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Miraculous return of Lake Haramaya: An account of hope

BY HIZKEL HAILU

Romedan Ali, a lifelong resident of Haromaya city which located in eastern Hararghe Zone of Oromia State, experienced a rollercoaster of emotions as he witnessed the remarkable revival of Lake Haramaya, which had been dried for 17 years.

For him, the lake's reappearance was akin to the arrival of a new family member, filling his heart with unparalleled joy and gratitude. His connection to the lake runs deep, as he grew up witnessing the previous flourishing state. The lake's sudden disappearance in 2005 had left him devastated, as if he had lost a close relative.

However, the tides turned, and the arid lakebed gradually transformed into a shimmering expanse of water once again. Romedan recalls shedding tears of happiness day and night, unable to contain his overwhelming emotions. Today, he stands as a beacon of hope and resilience, leading a team of 350 enthusiastic youths in

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New AU chairperson calls for collaborative effort in Education

BY FIKADU BELAY & EYUEL KIFLU

ADDIS ABABA- African countries should work together in the field of education in order to realize a prosperous Africa, new African Union (AU) chairperson said.

President Mohamed Ould Ghazouani of Mauritania assumed yesterday the role of Chairperson of the African Union (AU), succeeding Comorian President Azali Assoumani.

Speaking at the opening of the 37th African

Union Summit, the new chairperson indicated that 62 percent of the continent's population is young.

He further stated that it is the responsibility of

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Fulfill AU's commitment adopting Amharic as official language

News Analysis

BY TSEGAYE TILAHUN

The African Union (AU) would accomplish one of its ambitions stipulated under agenda 2063, if it adopts Amharic as official language, said Linguistics Expert.

Since the AU strives to foster unity, collaboration, and development

across the continent in under its Agenda 2063, the inclusion of additional official languages plays a crucial role, Bahir Dar University Linguistics Assistant Professor Gashaw Arutie said.

Among the seven aspirations stated under the Agenda 2063 in which the AU strives to achieve is found the 5th aspiration which promotes utilizing African languages to cooperation and the development of the continent.

The excerpt read as "Our diversity in culture, heritage, languages and religion shall be a cause of strength."

During the opening ceremony of the 44th Ordinary Session of the Executive Council of the AU, Foreign Minister Taye Atske Selassie has requested the participants to show support to make Amharic one of the official languages of the AU.

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Driving economic growth through enhancing investors' confidence

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Authority taking actions to mitigate sound pollution in urban areas

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Law of attraction or law of life?

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Cities forum kicks off in Wolaita Sodo, South Ethiopia

BY BETELHEM BEDLU

ADDIS ABABA- The 9th cities forum was held in Wolaita Sodo, South Ethiopia under the theme: 'Modern cities for Prosperous Ethiopia' yesterday.

Speaking to the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA), Wolaita Sodo City Communication Office Head Bilatena Birhanu, stated that the forum would allow cities to exchange experiences and build stronger ties for mutual growth.

She indicated that Wolaita Sodo has taken intensive preparation to host over 20,000 participants drawn from 200 cities across the nation.

And, the people has been also readying to welcome participants by showcasing the culture as well as cuisine of the state.

'Wolaita Sodo has seven gates which makes it convenient environment for investment on various areas,' she underscored.

Moreover, the mount Damota, Ajora twin waterfall, Mocheba Boraga rock shelter, among others have made the City best tourist destination, she added.

Exhibition, panel discussion, innovative competition and other recreational events are said to be part of the program.

Deputy Prime Minister Temesgen Tiruneh, South Ethiopia State Administration and other high level government officials took part at the forum.

It was learned that the forum will be held for seven consecutive days.

AU expresses green climate fund sluggish pace

• Pleas for climate fund promises' operation

BY YESUF ENDRIS

ADDIS ABABA— AU Executive Council African Risk Capacity Group stated that a fund to compensate the climate crisis happening due to global causes should be operationalized within the shortest time period.

In a side event accompanying the 44th ordinary Session of the AU Executive Council, Director General for African Risk Capacity Group Ibrahima Cheikh said that Africa's proposal in the COP-27 was so clear; hence a fund to compensate the climate crisis happening due to global causes should get operational within the shortest time.

Africa is releasing not more than four percent emission but facing the devastating climate change impact. Climate-fund promised by huge gas emitters is still in doubt, African Risk Capacity Group

announced.

"Many countries are still doubtful, trying to push the type of incentive because it shows possible sense of guilt in some of countries and they are pushing it back."

"The good news is in the COP- 28, for the first time, we got not only commitment, but also the international community took responsibility to operationalize funds promised earlier. We could build resilient Africa and will also help all developing countries across the globe," he stated.

He said, "There was a commitment of 600 million USD at the COP-28. I hope that additional billions of USD will be in the way to be released in couple of months. Then, we can provide sufficient funding obviously the loss and damage," he noted.

The amount of the loss and damage is being set up and by June they will have fully operational fund by organizations



like the AU itself, according to the General Director.

He further explained that providing resources to all particularly to most vulnerable communities is quite important. "Furthermore, we need to make sure that the private sector deserves incentive to get into green economy and investment," he added.



Halaba to produce 107,000 quintals in summer irrigation

BY ESSEYE MENGISTE

ADDIS ABABA- Halaba Zone Agricultural Department revealed a plan to produce over 107,000 quintals of different crops in the summer irrigation scheme in the current fiscal year.

Department Head Haji Nurye told the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) that the zone planned to obtain the stated output covering 671 hectares of land in wheat, avocado, papaya, various fruits and garden vegetables in the summer irrigation scheme. "The summer irrigation activities will be carried out in two rounds and we plan to cultivate 571 hectares in the first round and the remaining 100 hectares in the second phase."

The head further highlighted that the zone has managed to cover 30 hectares of land with the summer wheat irrigation and it is expected to obtain 1,000 quintals of wheat. In the last three years, 105 irrigation pumps have been distributed to farmers.

According to him, summer irrigation development is being carried out to enhance production and productivity by using mechanized farming tools and technologies.

In addition, the zone has done commendable jobs to put the lands that were not used for summer irrigation and witnessed promising results in this regard.

The summer irrigation also aims to increase production and productivity by using mechanized farming tools and technologies.

As Halaba is among the areas with limited water access, water from different basins is being stored and used for summer irrigation development. With this, farmers have shifted from producing once to three times a year and the activity has generated a sizable number of jobs for the youth, Haji emphasized.

"Taking into account the summer irrigation development's outcome in improving the livelihoods of farming communities and increasing their income level, we have attached special attention to the activity and partnered with relevant institutions and stakeholders to keep its effectiveness."

He also said that efforts are being made in cooperation with the farmers to prevent damage to the wheat crop.

Editorial

A timely, decisive agenda for the continent

As Nelson Mandela capitalized on one of his utterances the best way to break away from debilitating poverty is zeroing in on education whose benefits are multifaceted.

The perks to be derived from education could be broadly categorized as societal and personal.

Societies boasting a higher rate of degree levels of education tend to be healthier, have higher rates of economic stability, lower crime, and greater equality.

Personally people benefit from receiving education when it comes to income, career advancement, skill development and employment opportunities.

The African Union's Heads of State Summit kicked off yesterday in its headquarters in Ethiopia. Appreciably and timely education tops the agenda for this year's mammoth gathering. There is no gainsaying; achievement in the education sector will be instrumental in realizing the continent's lofty vision.

It is to be recalled that prior to the summit, the Forty-Seventh (47th) Ordinary Session of the African Union's Permanent Representatives Committee (PRC) adopted the theme: "Educate an African Fit for the 21st Century: Building resilient education systems for increased access to inclusive, lifelong, quality, and relevant learning in Africa."

The meeting has brought together ambassadors from African Union Member States and AU officials are expected to come up with various draft reports and prepare the agenda for the Forty-Fourth (44th) Ordinary Session of the Executive Council, scheduled for 14th to 15th February 2024, in Addis Ababa.

The theme for the Year 2024 is extensively deliberating on reforming Education in Africa, with the prospect of training young people endowed with intellectual, scientific, and ethical capacities to serve the transformation of our continent in a bid to create a comfortable and productive living space.

"Success in this area will have significant knock-on effects on sectors such as security, control of population growth, the empowerment of women and girls, agriculture, digitalization, migration, etc. Properly conducted and implemented in an orderly manner, educational reform will reverse the trend towards poverty and enhance the attractiveness of Africa, in terms of investment and therefore, the creation of prosperity."

Obviously, transforming Africa's education with modern systems and technologies, among others, will positively impact the actualization of the continent's aspirations. Africa's youth must be armed with the obligatory knowledge and skills to troubleshoot the major socioeconomic and political hurdles of the continent that is getting off the ground. As it is true in other spheres, post-colonial Africa is faced with ever-growing demand for improving access to education and scaling up quality. Education still remains at its embryonic state and it is marred by quality problems. It is subject to dependency on external finance and technological and material constraints.

Africa, a continent subjugated to slavery and colonization, has missed lots of amenities that it should enjoy from education. This is because of the reason that most of the educational curricula African countries use has been designed by colonizers or copied and pasted from the educational strategies of former colonial masters. This has directly or indirectly emasculated home-grown knowledge and eroded the cultural norms of most African countries.

A well-embracing and state-of-the-art education arms people with the essential knowledge, skills, and attitudes be it for personal development or societal progress; it also plays a key role in shaping the workforce, fostering innovation, and promoting social mobility. In this regard, a nation's curriculum eminence plays an immense role in taking the lion's share in shaping the future of the society.

Investing on technological advancement is also vital for giving a green light to universal access, buttressing the quality of education, and intensifying innovation, entrepreneurship, and employability. And, for Africa to circumvent its hurdles, the education sector begs to be decolonized and the curriculum calls for indigenization. Political determination and technical leadership are mandatory to upturn trends in the sector. In this regard, the directions at the highest level including the AU Summit have a fate-shaping impact in implementing goals and formulating sound policies. The bottom-line is success in the education sector will have a contagious effect on other areas as well.

According to the State Minister of Government Communication Service, Ethiopia has demonstrated a palpable turnaround in ensuring outreach with educational services placing focus on quality. This commendable task is worthy of emulation by others in a bid to beat poverty, transform Africa and ensure its growth, for Europeans assured growth through their renaissance program. Africa has to tap in to its potential specially its indigenous knowledge and own languages.



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Opinion

Tangible boulevard for transforming the African continent

BY MENGESHA AMARE

Since agenda 2063 serves as a fifty-year blueprint for Africa's socio-economic development and regional integration, all nations of the African continent are duty bound to translate promises, slogans like 'African solutions to African problems' and other related pledge into practical actions to help Africa come up with genuine transformation.

African leaders are definitely shouldered towards shaping the future of the continent. Yes, leaders have been discussing a number of issues revolving around all rounded aspects of the continent and viable ways to liberate the continent from external financial dependency by tapping their own untapped resources and potential to accelerate development with a view to averting economic and social challenges in the region thereby definitely transforming itself.

It is well recognized that the 37th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Heads of State and Government of the African Union has begun in Addis Ababa, the capital of this ancient and great nation—Ethiopia.

True, leaders are highly expected to discuss ways to break the continent's financial dependence on outside sources by using their own capacity to speed growth in order to prevent social and economic problems as well as to get all sources of the political and security upheavals dried well.

All member states have to develop courage and diligence to facilitate conducive trade environment in their respective nations to expedite the implementation of the myriads of projects which are believed to lift millions Africans from poverty and increase continent's revenue.

Principally, as climate change, food insecurity and other related factors are attributable to the cardinal problems in the continent, Africa should well focus on education, economic growth and science technology to get the continent prettily transformed.

Cognizant of the fact that Africa has to be represented by its own sons and daughters in the world arena, the leaders are also anticipated to exchange views on ways to enable the African continent acquire its proper representation at the global stages particularly in the United Nations Security Council.

Peace and security is also on the top of African Union Summit as it has been one of the challenges affecting the continent's development.

Africa has to be shaped and reformed by its own leaders taking the current situation into account. Such a bold move has to be consolidated and come to the forefront for the sake of the comprehensive wellbeing of the African people. No doubt, Africa is a key geopolitical player in the world and its

collaboration with neighbors and the rest of the world is quite decisive.

Following the systematic and visionary leadership of the African forerunners, the general community, civil society organizations, the Diaspora, women, and the youth, a range of associations, among others are expected to move in unison to work together as this is the right and convenient time for Africa to bring about real change and transformation in all trajectories.

Frankly speaking, the African population, which has accounted for almost one-third of the population of the world, needs to be better served by a deeper and meaningful commitment, dedication and real patriotic gesture to the protection of human rights, promotion of democratic governance, corruption Free State of mind and determination for growth and development across the region.

As insecurity, political instability and rivalry are hindering the continental development and real transformation, the issue of peace and serenity has to be one of the major and burning concerns that need to be well focused on. Besides, most African countries have been suffering from conflict, turmoil, bad governance, fragile leadership and bad governance overwhelm in Africa. Hence, post conflict management, peace building, collaboration and regional integration have to be adopted centering good governance and firm collaboration across the continent.

Since economic growth and development is deemed very slow in many African countries due to the inappropriate economic transformation, the lack of adopting state of development, a lot is expected of the African leaders, during their 37th Summit of course, to help Africa succeed what it has been long aspiring and emancipate itself from all impediments by which it has been soundly challenged.

No doubt, the continent is confronting climate change impacts like environment degradation, food insecurity, pandemic and epidemics, regional integration effects and others futures of competitiveness of market place with middle, developed and advanced countries of the world.

In sum, all African leaders should join forces, thoroughly single out the weaknesses and strengths; identify problems thereby making the assignment of transforming Africa easy.

Yes, it is this time the continent defeat all sorts of problems and obstacles to make a difference in all aspects. Interestingly, the Summit has underscored the issue of peace as it would lead to economic transformation—the core incentive of economic augmentation and real development. To this effect, the continent should exploit the maximum benefit out of globalization in terms of positive interdependence.

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

Fulfill AU's...

"In alignment with AU Agenda 2063 and the goal for empowering indigenous African languages to contribute to our continent's progress, I wish to propose the inclusion of Amharic as the official language of the African Union," he said.

Approached by the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA), Professor Gashaw noted that most of the AU's official languages are not indigenous to Africa. If the AU makes Amharic official language, it would promote indigenous African languages and improve their role for continental development, he added.

Applying Amharic as AU's official language would help to promote the notion of African solutions for African problems, he mentioned.

For him, making Amharic among the official languages of the AU promotes Ethiopia's diplomatic contribution and increases its influence in continental and international arenas.

The Amharic language is widely spoken in Ethiopia and other African countries

including Eritrea, Djibouti, and Northern Kenya, he said, adding that the quest to the inclusion of the language amongst AU's official languages is an appropriate proposal.

Amharic was among the first languages that used to sign the establishing charter of the then Organization of African Unity (OAU), the current AU in 1963, so that it should continue serving the Union as an official language, according to the Asst. Professor.

By doing so, he said, the AU could strengthen Ethiopia's contribution to the Union and other continental affairs.

As to the Scholar, the development of a language can be manifested via the expansion of its service as the significance of a Language is mainly to shape culture, identity, and communication.

Asst. Professor Gashaw expressed that Amharic language would get international recognition if the AU accept Ethiopia's quest for the adoption of the language as the union's official languages.

A noted Nigerien Journalist and Film

Director Rahmatou Keita has been appealing for Ethiopians and other Africans to support her quest of making Amharic among the official languages of the AU.

"Now, I need due support from all corners to list Amharic as one of the official languages of the Union. Africans should protect their treasures, among which Amharic is the one."

She indicated that Amharic is Ethiopia's indigenous language and is widely spoken in other African countries including Eritrea, Djibouti, and Northern Kenya. Besides, Ethiopia is the seat of the AU and has a special place in African independence movements.

According to Ambassador Taye, including Amharic among the official languages of the AU would strengthen the common identity of Africans.

Currently, Arabic, English, French, Portuguese, Spanish, Kiswahili and any other African languages are considered to be the AU official languages, the Foreign Minister stated.

New AU chairperson...

all countries to achieve the expected results by educating and training this youth force.

As to him, AU is expected to work with determination to make citizens more competitive and competent than ever before in a bid to achieve the goals of Agenda 2063 and realize a prosperous Africa.

At the event, he also called on member states to speed up the implementation of the African Free Trade Zone .

Talking about peace and security , AU chairperson Mohamed Ould Ghazouani, underlined that the need to permanently resolve the lack of peace and conflicts that are a threat to the continent. "Africans should sit down, talk, and follow a strategy that allows them to solve problems through diplomacy."

The chairman stressed that building the capacity to face the challenge of climate change to ensure food security should be the homework of each country.

President Mohamed Ould Ghazouani will serve the Union for a year. The 37th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Heads of State and Government is under way.

During the course of the summit, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) urged AU to develop indigenous knowledge and to neutralize destructive colonial legacy on the education system.

Taking the opportunity, the Premier stressed paying attention to food security and technological development.

He also noted that Africa, having highest young population should not be remained poor in political-economic global power.

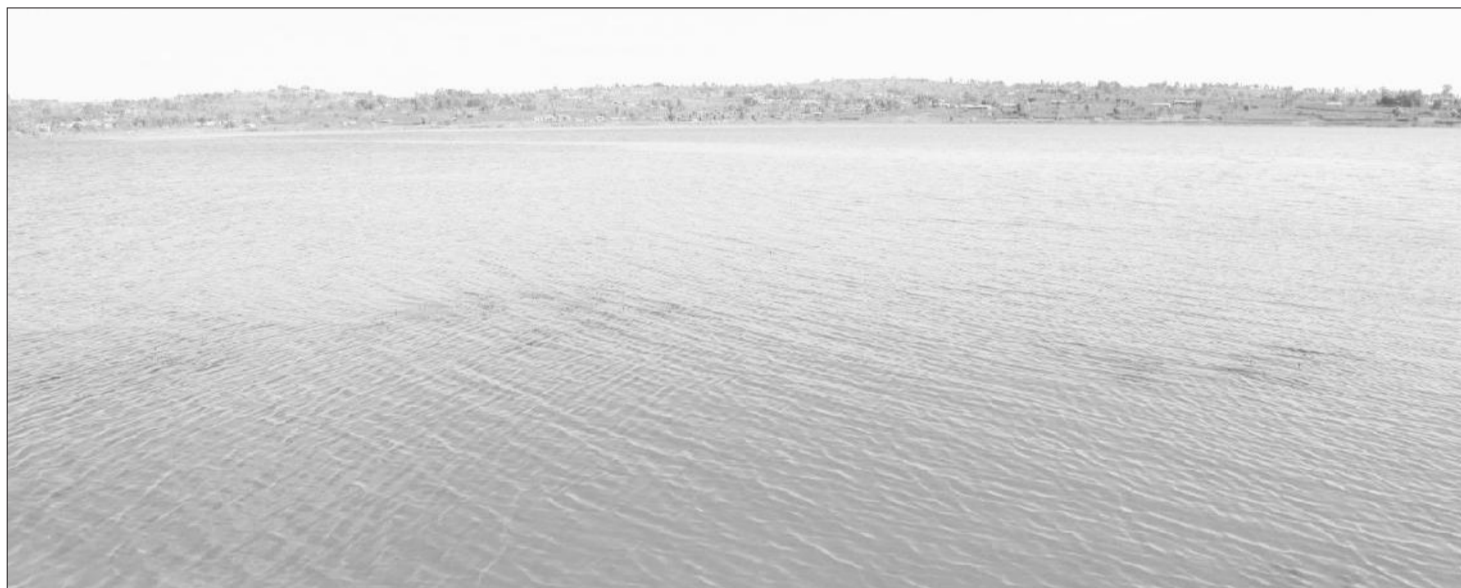
On his part, the African Union Commission (AUC) Chairperson Mousa Faki Mahamat remarked that Africa is experiencing the worst condition including political instability and poverty.

"African nationalism is dangerous unless guided by pan Africanism. Africans should look into their own institutional shortcomings. Institutional reform is the first means to address the challenge in institutional development so the education sector also deserves reform as other sectors deserve."

On the occasion ,Brazilian President Lula Da Silva said that : " Brazilians and Africans need to build our own way to the international system. We need to create new global governance."

"In the world, over 250 million students are out of school. We are willing to develop education programs with Africa to promote intense exchange of professors and researchers between the two."

Africa has a tremendous future and Brazil wants to get together with Africa, he said adding that "To move forward, to advance post of cooperation with the AU in sectors such as agricultural research, health care, education, environment, and science and technology is a must ."



Miraculous return...

coordinating efforts to maintain the lake's cleanliness and ecological balance.

The youth's involvement goes beyond environmental stewardship as it extends to sustainable livelihoods as well. Taking advantage of the thriving fish population in the rejuvenated lake, they have ventured into fishery, selling over 20 kilograms of fresh fish daily. This newfound economic opportunity has not only empowered the youths but also uplifted the entire community. Earning more than 400 birr per day, they are witnessing a positive transformation in their lives and a renewed sense of purpose.

One such transformation story belongs to Romedan's elder brother Yimej Ali, who returned to Ethiopia from Germany upon hearing the joyous news of Lake Haramaya's resurrection. Overwhelmed with happiness, Yimej made a heartfelt decision to celebrate his honeymoon with his wife in this very place. Inspired by the lake's resurgence, he embarked

on an ambitious endeavor to invest in the area through distributing motor boats to facilitate tourism and enhance the overall experience for visitors.

Yimej's also envisages to establish a life-saving motor boat service for emergency situations, ensuring the safety and well-being of Haramaya lake visitors. This initiative reflects his deep commitment to preserving human life and enhancing the lake's potential as a popular tourist destination.

The revival of Lake Haramaya has not only brought economic prosperity and opportunities but has also rekindled a sense of communal pride among its residents. The heartwarming story of Romedan and Yimej Ali, whose lives have been intricately intertwined with the lake, symbolizes the triumph of human resilience and the power of nature's regeneration.

As news of Lake Haramaya's miraculous return spreads, tourists and locals alike are drawn to its serene shores, eager to

witness this awe-inspiring transformation firsthand. The once-dried lake now stands as a testament to the unyielding determination of a community that refused to let nature's challenges dampen their spirits.

The revitalization of Lake Haramaya serves as a powerful reminder that hope can emerge from the depths of despair. It inspires many to cherish and protect natural resources, fostering a renewed sense of environmental responsibility among communities across the globe.

As the sun sets over the glistening waters of Lake Haramaya, casting a magical glow upon its resurgent beauty, it is evident that this remarkable tale of revival will continue to captivate hearts and minds for generations to come. The legacy of Romedan, Yimej, and the entire community of Haramaya city will be forever etched in the history books as a story of unwavering hope, resilience, and the extraordinary power of nature's rebirth.

Opinion

The undercover scramble for Africa must come to an end

BY GETACHEW MINAS

The Congo Conference, also known as the Berlin Conference, had been conducted from November 15, 1884 to February 26, 1885. It was a meeting attended by the European powers to confer, control and regulate the colonization of Africa. It also focused on trade in the continent during the expansion of imperialism. The conference was conducted in Berlin and had been initiated by Otto von Bismarck, the German Chancellor. The major objective of the conference was the “Scramble for Africa.” The European powers looked to establish their dominance over Africa without any contenders or challengers. They sought to be in charge of the different regions and sub-regions of the continent. In earlier times, Africa was mostly undiscovered by Europeans and other powers. The conference, therefore, focused on keeping conflicts at bay. They wanted to avoid skirmishes among the colonial powers as they expanded their empires into the continent of Africa.

The major European powers, including Great Britain, France, Germany, Portugal, and Belgium, had been present at the Berlin Conference. The United States had been assigned to an observer status. It did not have any territorial claims in Africa. The Russian Empire and other Eastern powers had not been invited to attend the conference. The major powers that participated in the conference had negotiated and agreed upon rules for the colonization of Africa. These rules included the acknowledgment of territorial claims and assertions based on real and effective occupation.

The delineation of occupied borders was of the essence. These borders had been delineated without due regard to Africans residing within the delimited areas. Africans had traditional rulers that governed specified areas, mostly occupied by indigenous peoples. These peoples followed and appealed to their rulers and religious leaders in time of social conflicts. These conflicts were related to grazing and farm lands and water resources. The Africans had been engaged in these conflicts for survival motives.

Native Africans in the remotest parts of the continent had rarely seen and contacted foreigners originating from Europe. Even if there were any contacts, it was only for religious purposes. Missionaries had initially come to Africa as individuals or groups who engaged in religious activities. One of the activities was related to spreading religious beliefs and providing humanitarian assistance. It also promoted social and educational development in various African countries.

Missionary activities in the continent had a long history. These activities took place before the colonial era and continued into the present day. Some historians have suggested that the missionaries were precursors and predecessors of colonial forces. In fact, they have been accused of providing basic information to the European powers on the culture, history, and resources of the African countries to which they had been assigned. A

few missionaries have been eloquent in the languages of the native peoples of Africa. This helped them to penetrate into the interior of the African countries without any local confrontation.

The missionaries to Africa had often come from different religious factions and backgrounds. These included Christianity, Islam, Judaism and other faiths. Christian missionaries had played a major role in the pre-colonial history of Africa. They had been involved, engaged and absorbed in evangelical activities. They had also played a major role in establishing schools and hospitals. They had also been engaged in various social services thereby contributing to the development of written languages, except in Ethiopia. They had encouraged Africans to engage in literature and develop their own traditional writing styles and texts. Thus, some historians view such missionary work as a positive force for community development and empowerment. However, others criticize it for being associated with cultural imperialism. They thought that the missionaries had been undermining indigenous cultures and beliefs. In so doing, the missionaries had contributed to the spread of Western values in pre-colonial Africa.

The impact of missionary activities in Africa is diverse and complex, with both positive and negative aspects. It is important to note that the role and impact of missionaries in Africa vary widely depending on the specific region, religious affiliation, and historical context. Additionally, missionary work often involves collaboration with local communities with a focus on sustainable development practices.

Modern agricultural practices have been introduced in the rural areas that were managed by missionaries. These practices focused on animal husbandry, grain production and plantation. With these practices, the missionaries had been able to secure the supply of food and other basic necessities. In the meantime, native Africans could gain modern means of farming in their localities. However, food production had never been new to the natives who used to engage in hunting wild animals for their survival. The local people had been introduced to modern education and health systems that had been managed by the missionaries. The missionaries designed to make Africans amenable to the future colonial adventure by the West.

After the Congo Conference, the major European powers continued with their program of scrambling Africa. Between 1889 and 1900, Great Britain occupied and controlled about a third of the African countries in one period. The British rule is still associated with conflicts, forceful extraction of natural resources and land grabs. France had colonized many countries in Africa, out of which fourteen are still paying a “Colonial Tax” amounting to \$500 billion annually. Some have stopped paying this tax. The German Empire colonized several African countries from 1884 until the end of World War One. After its defeat during the war, it was forced to transfer

some of its colonies to other colonial powers of the day. Portugal and Belgium had also colonized some African countries.

The number of African countries colonized by the European Powers indicates the objective of the colonialism in Africa. The colonizers were looking only for the rich resources of the continent. They have exploited the underground resources, particularly minerals which were used as inputs for industrial production. Of course, they had also exploited the agricultural outputs for food and textile industries.

Ethiopia has been able to remain independent through fighting and defeating alien powers that wanted to colonize it. Ethiopia and Liberia are the only two African countries that had never been colonized and the borders of which have been respected to date. The Africans felt that they had been dehumanized by the Western colonialists that exploited their resources. This caused them to struggle for the decolonization of their respective countries.

Freedom fighters had to be organized and armed for the liberation of their countries. After defeating colonial masters, white minority rule, and post-colonial authoritarian governments, many of African liberation movements seem to have lost ground in the democratic era. They were challenged by the harsh realities of current politics and socio-economic development factors.

Africa’s liberation movements were welcomed after years of colonialism and white rule. These movements included Front for the National Liberation of Algeria (FNL), the African National Congress (ANC) of South Africa, Mozambique’s Front for its Liberation (FRELIMO), Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) and others. These movements had been filled with hope, optimism, and confidence. The leaders of these movements had promised to improve the lives of their people. However, the promises of social justice and prosperity appeared to have vanished in the air. Instead severe social, economic, environmental and political crises have deepened all over Africa.

These crises prompted the emergence of a new generation of young activists and calls for political changes. The political, economic and social situations became catastrophic in all African countries ruled by governments that came out of the liberation Fronts. The leaders of the liberation movements wanted to create their own dynastic rule in which power is transferred to the crown prince or a deputy within the ruling party. Peaceful and democratic transition of power from the loser to the winner party remained only in the constitution. This practice called for coup d’état to overthrow a regime that refused to transfer power to the winning party. This tradition had caused political bloodshed in which leaders have been murdered or tortured. Some leaders have been forced to leave their country of origin and live in exile. This called for the interference of external powers in the internal affairs of Africans.

African leaders desired to keep out the former colonial leaders from interfering in their internal affairs. They also wanted

to create unity to defend their interests. They felt the need for the formation of a continental organization known as the OAU. It was established with the primary objective of promoting unity and solidarity among African nations, as well as addressing common challenges faced by the continent. The OAU was founded on May 25, 1963, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, with the signing of the OAU Charter by 32 African countries. The key goals of the OAU included: Promoting African Unity. The OAU aimed to encourage cooperation and collaboration among African nations to foster unity and solidarity. The organization sought to prevent and resolve conflicts among member states through diplomatic means, with the goal of maintaining peace and stability on the continent.

The OAU supported the decolonization of African territories and strongly condemned apartheid in South Africa, advocating for the end of racial discrimination and oppression. The OAU aimed to coordinate efforts among African nations to promote economic and social development, reduce poverty, and improve living standards. Despite its initial successes, the OAU faced challenges in effectively addressing conflicts and promoting development. As a result, the OAU was later transformed into the African Union (AU) in 2001, with the goal of enhancing its capacity to address the evolving needs and aspirations of the African continent. The AU continues to build on the foundations laid by the OAU, focusing on peace, security, development, and cooperation among African nations.

The AU also looked for a mechanism to settle disputes arising from border clashes and claims between neighboring countries. The AU has carefully and responsibly tried to arrest the deadly influence of the colonial and neocolonial powers on the African continent. In this regard, Ethiopia has played a crucial role in supporting African liberation movements materially and militarily to achieve their national independence thereby terminating the Goal of the Congo Conference. It has also provided space, among others, for building the OAU Head Quarters in Addis Ababa. It is also the seat of other International Organizations working for Africa.

The AU summit underway here in Addis these days is expected to make remarkable decisions that take the continent steps forward in terms of enhancing peace, ensuring universal development and attaining its right place in the global arena. Achieving these goals necessitates strengthening unity among themselves first via taking over internal conflicts and misunderstandings by themselves through applying the principle of “African solutions for African problems”.

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

Business & Economy

Driving economic growth through enhancing investors' confidence

BY LAKACHEW ATINAFU

Ethiopia, a land of rich cultural heritage and abundant resources, has been making significant strides towards economic development in recent years. One of the key drivers of this progress has been the Ethiopian Capital Market Authority (CMA), which plays a vital role in fostering a vibrant and robust capital market. With a focus on enhancing investor confidence and promoting sustainable economic growth, the CMA has become an instrumental institution in Ethiopia's journey towards prosperity.

The Ethiopian Capital Market Authority has been actively engaged in establishing and enforcing a robust regulatory framework for the capital market. It has implemented stringent rules and regulations to ensure transparency, accountability, and fair practices. These measures have not only protected the interests of investors but have also bolstered confidence in the market, attracting both domestic and foreign investments.

In enhancing market infrastructure, recognizing the importance of a sound market infrastructure, the CMA has made significant investments to strengthen the capital market ecosystem. It has worked towards improving trading systems, settlement processes, and information dissemination mechanisms, thus ensuring efficient and seamless operations. These efforts have facilitated increased liquidity and improved accessibility for investors, making the market more attractive and dynamic. According to documents obtained from the authority and investment commission.

Regarding promoting investor education and awareness, the CMA has been proactive in promoting investor education and awareness programs across Ethiopia. It recognizes the importance of equipping investors with the necessary knowledge and skills to make informed investment decisions. By conducting seminars, workshops, and awareness campaigns, the CMA has empowered investors to understand the risks and rewards associated with capital market investments, thereby fostering a culture of responsible investing.

Ethiopia's capital market has witnessed a growing interest from foreign investors, thanks to the CMA's efforts to create an investor-friendly environment. The authority has implemented policies to facilitate foreign direct investment, streamline regulatory procedures, and ensure a level playing field for all market participants. This has resulted in increased foreign capital inflows, contributing to the overall development of the economy.

The Ethiopian Capital Market Authority recognizes the importance of collaboration with international partners to strengthen



As the authority continues to implement innovative measures and adapt to changing market dynamics, the future looks bright for Ethiopia's capital market and its contributions to the nation's overall development

the capital market further. It has established strategic partnerships with regulatory bodies and financial institutions from around the world. Through knowledge sharing, capacity building initiatives, and technical assistance, the CMA has benefited from global best practices, enabling it to enhance its regulatory framework and market infrastructure.

As to documents, recent developments in the Ethiopian capital market showcase the commitment of the CMA to driving economic growth. In 2023, the authority introduced a new electronic trading platform, enabling seamless and efficient trading of securities. Additionally, it launched a bond market to diversify investment options and mobilize capital for infrastructure development projects. These initiatives have garnered positive responses from investors, signaling a promising future for the Ethiopian capital market.

The Ethiopian Capital Market Authority's unwavering commitment to enhancing the economy and promoting investor confidence has yielded encouraging results. By establishing a strong regulatory framework, enhancing market infrastructure, promoting investor education, attracting foreign investments, and collaborating with international partners, the CMA has played a pivotal role in driving economic growth and creating a vibrant capital market in Ethiopia. As the authority continues to

implement innovative measures and adapt to changing market dynamics, the future looks bright for Ethiopia's capital market and its contributions to the nation's overall development.

Based on the implementation of the Capital Market Service Providers Licensing and Supervision Directive (No. 980/2024), the Ethiopian Capital Market Authority is pleased to announce that it will be accepting applications for Capital Market Service Providers in two weeks!

The authority encourages those who are interested to work in the sector to make sure they meet the license requirements set by the directive and make the necessary preparations.

The Ethiopian Press Agency formerly reported that Preparations for launching the capital market in Addis Ababa were being completed, the Ethiopian Capital Market Authority announced.

Capital Market Senior Advisor with the authority Solomon Gebre told the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) that preparations have been going on for the past year and a half to launch the capital market, which is supposed to start in 2023/2024.

Solomon further noted that the authority has done a lot of work regarding the legal framework of the capital market and 10 guidelines and two regulations containing details have been drafted based on the decree issued a year and a half ago. Moreover, three of the guidelines have been collected from the public and have been registered by the prosecutor, while one of the guidelines has been sent to the Council of Ministers for a final ratification.

Since the capital market is just starting in Ethiopia, awareness has been created for the companies involved in the sector. In this way, 600 people from financial institutions, banks and also those who are interested in the sector have been trained. "One of our main focuses are making the service should not be limited to Addis Ababa but be expanded to different states and areas," he said.

According to the advisor, a growing number of investors are showing great interest in participating in the capital market and meaningful participation has been seen in the last six months. "Although the domestic investor was skeptical at first, now the confidence and nature of the project is showing high interest," he added.

Because of the capital market will bring many opportunities and changes, it is necessary to prepare to satisfy the society's expectation and enshrines Ethiopia's overall progress, he advised. As part of its attempt to build a diversified and vibrant economy, Ethiopia is working to establish capital market whereby a long-term debt (over a year) or equity-backed securities are bought and sold.

Recently, the Ethiopian Capital Market Authority hosted a press conference to discuss significant developments in the capital markets sector, particularly regarding the adoption of the Capital Markets Service Providers and Supervision Directive. The Director General Brook Teye (PhD) shed light on the pivotal role of this directive in enhancing the regulatory landscape and ensuring the integrity and stability of the capital markets.

Furthermore, the Director General provided insights into the ongoing drafting process of the Public Offer Directive, emphasizing their commitment to fostering transparency and investor protection. This directive underscores their dedication to facilitating fair and efficient capital raising activities while upholding the highest standards of accountability.

During the session, the Director General unveiled the authority's forward-looking agenda for the upcoming six months, outlining key initiatives and priorities aimed at advancing the interests of investors and market participants alike.

In the interactive Q&A session, he addressed pressing inquiries, including collaborations with media regulating bodies to combat deceptive advertisements targeting investors. "We remain steadfast in our mission to safeguard investors from fraudulent schemes and deceptive practices, working closely with relevant stakeholders to uphold market integrity," he underlined.

Additionally, the discussion touched upon the types of licenses that will be granted starting Monday, marking a significant milestone in streamlining regulatory processes and promoting innovation within the financial services industry. The Ethiopian Capital Market Authority (ECMA) has announced its readiness to grant licenses to participants, marking a significant advancement in the long-awaited launch of the capital market. However, the establishment of subsidiaries by local retail banks, as permitted by a central bank directive, is still pending.

Planet Earth

Authority taking actions to mitigate sound pollution in urban areas

BY FIKADU BELAY

The rising levels of noise pollution in Ethiopia have detrimental effects on the physical and mental well-being of its residents, as well as the overall quality of life. Several factors contribute to the escalating problem of sound pollution in a country. Among these, the city's population is rapidly increasing, resulting in the proliferation of vehicles, construction activities, and industrialization. The constant blasting of car alarms, blaring music, and the clamor of construction sites combine to create a discordance of noise that permeates the city.

Additionally, the lack of urban planning and inadequate enforcement of noise regulations further exacerbate the problem. Moreover, because the city has densely populated areas, the amplified sounds from religious ceremonies such as mosques, churches, and other places of worship can contribute significantly to sound pollution.

During his conversation with The Ethiopian Herald Focal Person of the Addis Ababa Health Bureau, Anteneh Mitiku, the consequences of sound pollution are far-reaching and affect various aspects of life in a country. The most significant impacts are on public health. Extended exposure to high levels of noise can lead to hearing loss, stress, sleep disturbances, and cardiovascular issues.

He stated that the relentless noise disrupts concentration, communication, and learning, negatively affecting students' academic performance and productivity in workplaces. Moreover, the continuous noise pollution takes a toll on mental well-being, leading to increased anxiety, irritability, and decreased overall life satisfaction.

Sustained exposure to high noise levels can lead to chronic stress, hypertension, and even heart disease. Children and the elderly are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of noise pollution, as it can hinder their cognitive development and health life, he said.

Furthermore, sound pollution has adverse effects on the environment. It disrupts the natural habitats of wildlife, causing disturbances in their communication and behavior patterns. Additionally, the excessive noise levels can affect the growth and reproductive abilities of plants, leading to ecological imbalances.

According to the Addis Ababa Environmental Protection Authority data, identifying the urgent need to address this issue, the Authority, along with other organization in Addis Ababa, has initiated measures to combat sound pollution. Strict regulations and guidelines relating to noise levels have been put in place, but enforcement remains a challenge.

Head of the Addis Ababa Environment Protection Authority, Dida Diriba, said that sustainable urban planning is



crucial in mitigating sound pollution. The construction of noise barriers, green spaces, and pedestrian-friendly zones can help reduce noise levels in densely populated areas. The promotion of public transportation, cycling, and walking can minimize traffic congestion and subsequently decrease noise generated by vehicles.

Additionally, industries and commercial establishments must adopt noise reduction technologies and practices. Encouraging the use of soundproofing materials, implementing noise control measures, and conducting regular monitoring and evaluation can significantly mitigate the impact of sound pollution, he said.

He noted that attempts are being made to resolve issues with the city's business office in order to streamline operations, as issues arise when allowing nightclubs and hotels to operate in homes, schools, hospitals, and other comparable locations.

According to him, the authority has applied the necessary measures to monitor and resolve approximately 5,000 service-providing and manufacturing companies in six months, out of the 10,000 industries it is expected to monitor in a year. Additionally, he said that the Authority has addressed the 942 complaints that had been submitted and continue to toiling to find solutions for additional noise pollution related issues.

Furthermore, sound pollution can have a negative impact on the tourism industry in Addis Ababa. Many tourists visit the city to experience its rich cultural heritage, historical sites, and vibrant markets. However, the constant noise can detract from the overall tourist experience, making it less appealing for visitors seeking tranquility and relaxation. This can lead to a decline in tourism revenue and hamper the growth of the local economy.

Efforts should be made to raise awareness

about the health risks and encourage individuals to take necessary precautions, such as using ear protection and seeking quieter areas for rest and relaxation. There is a need for increased awareness and education among the public regarding the detrimental effects of sound pollution and the importance of adhering to noise regulations, Anteneh noted.

Striking a balance between religious practices and minimizing noise levels through the use of appropriate soundproofing and scheduling can help mitigate the impact on surrounding communities, Dida said.

He further stated that the authority has taken action against over 1,220 polluting facilities in the first half of the year as part of its sustained efforts to preserve the aesthetic appeal of the city and to resolve problems that contribute to climate pollution.

A warning, packing, and a fine decision are the actions. He stated that government agencies, hotels, factories, and nightclubs are collaborating to find a solution to the issue.

Incorporating soundproofing measures in the construction of buildings and infrastructure can also contribute to a quieter and more livable cityscape. Additionally, promoting the use of audio materials with permissible level of volume in public spaces, such as schools, hospitals, and recreational areas, can create a more conducive environment for learning, healing, and leisure activities.

Addressing sound pollution requires active community engagement and participation. Residents can play a vital role in reporting noise violations to the authorities and advocating for stricter enforcement of noise regulations. Community-led initiatives, such as neighborhood watch programs and awareness campaigns can

help foster a sense of ownership and collective responsibility in reducing sound pollution.

Mitigating sound pollution in a country requires collaboration among various stakeholders, including government agencies, local authorities, urban planners, environmental organizations, and residents. By working together, these stakeholders can develop comprehensive strategies and action plans to tackle the issue effectively. Regular dialogue, information sharing, and monitoring mechanisms can facilitate a coordinated approach to addressing sound pollution.

He stated that the management threatened to suspend the company license and notify the appropriate authorities if the institutions to be sealed failed to resolve the issue within the allotted period. Also, the establishments are run by staff members and offer public services; they ought to abide with the regulations.

He stated that efforts are to fully eliminate nighttime noise pollution. Awareness campaigns are being conducted by schools, religious leaders, and other potentially harmful segments of society due to the proper volume of sound that are heard every day. Also, traffic regulation and management are being focused on as big cars are contributing to noise pollution in places like schools, hospitals, embassies, and condominiums, he added.

By implementing a combination of measures, including stricter regulations, sustainable urban planning, public awareness campaigns, and community participation, the city can take significant strides towards creating a quieter, healthier, and more livable environment for its residents and visitors alike. According to Dida, the Authority collaborates with roughly twenty different entities to address environmental issues.

Art & Culture

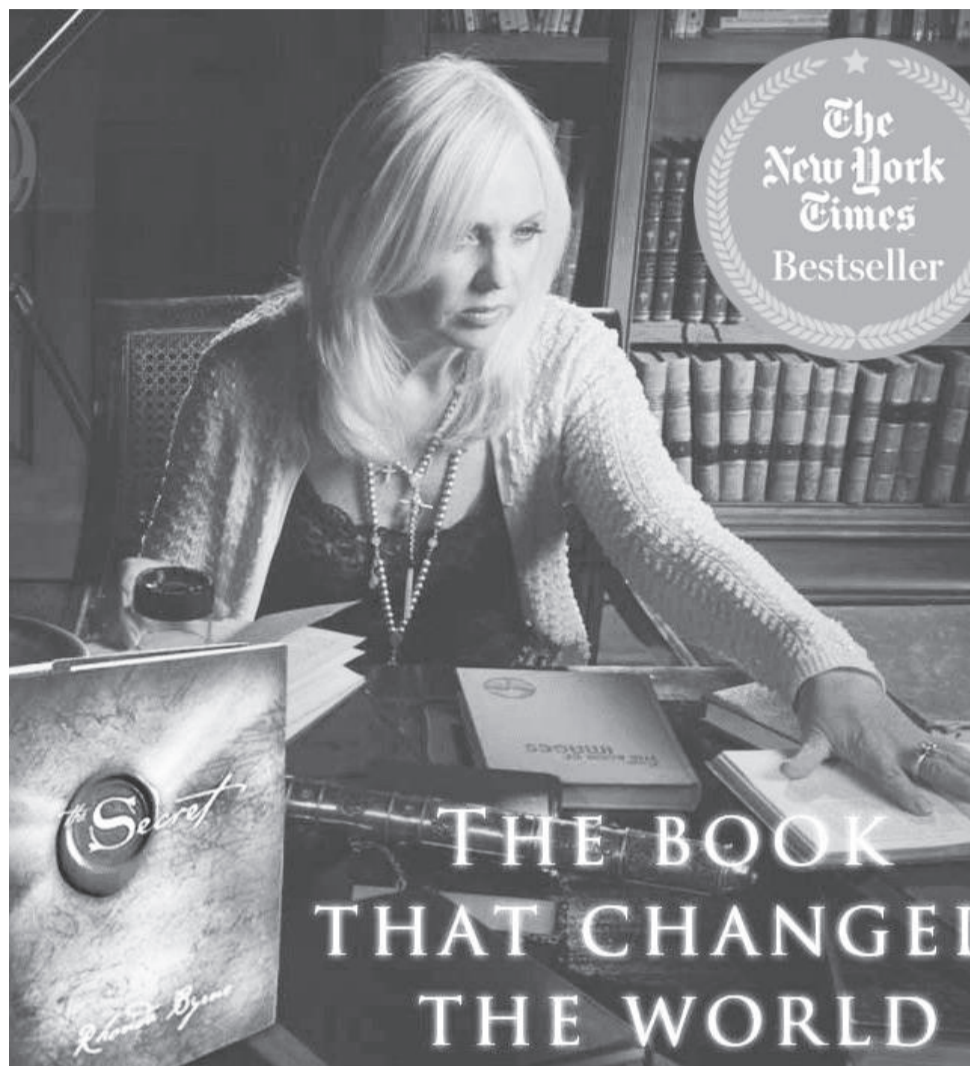
Law of attraction or law of life?

BY BITANIA TADLE

In the realm of literature, there exists a book that has captivated the masses and stirred debates among friends - "The Secret" by Rhonda Byrne. This literary phenomenon, with its promise of a life-altering secret, has sold over 30 million copies and been translated into 50 languages, making it one of the most widely read books in history. At its core, the book delves into the power of thoughts and beliefs, asserting that our thoughts can shape our reality through the law of attraction.

As I immersed myself in the profound teachings of "The Secret," I found myself grappling with the concept that our thoughts have the potential to manifest in the universe and return to us. The idea that our beliefs hold the key to influencing our reality intrigued me, prompting me to delve deeper into its mysteries. Despite my repeated readings and efforts to unlock the elusive secret, I found myself standing at the threshold of understanding, with more questions than answers.

Eager to gain insight from my circle of friends on this controversial book, I initiated a discussion that led to unexpected revelations. To my surprise, the reactions were predominantly negative, with one friend, Beza Amara, expressing reservations about the book's



compatibility with spiritual beliefs. She questioned the motives behind a book that had gained such widespread popularity and raised concerns about its potential impact on one's connection

with God. Another friend offered a contrasting perspective, challenging the notion of the law of attraction and introducing an alternative concept - the law of life.

According to this viewpoint, human existence is governed by a set of laws that dictate individuals' paths based on their actions and beliefs throughout their lives. This friend emphasized the importance of understanding and adhering to these laws to navigate the complexities of existence.

As our discussion unfolded, we delved into the contrasting viewpoints presented in "The Secret's law of attraction" and the alternative perspective of the law of life. While some found comfort in the idea of manifesting desires through positive thoughts, others sought solace in the notion of a universal law guiding human existence. Amidst the diversity of opinions and beliefs, one common thread emerged - the significance of open dialogue and exploration of diverse perspectives to deepen our understanding of the world around us.

In this journey of exploration and contemplation, the interplay between the law of attraction and the law of life illuminated new pathways of thought and reflection. As we navigated through the complexities of these philosophical concepts, we found ourselves enriched by the diversity of perspectives and insights shared among friends. Ultimately, it was through this exchange of ideas that we discovered the richness of human experience and the power of collective wisdom in shaping our understanding of the mysteries that lie beyond.



Like a cigarette

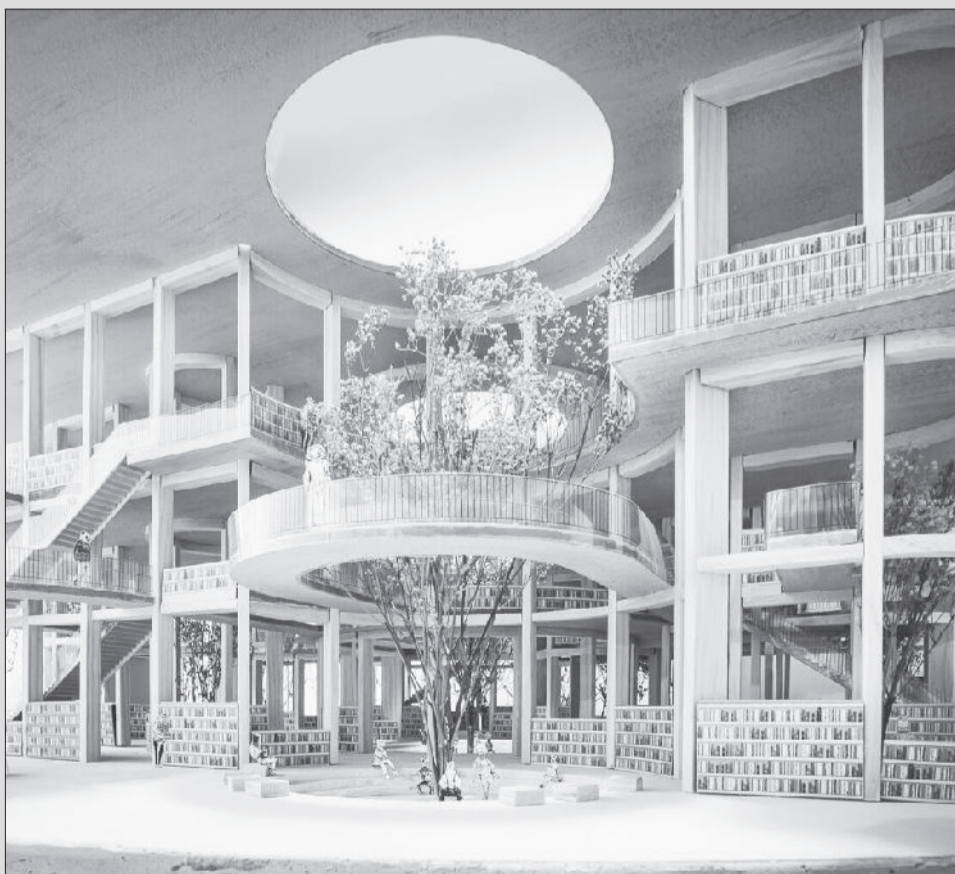
BY ALEM HAILU G/KRISTOS

Bro, tell me please
 To your heart's content
 Enjoying a French kiss
 In squeezing out
 The nectar of their lady-hood
 Not remiss,
 Are the lasses
 A cigarette
 For a while you keep
 By your chest
 To burn them to ashes
 And ignominiously
 Squash them down
 Under your heels?

BY GIDEON CECIL

I have a fantastic library hidden
 in the camera of my mind
 a thousand egrets playing
 on the sea shores of time
 my muses bring my words
 like a shower of rains into
 the soul of my pen
 to write words of philosophy
 in the images of my poetry.
 My mind sees a library where
 my muses live and comes to
 me to write of times past and
 generations to come.
 Why do I write like a man in
 love with a woman
 but falls in love with words as my
 true love?
 My poetry is a very powerful expres-
 sion of love,
 its impact can be felt far and wide
 in the deep rivers of your heart.
 Coming from an unseen library in
 my soul
 by my muses beyond the wings of
 the skies.
 My poems are pictures of your

A Library in my mind



dreams
 written on the leaves of your soul,
 plant my words in the river of your
 mind;
 read my poetry to forget your blackberry

phone
 explore my words in the river of your
 mind;
 my words are a library of my soul
 contemplating -contemporary poetry.

Society

Ethiopian patriots unity for Adwa Victory: Celebrating a historic triumph

BY TEWODROS KASSA

The Battle of Adwa stands as a remarkable moment in Ethiopian history symbolizing the united spirit and unwavering determination of Ethiopian patriots in the face of foreign aggression. This historic battle, which took place on March 1, 1896, between Ethiopian forces and the Italian colonial invaders, marked a resounding victory for Ethiopians, Africans and black people across the world and a significant setback for European colonial ambitions in Africa. The Adwa Victory not only secured Ethiopian independence and sovereignty but also became a beacon of hope and inspiration for other African nations who were fighting against imperial powers. In this article, we delve into the unity displayed by Ethiopian patriots, the factors that led to their triumph, the role of women in the battle, the lasting legacy of Adwa, and the valuable lessons we, Ethiopians, can learn from this remarkable chapter in history.

No doubt, the Battle of Adwa holds immense significance as it marked a resounding victory for Ethiopian forces against the colonial ambitions of Italy. It shattered the myth of European invincibility and showcased the strength and resilience of the Ethiopian people. The triumph at Adwa not only secured Ethiopia's independence but also inspired other nations in their fight against colonization.

Throughout history, Ethiopians have demonstrated a fierce determination to preserve their independence. From the ancient kingdom of Axum to the present day, Ethiopians have fought against various colonial powers, including the Egyptians, Ottomans, and Europeans. This resistance is a testament to the unwavering spirit and patriotism of the Ethiopian people.

Historical documents also witnessed that patriotism runs deep in Ethiopian history, serving as a unifying force during times of adversity. It has played a crucial role in inspiring and mobilizing the Ethiopian people to defend their land and culture. The Battle of Adwa stands as a shining example of how Ethiopian patriots rallied together to protect their sovereignty, embodying the spirit of national pride and love for their homeland.

Accordingly, the Ethiopian patriots shared a common set of ideals and values that brought them together. Their love for Ethiopia, a strong sense of national identity, and a deep-rooted belief in their ability to protect their land and culture, were central to this unity. Additionally, the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church (EOTC), which played a significant role in national identity, served as a unifying force among the patriots.

More importantly, the unity of Ethiopian patriots was also fueled by influential

figures and leaders who emerged during this critical period. Emperor Menelik II, Empress Taytu Betul, and other prominent leaders played pivotal roles in rallying the Ethiopian people. Their vision, charisma, and strategic acumen were instrumental in forging a sense of unity and purpose among Ethiopians.

Moreover, when it comes to the Adwa Victory, women played a crucial role that cannot be overlooked. They were not just bystanders cheering from the sidelines; they were right there on the frontlines, fighting alongside the men. These fierce ladies showed that they were just as capable and brave as their male counterparts.

Not only did women join the battle, but they also provided invaluable support to the Ethiopian patriots. Behind every warrior, there was a woman - a mother, wife, sister, or daughter - offering encouragement, care, and even logistical assistance. They kept the troops motivated, nursed wounded fellowmen back to health, and, gave some pretty pep talks too. Their contributions may not have been as visible, but they were certainly essential to the overall victory.

Recently, during the inauguration ceremony of the Adwa Victory Memorial Museum, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed said: "Our forefathers had known on what issue they became cooperative and made difference."

"They also knew the difference between the government and the interests of the country. The forefathers have the knowledge that identifies the government and state's interest and called on the new generation to inherit the positive assets from them," he added.

According to him, our forefathers, the Prime Minister emphasized, understood the power of unity and discernment. They distinguished between the government and the true interests of the nation. This wisdom is a crucial inheritance we must embrace.

He also urged the younger generation to not simply inherit the "fires" of the past, but to harness the true spirit of Adwa's victory. This spirit, he elaborated, embodies the eradication of poverty, unwavering defense against invaders, the preservation of dignity, and the achievement of food sovereignty.

Accordingly, the Adwa Victory holds a profound place in the collective memory of Ethiopians. It symbolizes the resilience, courage, and unwavering patriotism that lies at the heart of the Ethiopian people. Generations have been taught about the exploits of their ancestors, and the lessons from Adwa continue to inspire Ethiopians to this day.

The victory also had far-reaching geopolitical implications. It not only established Ethiopia as a beacon of



hope and inspiration for other African nations facing colonization but also compelled European powers to reassess their approach towards Africa. The battle served as a powerful catalyst for the pan-African movement and ultimately contributed to the dismantling of colonial rule across the continent.

In sum, the unity shown by Ethiopian patriots during the Adwa Victory teaches us an important lesson: "united we stand, divided we fall." Despite differences in ethnicity, religion, and social status, the Ethiopian patriots put aside their disagreements and stood together as one.

They recognized that only through unity and collaboration could they overcome their common enemy. This lesson still holds true today - when we join forces and work towards a common goal, we become an unstoppable force.

In addition, the Adwa Victory's legacy continues to inspire and remind the world of the determination and resilience that resides within the hearts of Africans. As we celebrate this historic triumph, let us be reminded of the enduring spirit of unity that led Ethiopian patriots to victory and reflect on its relevance in today's world.

Law & Politics

Resource-rich continent bending to foreign handouts

BY DANIEL ALEMAYEHU

From Wall Street to Hong Kong, finance runs the world and is the nucleus of might. And, as they might makes right. In an increasingly competitive world, maximizing power will put you on a glide path toward success. Especially, economic and financial power is the key to steering the world in any direction. Finance is in this regard considered to be the blood vessel of nations to assert their hegemony. Surely, power without financial might is unthinkable and superpowers and blocs around the globe have built their power with their financial backings.

Generating alternative sources of finance and expanding revenues have been priorities of international, continental, and regional blocs to realize their ambitious aspirations. For many, financial independence will make organizations robust and active in their quest to meet their interests.

Equally true, financially unstable and weak entities as witnessed in many instances fall prey to their financiers and the ownership status will be put in jeopardy.

Politically speaking, finance has it all in terms of influencing the decision-making abilities of political alliances or blocs. In this regard, being a resource-rich continent, Africa is still under the shackles of financial dependence sticking itself with external donors. At the heart of such problems is the continental bloc African Union. Although being one of the oldest originations, the bloc of 55 member states, the African Union has been struggling to emancipate itself from financial dependency.

Recent figures reveal that around 15 members out of the 55 states have been living up to the pledges. And, many float the idea that financial constraint makes the Union to be a rubber stamp institution, succumbing to the interests of donors.

The bloc relies heavily on partners to fund its activities, with two-thirds of its 2023 budget drawn from external sources, a report by the Institute for Security Studies indicated.

Over the last few years, different factors have hampered member countries' abilities to finance the union.

African nations have dealt with a number of global challenges including the Covid-19 pandemic and the recent wars between Russia and Ukraine and Palestine and Israel. To this end, the countries were unable to commit themselves to the Union. Yet, member states will remain committed to their obligations to the AU, said Angolan Ambassador Jorge Catarino Cardoso, Director of the Africa, Middle East and Regional Organizations Directorate of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs told to The Ethiopian Herald.

The ambassador said, "We are facing very

challenging times. We just came from the Covid-19 pandemic which made things very difficult for member states. A lot of effort and resources were put into fighting the pandemic. That was a priority of saving lives."

The current report, which has been presented at this year's AU Summit, has a positive picture in terms of the contribution of member states for the 2023 financial year, said the Ambassador.

In the Kigali Decision in 2016, African Union member states pledged to finance the Union by contributing 0.2 percent of their levy would be transferred to the AU to pay for its operational, program, and peace support operations.

Back in 2017, Paul Kagame spoke at a Consultative Meeting on African Union Reforms in Kigali, saying "The decisive factor here was changing our mindset from dependence to ownership, and from "we can't" to "we can". That is an asset that cannot be imported. The levy is the formula we came up with to assure our independence as Africans. This is first and foremost a choice to no longer be dependent on outsiders. It's really about the value we attach to being effective and self-reliant as an organization and as a continent."

The Ethiopian Herald held an exclusive interview with Dawit Mezgebe Tsegaye, a lecturer at Dila University and PhD candidate of African and Asian studies at Addis Ababa University. He said, "Since its establishment in 1963, the African Union is still unable to be financially independent due to multiple factors. The colonial legacy and Africa's domestic political instability are some of the major factors."

"Being financially dependent on external donors made Africans to be self-abnegation that they are bending for the interest of those donor countries," Dawit stated.

Regarding political meddling in the internal affairs of African nations, according to the scholar, Africans have been under the colonial legacy since the colonial period; even some West African states are still dependent on their colonial masters. Yet, there is an external interference in Africa's internal politics. This interference has also an impact on Africa's domestic economy.

Dawit mentioned that Kigali's Decision to contribute 0.2 percent of the nation's import income is based on the amount of goods and items imported from the outside world. The relation between the African nations and the global economic powers determines the quantity.

Failing to meet the financial commitment of the member states, Dawit added, the problem is an intercontinental issue. After independence, most African states were not stable politically and economically. Between the 1960s and 1970s, there was significant growth in the African economy



Being financially dependent on external donors made Africans to be self-abnegation that they are bending for the interest of those donor countries

due to a higher exporting rate. However, recurrent coups and instability caused Africa to fail to meet the commitment to contribute to the Union.

Further, Dawit noted that though Africa and other nations have established the Non-aligned Movement, Africans cannot escape the domination of its financiers. Such domination is structural and it negatively affects the economics of the latter, adding "Africa is a resource-rich continent, but it is politically and economically mismanaged, and it is directly and indirectly affected by external factors."

The 0.2 percent contribution is for the Union and for Peace fund. Africans are not contributing so we are under the mercy of donors and blocs supporting us. "Africa is comprised of 55 independent states. After the Kigali decision of contributing 0.2 percent of the income, very few states are

contributing," the scholar discussed.

"African Union is a toothless lion. The leaders are having summits in a specific time frame, and they are more dependent on the UN, UNSC, and the EU. We need to work on increasing the nations' commitment and mechanisms to impose strong commitment."

In relation to generating its own income, according to the scholar, "Multinational companies like banks are investing in Africa; Airlines are passing through the continent. Accordingly, the African Union must create a sort of mechanism for generating its own income from the above-mentioned opportunities."

"African states and leaders should have full commitment to come closer and work. They need to understand the importance of financing the Union. We need to have very strict rules and regulations on financing the Union with transparency and accountability. We, Africans, must be unified to have a strong Union."

The scholar elucidated that the European Union, for example, is intelligently collecting its budget support from member states, and such action is a luxury for African countries. The African Union should draw a lesson from other blocs like the European Union (EU) on how to collect what is promised.



Ephrem Endale
Contributor

Between you & me

Board the Train, or Leave the Station!

This happened to a friend some time back. Somehow he got himself in the midst of a certain group he wasn't familiar with. Of course he knew them individually but never to the extent where he calls and says; "How about you and me getting together for tea tomorrow!" So he knew very little, even practically anything worth about their behaviors. Are these the kinds of the guys you can sit down with for the sake of having some lively chats? Are these the kinds of guys with whom you could voice your opinions on a hundred and one things and they don't frown at them even if they don't subscribe to them? Are they the kinds of guys who believe that differences of opinions make the world a much better place rather than a boring and very uninteresting planet? Are the kinds of guys who expect you to play second fiddle to everything they say and every emotion they display? You know the kinds who through their side glances and grimaces say, "If you don't laugh when we laugh and cry when we cry, just get lost!"

So as I was telling you this friend of mine finds himself in the midst of this group, something he regretted for days. He says it was a group where everyone thought they were some M, Bin or something and each tried to tell jokes and get the loudest laughs. Well my friend says every single one of them got the loudest of laughs! How do such things happen?" Well the most probable scenario is that group members are acting as they were expected to act. The guy tells a joke he thinks

would bring half of the world down with laughter and you remain stone-faced! That, ladies and gentlemen, isn't a very brilliant thing to do, as some would tell you.

"Look the joke might be the worst joke ever told since that left rib was taken out from poor Adam!"

Look, by being advised to act as you're expected to act you're told "Cut the crap about being a man of principles. The concept of being oneself and never being oneself and not bending to outside pressures is a defeated concept as this is a world of polishing your acts as society expects you to. Get on the train or get out of the station!"

My friend being the sort of guy whom you might call a hard nut to crack remains emotionless during all the noise. Two members of the group members notice and ask him if anything was wrong with him. He says nothing was wrong.

"Are you sure you feel alright?"

"Definitely! Thank you for your concern." "Then why aren't you laughing when everyone laughs?"

My friend admits it was a question that took him off guard. He never expected it to come so head-on! He didn't answer and, luckily, the two didn't press any further. But when he finally got up saying he had a couple of appointments he didn't get any friendly "Sayonara!" After all not that he wasn't a real friend! He didn't even smile when they were

losing their heads with laughter! He wasn't a team player! By maintaining a face that remained blank and emotionless through and through he impressed no one.

Look, the fact is that in many instances in this society you're expected to accept as others do if you want to defend yourself from the unwanted, unfriendly stares. Who do you think you are not even smiling while everyone is laughing! Take meetings where you hear repeated applauses even while there is nothing to applaud. A few people in the audience 'take the initiative' and begin to clap and much of the audience follows! It is not only the unnecessary the uncalled for applause you witness in such instances but also people standing up because few guys probably up front decide to do so. Trying to answer the reasons as to why people act as such could be tricky as there could be a thousand explanations and all sound legitimate! But one thing we can be sure of is that we don't want to be noticed because being noticed would be throwing one's name in a certain black list, individual or otherwise.

The fact is you don't feel like the rest do, or act. There is nothing to convince you that while you might have your own principles which you observe as best as you can you should play ball with the others because the unwritten 'conventional wisdom' demands you do so. I mean if you don't feel like being part of the group or crowd and choose to get lost in your own thoughts. So you get lost in your own thoughts be they sweet or sour!

But it isn't easy. You're supposed to be like the crowd or the group because many would try to make you believe that as a member of the society that was what was expected from you. Yes, you're physically part of the group. You're sitting together and whatever you're eating and drinking is in front of you like is the case with the others. But that doesn't mean you're emotionally connected with any member of the group or with whatever they say or whatever they do. So you try to be yourself. Life hasn't put you in such a hopelessly tight place that you have to negate your core principles just because others would feel happy.

I mean, that's you! And there can't be any ground for you to act like others when you don't feel like it. You can't go in life playing ball with everyone just because you don't want to be left out in the cold. The idea of being left out in the cold just because you try to be what you are could be a little unsettling, even scary. In fact you might even be taken as some antisocial nerd who doesn't have brains enough to keep pace with the times; times which are changing so thoroughly in every aspect that the option of being a non-interfering observer isn't there.

So get on the train, or get out of the station! Tough, believe me that is one scenario when you realize the real meaning of the term tough. Because social life these days is real tough and navigating the thin line between boarding the train and leaving the station could be an existential issue in its strange ways!

Cheering the Home Team

Being a sort of football fan of the old order I watched much of the recent African Cup of Nations tournament. I can tell you I'm one of those delighted that the hosts made sure the cup stayed in Abidjan. Having put so much effort and preparation in hosting the tournament, and the emotional support of Ivoirians who remained behind their team all makes it a well-deserved victory. As I was saying though I watched many of the games I've to admit I was no fan of any single team. I made my choice only a couple of hours before matches. Now you would be pardoned to think that I would pick the stronger team because of that natural urge to be on the winning side. It could be argued that no one would opt to cheer a side that would definitely lose the only outstanding question being how much torment their poor goalie would suffer. And who do I choose? I almost always choose the underdogs! This is not about being a nice, considerate guy. It's not about fair justice genes in me going on a riot. "Stand with the oppressed! Down with the oppressors on the football pitch!" It's all about enjoying the game. I mean when you think that the stronger team would win by a wide margin and it still wins buy a wide margin that's no news. "So what! You tell me the sun would rise from the east the next morning and it rises from the east; what's news about that?" So the powerful beating the weak is no big deal. Big deal is when the powerful are beaten black and blue by the supposedly weak! You know, like the David and Goliath scenario!

So you might ask what really reason to cheer the underdogs when you'll have your day

in the sun by supporting the heavyweights who'd definitely KO the weaklings in the first minute of the first round! Isn't wining all that counts?

Well, winning is nice. But it is the road to the end, to the final whistle from the referee which makes games worth watching. I think real adventure in sports like football is being on the edge of your seat for much of the ninety minutes, finding it hard to breathe correctly now and then and the like. And the payoff would be the final result. That's where the real fun comes if you, like some of us, choose to be behind the underdogs. And I can tell you this would be one win-win scenario even if the underdogs lose by whatever margin. "That's one hell of a fight the kids put up! And they lost only by a single goal!" With the underdogs losing is subjective. What counts is the hell they gave the heavyweights.

Many times than not there is this biased conclusion from those people they call "pundits" or something like that. If the underdogs win their analysis comes not from the vantage point of the strengths of the underdogs who for all practical purposes were expected to lose, but from the supposed failings of the heavyweights. "Have you seen the center backs? They were practically nowhere and left the final third unattended and exposed the goalie!" But the goals didn't come out of nowhere; their forwards had to go through all sorts of maneuvers to break through the iron wall defenses of the mighty and but the ball bend the goalie! It's an astounding to realize that they aren't given due credit. The analysis is seldom on how the

forwards manage to score but about how the defenders failed to stop them because of not playing as he 'pundits' say they should have played.

In fact sometimes the analysis would be so hopelessly convoluted and virtual mess you wouldn't be called to question for feeling the guys were suggesting some kind of outside intervention from whatever power! Anyways supporting the underdogs might not be something that gets you universal blessings. No way! I could just imagine the types of conversations like the one below;

"Why do you support the underdogs?"

"Well, first they deserve supporters like all the other teams. Secondly the ultimate delight that comes from watching the underdogs beating the super teams is some delight that you don't often experience."

"Come on, between you and me, let's be frank."

"What are you suggesting?"

"I'm not suggesting anything; It's only that I've this question nagging me. Are the reasons you just told me the real reasons?"

"I'm afraid I don't get you. What are you driving at?"

"Look, I'm only asking you to confirm..."

"Hey, hold it! If you're accusing me of something come with it."

"You guys don't want to be asked such questions, do you?"

"Cut that out! I've a feeling that you've formed your own opinion."

"Ok, what I think about you guys always

supporting the underdogs is that it's not about the team but about yourselves."

"And what are you implying?"

"I'm not implying anything. I'm telling you as it is. By supporting the underdogs your motivation is your selfish interest to seek enjoyment at the expense of others. I'll say it again; what I conclude from your actions is that everything is about yourselves and not encouraging those you call the underdogs."

"How the hell could you say that?"

Well you said the ultimate delight you get is at seeing underdogs win the day. That means you're not actually concerned about their winning and increasing their points tally about you having a really good day at seeing the mighty teams beat the dust. Anyways, don't take what I said personally. I just wanted to get things off my chest. I hope you're not offended."

"Never! Don't mention it."

Anyways cheering the underdogs could be as enjoyable as cheering the home to team, as long as they cut the mighty ones to their sizes! Hmmm...!

After all that has been said there is one question that bothers most of us! When, oh when will we have a team that showers us with unlimited happiness and joy as the likes we have seen in Abidjan? The last time we won any cup was during the Fifteenth East and Central Africa Cup Ethiopia hosted I was the editor of the sports page of the English daily. The scenes that night when we finally took the cup after a tense penalty shootout are scenes I'll never, ever forget!

Citizens visiting Adwa Victory Memorial

Residents of Addis Ababa City and citizens from the countryside have started visiting the Adwa Victory Memorial immediately following the opening of the center for visitors on Tuesday.

Adwa Victory Memorial center was inaugurated last Sunday by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed. Following the inauguration, the center was opened for visitors. Citizens are flowing to visit the center and it is busy since the first day.



In Pictures

Adwa Memorial Museum open for visitors

BY DARGIE KAHSAY



PM Abiy, Brazil's President discusses

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) warmly welcomed the President of Brazil, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva at his office on Friday. The President of Brazil arrived in Addis Ababa on late Thursday for an official state visit and met with PM Abiy on Friday.

During the discussion, the two leaders addressed various bilateral and multilateral issues, reflecting the depth of the two countries' relationship. "As Ethiopia joins the esteemed ranks of the BRICS group, we eagerly anticipate strengthened collaboration with Brazil, viewing our meeting as a pivotal step towards forging a robust partnership," PM Abiy said.

President of Brazil visits Adwa Victory Memorial Museum

President of Brazil visits Adwa Victory Memorial Museum

The President of Brazil, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva with First Lady Janja da Silva, who arrived in Addis Ababa on Thursday for an official state visit, had visited the newly inaugurated Adwa Victory Memorial Museum on Friday morning.

During his visit to the memorial center, President Lula da Silva laid a flower wreath in front of the monument honoring the heroes and heroines of Ethiopia. Addis Ababa City Mayor, Adanech Abiebie and Finance Minister, Ahmed Shide warmly welcomed the President and his wife at the memorial center.



African FMs, diplomats based in Addis visited Adwa Memorial

Alongside the 44th Ordinary Session of the African Union (AU) Executive Committee meeting, Foreign Minister of various African countries who attended the session and other dignitaries had visited the Adwa Victory Memorial Museum.

Ambassadors of various countries and representatives of international communities residing in Addis Ababa had also visited the memorial.

