guests of honor was warmly welcomed by the event organizer. The above picture shows DPM and FM Demeke Mekonnen and State Minister of Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Misganu Arega arriving at the Expo center on Thursday.



## Senior government officials visiting Diplomatic Expo

Following the official opening of the Diplomatic Week and Expo by President Sahle-Work Zewde on Thursday afternoon, President Sahle-Work, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Demeke Mekonnen, Ministers, State Ministers and other senior government officials and diplomats visited the expo.

## Panel discussion at the Diplomatic Expo

Panel discussion was part of the Diplomatic Week and Expo. The picture shows Senior Federal and State Government officials, diplomats and other participants attending the panel focusing on the history of Ethiopia's Diplomacy.

