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Ethiopia readies to welcome AU guests

• Extends Diplomacy Exhibition closing date

BY YESUF ENDRIS

ADDIS ABABA-Preparations to receive participants of the 37th African Union Summit are being completed, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) announced.

In a press briefing he gave here yesterday, MoFA Spokesperson Ambassador MelesAlem (PhD) said that the government is strengthening hospitality and security services taking the upcoming AU's ministerial and leaders' summit into account.

All preparations are being facilitated to welcome not only African leaders but also all leaders from the world. Leaders from

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Canadian gold miner set to invest 500 mln. USD in Ethiopia

BY MISGANAW ASNAKE

ADDIS ABABA- A giant Canadian gold miner, Allied Gold, set to launch a half-billion-USD investment in Ethiopia that would also facilitate knowledge

and technology transfer, the Ethiopian Ambassador to Canada said.

In an exclusive interview with the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA), Ambassador Fitsum Arega said Ethiopia's Embassy in Ottawa

has been utilizing various platforms to promote the country's immense investment opportunities to Canadian businesses.

Canadian and other Western countries' investment

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Aisha Mohammed (Eng.)

Photo: Dagne Abera

Pastoralist expo impetus for continental integration: MILLS

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South Ethiopia State sees hotel expansion driving for tourists' inflow

• Haile Hotel opens 9th destination in Wolaita

BY BETELHEM BEDLU

WOLAITA SODO- The expansion of star-designated hotels including Haile Hotel Wolaita has played an immense role in attracting tourists' inflow, providing jobs and propelling the South Ethiopia State's economic progress, the Vice Chief Administrator said.

South Ethiopia State Vice Chief Administrator TesfayeYigezu made the above remark yesterday while inaugurating the 9th branch of Haile chain Hotels which was built in the outlay of over 1.1 billion Birr.

Tesfaye also stated that the inauguration of the four- star hotel would play a major role in stimulating the tourism sector as well as

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Soda ash reserve for fueling economic growth, industrial expansion

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Transferring climate technology requites international cooperation

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Pastoralist expo impetus for continental integration: MILLS

BY ASHENAFI ANIMUT

ADDIS ABABA – The East African Pastoralist Expo has given a multitude impetus to bolster the continental economic, social cohesions, the Ministry of Irrigation and Lowlands (MILLS) said.

The expo organized by MILLS and IGAD under the theme “Pastoralism: The East African Mosaic”, which was held for the last seven consecutive days concluded yesterday.

At the grand closing ceremony, MILLS Minister Aisha Mohammed (Eng.) said that the expo has given a significant milestone towards promoting regional integration through entertained views, panel discussions and other important engagements that help promote regional integration and the countries common progress.

She further stated that the event is a breakthrough for the nation to revise policies and set directives which are believed to change the livelihoods of the pastoralist community and the country in advance.

Apart from creating a playground for ensuring these communities in multifaceted ways, the minister said, adding that the expo showcases that pastoralism is being a

mosaic for East African countries.

MILLS State Minister, Endrias Geta (PhD) on his part stated that the expo mainly creates the opportunity to recap the past and present scenario of this community and lays a foundation to decide their destinies in the region.

In the sidelines of the expo, other side events such as panel discussions and exhibitions among other undertakings were taking in place, he added.

It also embraces regional governments, development partners, NGOs, private sectors IGAD member countries and many other stakeholders have displayed their own international experiences and technological outputs which are believed to add values on the livelihoods of the community.

About 250 key stakeholders drawn from the four East African clusters such as Karamojjo, Moyale, Mendera and Dikihil paid a visit to the expo. In addition, 20,000 people visited it, it was learnt.

Moreover, a total of 60 exhibitors displayed significant creativities, technologies and their culture and endowments which reveling pastoralists’ inclusive development endeavors in the areas.

It was also indicated that Ethiopia is the only country which has pastoral policies and strategies, which is believed to create favorable environment to create social and economic integration in the region.

“The ministry has also set directions on land management, to leverage home grown knowledge and way of life. Also, it has taken insightful directions to utilize the natural endowments such as minerals, incents, fishery and beekeeping through various infrastructural developments in the area,” he noted.

Accordingly, the ministry also endeavors to provide access to financial loans via financial institutions and the country’s development banks to realize the benefits of the pastoralists.

In collaboration with the ministry, he emphasized that it is highly valuable to consolidate efforts along with regional bureaus, institutions and other parallel development partners to equip them with the required skills, knowledge to meet the goal.

During the event, various government offices, exhibitors and pastoralists who have been actively taking part in the expo awarded recognition certificates.



Ethiopia secures over 47.5 mln USD exporting power

BY STAFF REPORTER

ADDIS ABABA - Ethiopia has secured over 47.5 million USD from electric power export, Ethiopian Electric Power (EEP) said.

EEP Sales and Customer Management Head Menelik Getahun told the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) that the country has earned more than 47.5 million USD by exporting electric power to neighboring countries in the past six months.

He noted that the organization has achieved over 47.5 million of the planned 66.2 million USD to be generated from energy export.

The Sudan conflict which affected the country’s ability to pay for its imported power on time is among the various reasons for the low performance, he mentioned.

Accordingly, he said, Ethiopia has cut 50 percent of the energy that had been providing to Sudan which in return decreased the income.

So far, Ethiopia didn’t collect 70 million USD revenue from the electric power it has exported to Sudan this year, according to Menelik.

Djibouti and Kenya also reduced the amount of power they buy from Ethiopia which affect the income designed to be generated in six months, he stated.

Despite the challenges, he expressed that the country has seen a 16 percent rise in its power export volume compared to last year’s same period.

As to Menelik, the country has sold eight million MW electric power of the planned 8.6 million MW in the aforementioned period.

Ethiopia supporting over 20,000 Sudanese refugees

BY STAFF REPORTER

ADDIS ABABA - Ethiopia would work with partners to resolve challenges that Sudanese refugees and asylum seekers are facing, Refugees and Returnees Service (RRS) announced.

In a press release sent to *The Ethiopian Herald*, RRS disclosed that Ethiopia in collaboration with partners, would continue supporting and easing the life of more than 20,000 Sudanese refugees and asylum seekers that have crossed its border via Kurmuk in search of safety and stability since the mid of April 2023.

Recognizing the urgency of the situation, the institute noted that a delegation led by RRS Director General Teyiba Hassen and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi have visited the migrants and discussed with their representatives who highlighted the existing challenges.

On the occasion, RRS Director General Teyiba Hassen has expressed her organization’s commitment to spare no effort in collaboration with partners to relocate the refugees and asylum seekers and resolve the challenging situation shortly.

“It’s heart-breaking to see women and the elderly, particularly children suffer this much due to misunderstandings between the parties to the conflict back home. Our people and government are committed to share what they’ve to the people of Sudan



Flippo and Teyba during the visit

as we’ve a lot of commonalities to cherish beyond neighborliness,” she said.

UNHCR High Commissioner Filippo Grandi on his part expressed deep concern on the situation in Sudan and vowed to do what it takes in his Commission’s capacity to support the people in need while appreciating Ethiopia for hosting the migrants.

“Thanks goes to Ethiopia for its shining example of hosting nearly a million refugees and asylum seekers despite challenges within. We also thank the regional government for allotting land for relocation,” Filippo said.

According to the release, the representatives of the refugees also applauded Ethiopia for graciously hosting them amidst their dire situation. “Hadn’t it been for the generosity of Ethiopians, our circumstances would have been far worse.”

The Sudan emergency is severely underfunded on a global scale and requires more support as we speak, RRS said in the statement.

The visiting team to Kurmuk emergency site comprised of officials from Benishangul-Gumuz state, RRS and UNHCR, it was learnt.

News

Ethiopia, UNIDO sign 28mIn USD project agreement

BY STAFF REPORTER

ADDIS ABABA-Ethiopia signs a 28 million USD (approximately 1.57 billion Birr) project agreement with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) to enhance the growth of the textile and garments industry in Ethiopia.

At a signing ceremony held in the Ministry of Finance, it was disclosed that the project will be financed in collaboration with the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) of which UNIDO's share of the program is 3 million USD.

The project which will be implemented by Ethiopian Textile Industries Development Institute in the next five years will focus on the promotion of a circular economy in the textile and garment sector through the introduction of resource-efficient technologies.

Moreover, the project is expected to



focus on recycling waste in the industry to minimize losses and maximize gains in the production process as well as enhance regulator and institutional capacity in the textile and garment industry.

UNIDO has been providing capacity-building and technical support to the industrial development efforts of Ethiopia focusing on the textile, leather, and agro-processing manufacturing sectors.

UNIDO's flagship program in Ethiopia namely the Program for Capacity Partnership (PCP) founded on a multistakeholder partnership to ensure institutional capacity development, strengthening of value chains, creation of value additions, and economic transition efforts all aimed at harnessing the potential of the manufacturing sector in Ethiopia.

Semereta Sewasew, State Minister of Finance, during the discussion, stated that following the expression of the government's ongoing and planned efforts to enhance the manufacturing sector and substitute imports she affirmed that the commitment of UNIDO will continue supporting the journey of industrialization in Ethiopia.

The agreement was signed by Semereta Sewasew, State Minister of Finance, and Calabro Aurelia Patrizia, UNIDO representative in Ethiopia with the attendance of H.E. Hassan Mohammed, State Minister of Industry.

Canadian gold miner set to...

is different from other countries' investments in its rich knowledge and technology package and it will have an immense role in knowledge and technology transfer in the country. Such an investment would also introduce Ethiopia to a new way of doing things, he elaborated.

Due to the rigorous work of all stakeholders to attract Canadian investment, Ethiopia that has no meaningful business with the former a few years ago can attract such a large-scale gold miner with the desired expertise and technological caliber,

Ambassador Fitsum further highlighted that sustainable economic growth, availability of land and competent labor are major factors that attract giant Canadian companies to Ethiopia's priority sectors including mining, agro-processing, and food industries. Consolidated efforts are underway to lure

Canadian businesses to engage in potash production too.

Moreover, the two countries are collaborating in the aviation industry and flights are available from Toronto to Addis all seven days a week. Thus, the flag carriers have been facilitating and strengthening the two countries' relations apart from bridging Canada's ties with the African continent.

"Canada has the reputation in the development of aviation, mining, education, technology, and agro-processing", he noted, adding that the situation provides a great opportunity to Ethiopia to lift its cooperation with the former to new heights and ensure mutual benefit.

Canada permits Ethiopian primary goods including coffee, oil seeds and leather products to enter into its market free of tax

though the latter does not sufficiently utilize the opportunity. Canada is the only nation that continuously supports the people of Ethiopia during difficult times and is among the leading development partners of the East African country.

Canada has been providing support to war-affected communities in Ethiopia as well as back democracy building in the country. Also, Canada is offering scholarships for Ethiopian students at the masters and PhD levels.

"The two countries have a great opportunity to advance their partnership in the economic, investment, and trade frontiers, and their policy is based on mutual respect that fits each other," Ambassador Fitsum remarked.

Diplomatic relations between Ethiopia and Canada date back to over 70 years.

Ethiopia...

several non-African countries are expected to attend the summit and side events of bilateral and multilateral discussions will be organized. "So, it needs substantial effort, so we do."

Welcoming thousands of guests is not something easy. Beyond the usual preparation, hotels and security agencies will serve guests with better packages. The national committee for the preparation has also discussed coordination mechanisms with AU officials, the spokesperson elaborated.

Ambassador Meles further stated that Ethiopian diplomats and officials will discuss with world leaders and higher officials in bilateral and multilateral issues of mutual importance at side events. "Last year, the Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister and diplomats had discussions with more than 50 country leaders and higher officials. This year, we expect more diplomatic discussions."

In related development, he indicated that the closing date of the ongoing Diplomacy Exhibition has been extended. The exhibition was launched last 11 January. MoFA extended the closing date to show the long diplomatic history of Ethiopia to leaders and diplomatic guests of the AU Summit.

"The exhibition has received appreciative comments and reactions since its opening and we extended the closing date to make it available for incoming guests accordingly," he remarked.

The 44th Ordinary Session of the Executive Council and the 37th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the AU Heads of State scheduled to take place from February 14-18, 2024.

South Ethiopia State sees hotel expansion...

bringing about multilayered benefits to the state economy as well as the public at large.

Wolaita Zone Chief Administrator Samuel Fola on his part mentioned that inauguration of the resort would not only enhance the tourism sector but also showcases the state's immense attraction potential.

Encouraging the private sector's robust investment is one of the government's priorities and the state administration has undertaken several activities to lure businesses to the area as well as ensure enduring peace which is the precondition for any sort of investment.

According to him, the inauguration of Haile Hotel Wolaita would play an essential role

for the 'national cities cooperation forum' which is expected to be held soon. Also, the facility contributes highly experienced and skilled hotel and tourism professionals to the State.

Tesfaye further noted that apart from providing ample jobs, the hotel is of great significance to encourage other investors to come and do business in the area.

Haile Gebreselassie, Owner of Haile Hotels and Resorts said at the inauguration ceremony that besides many outcomes, the hotel would contribute due share to ease the pressing urban unemployment in the area. "Upon fully operational, the hotel has the capacity to increase the number of its

permanent employees from the current 160 to 300."

According to athletics legend-turned-successful business magnate, the newly opened hotel has 107 rooms and seven meeting halls that accommodates from 15-600 people. Plans are also set to inaugurate other hotels and resorts in Jimma, DebreBirhan and Shashemene towns and the company envisions expanding its wings to East African countries.

Haile Hotels and Resorts also pledged a 2/3million Birr for students, especially school girls in the state.

Haile Hotels and Resorts has so far employed 1800 citizens.

Opinion

Making summit viable means for prosperous and sustainable Africa

BY MENGESHA AMARE

Taking the importance of moving in unison and integration for bringing about concrete difference, the continent of Africa has planned and been working on it from time to time to bring about what it has long been aspiring-- being stable, prosperous and chaos-free continent. Yes, Africa is now rising. The continent is endeavoring a lot to be a landmass of its vision and set target. Of the various steps the African countries have been taking, the summits conducted keeping some sorts of time intervals like the African Union Summit, which is believed to take place from February 17 to 18, 2024, in Addis Ababa, have been viable means to discuss a range of continent and regional issues.

Being the diplomatic capital of Africa and the seat of the African Union, Ethiopia has had the opportunity to host this grand meeting. Its capital Addis Ababa (New Flower, in local language Amharic) has long been preparing to confidently receive its respected guests from all over the globe especially from the African Continent.

As member countries and delegations represented by Presidents, Vice-Presidents, Prime Ministers, Foreign Ministers and other high-ranking officials, as well as the Secretary-General of the United Nations and heads of other international and continental organizations are expected to participate in the Summit, a multitude of issues that can definitely hold water and contribute a lot to the effort geared towards helping Africa boost change are supposed to be dealt with.

Unequivocally, each participant entity has to understand what is expected of them and effectively discharge responsibilities as well as tasks with a view to contributing to the success of the African Union Summit and its ultimate target-- pushing Africa steps forward and make it the land of prosperity and freedom for its inhabitants and beyond.

Diplomatically speaking, the summit bespeaks Ethiopia's relentless and systematic move consolidating ties, be they are bilateral, trilateral or multilateral bonds, ranging from neighboring nations to cross-continental and global trajectory.

Moving from the margins to the mainstream, the economic growth is gaining momentum and political backing to provide nations, regions, cities and rural areas with new opportunities to maneuver existing catastrophes and be more resilient in the face of future shocks and stipulated or unprecedented jeopardy.

Africa is genuinely left with a long journey as it has to deal with a serious of assignments in relation to corruption, maladministration, nepotism, fraud and treachery though the degree varies, some nations do have a relatively better status quo in this regard. The continent also houses a number of refugees to be assisted, displaced ones to be rehabilitated, asylum seekers to be well nurtured and local fighters here and there, who have felt discomfort with the incumbent regimes of almost over half of the nations of the continent, have to be convinced with governing ideas so long as, both sides, the ruling and the ones

who have thought there are wrong doings, are working for the same cause--making their respective countries competent and free from state of inequalities and injustice.

True, it is high time for Africa to effectively combat all sorts of wrong doings via promoting economic growth, intensifying coordinated efforts against climate change, supporting the green transition, tackling housing and food security issues, making schemes used for creating jobs opportunities rife, as well as providing all those in dire need across the continent with goods and services, notably for disadvantaged and destitute individuals. It is also quite crucial to foster socioeconomic solidarity, politico-economic bond, as well as peace-development nexus as such invaluable steps are of paramount importance in making a difference in all aspects.

The occasion, summit, needs to be meaningfully held since the African continent in particular and the universe in general are at stake following the unbearable repercussions of climate change and other related social, economic, political and the lake factors.

The Summit should be made a milestone of the indispensable continental actions that can potentially lay the foundation for growth, change and regional integration. It has also to be a glue knitting policy makers, influential leaders and others that would contribute a lot to the effort geared towards emancipating Africa from all sorts of challenges and highly related socioeconomic and political traps through reinvigorating innovative business models that build social cohesion and resilience. Yes, addressing many hot topics revolving around expectations of the youth, future plans of the continent cascaded from every member country to arrive at the 2063 continental goals, the place of women in the social economy and beyond, efforts exerted to intensify green economy and digital transformation, legal frameworks and social impact measurements, steps taken to successfully fight corruption, the very cancerous of the world over predominately the continent under discussion, have to come to the forefront if Africa is to lift itself out of the trap of all wrongs. True, solutions must be found for environmental challenges as it is the basis for running every activity by diffusing a number of lucrative environmental protection moves.

Besides, challenges including climate change, increasing inequality and food insecurity, conflicts, be they are sporadic or recurrent, have to be dealt with for good by strengthening collaborations that aim to find new solutions to advance future stability and good way of living.

Principally, the core principles of the AU and international law in their bilateral and international relations need to be well adjudicated and translated into practical actions for the benefit of the people of Africa. Furthermore, African states are expected to cement ties refraining themselves from further actions and pronouncements that could negatively impact the strong bonds of good neighborliness, friendship and solidarity existing between/among them. Basically, this can be nurtured through exercising restraint, de-escalate and engage

The Summit should be made a milestone of the indispensable continental actions that can potentially lay the foundation for growth, change and regional integration

in meaningful dialogue towards finding a peaceful resolution of the matter, if any, in the spirit of 'African solutions to African problems.'

Interestingly, Ethiopia is making the necessary preparations to warmly welcome and successfully host the 37th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Heads of State and Government of the African Union (AU). Since the summit is also expected to bring leaders of various African countries and officials of non-member states and leaders of international organizations, among others, together, a range of lucrative ideas would be tabled on and possible mechanisms for the problems are going to be devised. Needles to state, the African Union is set to pay special attention to education and training with the theme of the year focusing on educating an Africa fit for the 21st century: building resilient education systems for increased access to inclusive, qualitative, lifelong and relevant learning for Africa.

The summit will also look into how the continent can maintain momentum in addressing issues of peace and security, regional integration, and development.

Besides inspiring Africans to discover more about their diplomatic history by highlighting the contemporary diplomatic accomplishments, the diplomacy exhibition depicting their history of diplomacy and current diplomatic achievements on the bilateral, as well as multilateral spheres. No doubt, diversifying diplomatic activities is crucial in enhancing cooperation with various countries based on the principle of equality, win-win fashion, respect and partnership. Complete reunification of the African continent through the enlargement process is a geo-strategic investment in peace, security and prosperity needs to be well intensified. Besides, the Union is expected to make a significant investments in the region, including through the Economic and Investment Plan, which supports investment projects in the fields of transport, energy, the digital and ecological transitions, the private sector and social development, including actively engaging the youth in various socioeconomic spheres.

The summit has to be a viable means to make the joint vision of all sate members a reality, and the vision is to consolidate a revived partnership for solidarity, security, peace and sustainable and sustained

economic development and prosperity for citizens of the continent and the future generations, bringing together people, regions, associations and organizations. This renewed partnership will be founded on geography, acknowledgment of history, human ties, respect for sovereignty, mutual respect and accountability, shared values, equality between partners and reciprocal commitments. It has also to be the driving force in promoting common priorities, shared values, international law, and preserving together interests and common public goods. It needs to center protection of human rights for all, gender equality and women's empowerment in all spheres of life, respect for democratic principles, good governance and the rule of law, actions to preserve the climate, environment and biodiversity, sustainable and inclusive economic growth, the fight against inequalities, support for children's rights, and the inclusion of women, young people and the most disadvantaged.

All the journeys have to lead member countries and beyond to a prosperous and sustainable Africa. The pro continent activities should also help nations build more diversified, inclusive, sustainable and resilient economies. All African countries have to move in unison with a view to exasperating investment in energy, transport and digital infrastructure aligned with an energy transition that is fair, just and equitable, taking green growth, digital transformation, sustainable and decent job creation, into account.

Let me exhort my case urging all African leaders to capitalize on all ways of emancipating the nations from the grip of dependency, poverty, underdevelopment and submissive syndrome as the arms of most of the leaders of many nations of the continent are highly susceptible to be twisted by interested groups and some are working against their respective citizenry at the expense of the mass. Africa lacks nothing except committed leadership and confident management that can come up with sound decisions primarily benefiting local population instead of serving the interest of the masters. The underlined point here is no one can come and act accordingly to make Africa a land of its own people at all.

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

Editorial

The cause that keeps our head high

The victory made at Adwa is the bedrock to win back our dignity. Colonizers, who were possessed by a capitalistic demon, robbed off Africa's industrious people to exploit their labor and took the dear people to the other side of the Pacific.

On the table in Berlin in 1884/5, we, black people, were dehumanized. There had been enough civilization in Africa that was disrupted by the advent of the wicked trans-African slave trade which lasted over 300 years. On its heel came the colonialists to enslave Africans on their own land. And the initiative taken by Otto von Bismark put the cruel knife on the body of almost an entire Africa.

The sharp dehumanizing edge of the colonial knife looked like to inflict a lasting harm on African people indirectly and the entire black people in general until Emperor Menelik II mobilized Ethiopians from across the length and breadth of the country. The wicked sharp edge of the knife was unable to slice the sovereign and dignified black people in the battlefield at Adwa. The ill-conceived project to subdue Africans/black people and the seemingly unstoppable imperialism was proven impossible. It was a matter of time, otherwise Adwa moved the entire black people, of course all the oppressed ones.

Raymond Jonas, a history professor, in his 2011 book entitled: *The Battle of Adwa: African Victory in the Age of Empire* recounts the triumph. In March 1896 a well-disciplined and massive Ethiopian army did the unthinkable.... In an age of relentless European expansion, Ethiopia had successfully defended its independence and cast doubt upon an unshakable certainty of the age - that sooner or later all Africans would fall under the rule of Europeans.

Many researchers and writers alike attempted to fathom the triumph. Some described it as a 'Victory of Justice over Injustice'; others highlighted its significance in terms of 'charting a new course in the history of humanity' and the rest tried to elucidate it as a historical phenomenon that humanized the entire black people.

The conference to partition Africa is easier to understand—it was conceived out of greediness, selfishness, malice and ignorance if you like. But, when one comes to the triumph of Adwa, there are not enough words to describe it. But may be one can attempt to understand it in terms of "selflessness", "self-worth", "dignity" and "righteousness". It is the pinnacle of black peoples' achievement. It is from here that the giant scholars and pan-Africanists drew their lessons to start the engine of the struggle for freedom and complete liberation.

Early Pan-Africanists from Henry Sylvester-Williams of the West Indies, W.E.B. Du Bois of the USA to Kwame Nkrumah delved into the wisdom of the victory and went to accelerating pan-Africanism. With the seamless effort of Emperor Haileselassie I, pan-Africanism has taken an institutional shape in Addis Ababa in 1963.

When we mark the 'Black History Month' in the month of February, we pay homage to all the black people who sweat to change the way we live today. The ancient knowledge and wisdom of the black is behind today's well-developed nations, be it the USA or countries in the EU and beyond.

The mother of all black people, Africa, and its children all over the world are still facing myriads of challenges. These challenges, most of which originates from Africa's own riches, must be acutely tackled. The youth, who make up the majority of the over a billion people should get proper education—education that would emancipate the mind. The 37th Ordinary Session of the AU says it all: "Educate an African fit for the 21st Century: Building resilient education systems for increased access to inclusive, lifelong, quality, and relevant learning in Africa".

Happy Black History Month!



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Opinion

Addressing root causes, underlying factors to prevent terrorism

BY ADDISALEM MULAT

There is no doubt that the subject of terrorism is an imminent peril that requires collective efforts as well as collaboration among numerous countries. As one would expect, the intricacy and internal impact of this delinquent cannot be undervalued putting the accent on the need for countries within a region to join forces against radicalism at the earliest possible time. Speaking frankly, comprehending the linkage of terrorism is vital on the grounds that its repercussions are not bounded to a single country's borders.

The global interconnection of contemporary world means that offenses against terror can rapidly go beyond national borders influencing worldwide security and steadfastness at the earliest possible moment. It is evident that the encounter of terrorism is located within its continuously every changing nature. In actual fact, anarchist organizations are competent at espousing alien tactics which demands a continuing alternation of approaches and counterattacks by governments and law enforcement bodies.

As a matter of fact, to successfully fight against terrorism necessary measures must be taken to actively oversee these fluctuating dangers and make certain the safety and well-being of masses.

It is certain that governments and law enforcement bodies have the cards stacked against countering terrorism as a consequence of the nimbleness and flexibility of anarchist groups. This continued hazard necessitates an unceasing endeavor to inspect and investigate potential risks allowing speedy implementation of precautionary measures. Periodical assessments and announcement on the topic of various approaches are vitally important to stay a step ahead of extremists reducing the potential implications of their actions.

The exchange of intelligence between countries and international security agencies is fundamental to upholding collective conscientious and preemptively tackling cutting-edge risks. As radicalism remains evolving, joint maneuvers and simulations must play a key part in concocting law enforcement bodies to effectively react to potential hazards.

By simulating numerous scenarios, armed security forces can ameliorate their skills and advance synchronized response strategies making the most of their ability to defend noncombatants and infrastructure from various acts of terrorism. As a matter of fact, fighting radicalism demands endeavors to tackle deep-rooted causes that play a part in its pervasiveness.

The concern of terrorism should not be tackled in segregation by any individual nation. A shared, concerted, and comprehensive response is important to address the multifaceted and vagrant hazards. To bring about permanent solutions to the complications of terrorism, it is extremely important for all interested groups to undertake all-embracing and multidimensional approaches.

This procedure should address the assorted causes that pay a regular contribution to terrorism. By addressing these fundamental issues, nations can work towards permanent solutions that avert the rise of terrorism through the passage of time.

It is certain that knowing the importance of collaboration is paramount in successfully fighting terrorism. All nations must comprehend the benefits of collective efforts and collaboration to tackle this worldwide threat in the shortest possible time. By joining forces and resource sharing, expertise, and intelligence, nations can augment their capacities to thwart acts of terrorism.

It is a well-known fact that extremism is not confined to a specific region or nationality. It is a pervasive and transnational issue that can affect any country, irrespective of its geographic location. It is crucial to adopt a global perspective when addressing terrorism, recognizing that a united front against this threat is imperative to safeguard global security. A key prerequisite for fruitful counter-terrorism endeavors is the setting up of partnerships and the exchange of information among a wide spectrum of stakeholders which includes security agencies, political organizations, and the general public.

By pooling resources, sharing expertizes and combining resources, these various entities can cooperatively work towards averting terrorist offences. By having access to responsible intelligence, enforcement agencies can preventively classify potential hazards and take appropriate actions to thwart them. Effective information sharing platforms must be designed for facilitating the progression of critical information among relevant stakeholders.

While on the subject, developing a cross-cutting strategy place the emphasis on cooperation and understanding the extraterritorial nature of terrorism are significant to efficiently tackle this complicated issue. By setting up collaborations, exchanging information, complying with human rights, and engaging with the public, nations can smooth the path of their talents of gathering accurate intelligence, rapidly respond, and avert terrorist assaults.

To effectually avert glitches related to terrorism, it is vital for all nations to form an alliance and work in collaboration. It goes without saying the aspect of terrorism is continuously sprouting with criminal organizations turning out to be progressively more sophisticated, adaptable, and diverse in their operations. This requires the expansion of ground-breaking and dynamic approaches to counter-terrorism that can effectively respond to the changing trends.

Similarly, to successfully mitigate and elude terrorist actions, it is important to vigorously steal a march on the threat curve. This entails persistent innovation and the implementation of new expertise to propel intelligence gathering and monitor capabilities with the intention of preserving the timely detection and neutralization of terrorist plots.

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

Business & Economy

Soda ash reserve for fueling economic growth, industrial expansion

BY HIZKEL HAILU

Ethiopia, as a country, is known for its rich natural resources and hosts vast reserves of soda ash mineral in different parts of the nation. Soda ash is a versatile chemical compound used in various industries, including glass manufacturing, chemicals, detergents, and metallurgy. Its wide range of applications makes it a valuable raw material contributing to the growth and development of these sectors.

Different sources indicated that there is much amount of soda ash mineral at the Abiata-Shalla lakes. With more than 380 million tons of soda ash available, the Abijata-Shalla Soda Ash Share Company has capitalized on this resource to significantly contribute to Ethiopia's economy, so said Gemechu Negera, Head of the company.

Soda ash, also known as sodium carbonate, is a fundamental ingredient in various industries such as glass manufacturing, detergent production, and chemical processing. It plays a crucial role in neutralizing acidic solutions, controlling pH levels, and facilitating chemical reactions. The global demand for soda ash is substantial, and Ethiopia's abundant reserves provide a strategic advantage in meeting both domestic and international requirements.

Noting that Soda ash is a commodity that Ethiopia is importing to meet its industrial needs, he avowed that the establishing the Abijata-Shalla Soda Ash Share Company has significantly reduced its dependence on imported soda ash. One of the key economic advantages of soda ash production in Ethiopia lies in import substitution. This import substitution strategy leads to cost savings, strengthens the country's balance of trade, contributes to local job creation, and promotes the growth of local industries.

Moreover, the availability of locally produced soda ash is catalyzing the growth of domestic industries. Previously, Ethiopian businesses importing soda ash faced challenges such as high transportation costs, import duties, and currency fluctuations. However, the presence of the Abijata-Shalla Soda Ash Share Company has alleviated these obstacles, empowering local industries to become more competitive and efficient. This increased competitiveness has spurred productivity gains and encouraged the growth of downstream industries, further strengthening Ethiopia's economy.

The establishment and operation of the Abijata-Shalla Soda Ash Share Company has also facilitated technology transfer and knowledge exchange in Ethiopia. Collaborations with international partners and suppliers have allowed the company to adopt advanced production techniques, modern machinery, and efficient processes. This transfer of knowledge and technology has a ripple effect on domestic industries, as it promotes innovation and enhances productivity.

Through partnerships and collaborations, local employees receive training and exposure to best practices in soda ash production. This not only improves their skills but also creates a pool of expertise that can be leveraged for future industrial development. The knowledge exchange between international experts and local professionals contributes to the overall growth and competitiveness of Ethiopia's manufacturing sector.



The Abijata Soda Ash Project

By prioritizing social and environmental responsibility, the soda ash industry in Ethiopia contributes to sustainable development and the well-being of local communities

This production also brings the potential to drive regional development and economic integration. In this regard Gemechu emphasized that his office has a multiplier effect on the local economy, creating opportunities for suppliers, service providers, and other businesses in the surrounding areas. This stimulates economic activity, generates income, and improves the standard of living for communities in the vicinity.

It can also create numerous employment opportunities across various sectors. The establishment and operation of the Abijata-Shalla Soda Ash Share Company have directly provided more than 200 job opportunities for engineers, chemists, technicians, and administrative staff. Additionally, the growth of downstream industries that rely on soda ash has further expanded employment opportunities, benefiting the local workforce and contributing to poverty reduction, he stated.

Mentioning that Soda ash production has become a significant source of revenue for Ethiopia, he explained that the Company has carried out different activities to start exporting its product for the foreign market. Hence, it is also seemingly

important to stabilize the country's currency and finance essential imports.

The revenue generated from soda ash sales can also be reinvested in infrastructure development, education, healthcare, and other critical sectors, fueling overall economic growth.

Moreover, he elucidated that the presence of a reliable domestic source of soda ash has encouraged the diversification of Ethiopia's industrial base. Industries that previously relied on imported soda ash can now expand their operations and explore new product lines. This diversification not only reduces dependency on specific sectors but also promotes innovation and competitiveness, fostering sustainable economic growth in the long term, he noted.

Soda ash production in Ethiopia is accompanied by a commitment to environmental sustainability. The Abijata-Shalla Soda Ash Share Company upholds social and environmental responsibility in its operations. By adhering to strict environmental management practices, the company minimizes its impact on the surrounding ecosystem.

As to Gemechu the Company employs modern technologies and rigorous environmental management practices to minimize its ecological footprint. Efforts are made to conserve water resources, manage waste responsibly, and mitigate any potential harm to the fragile ecosystem of the Abiata and Shalla lakes, he explained.

It can also spur industrial diversification in Ethiopia. Accordingly, industries can now expand their operations and explore new product lines. This diversification not only reduces dependency on specific sectors but also promotes innovation and competitiveness, fostering sustainable economic growth in the long term.

The presence of abundant soda ash reserves has attracted both domestic and foreign investors, leading to the establishment of new industries and the expansion of existing ones. This diversification strengthens the country's industrial base and creates a more resilient economy, capable of withstanding external shocks. Moreover, the development of

downstream industries leads to value addition, job creation, and the retention of foreign exchange within the country.

Additionally, the company implements social initiatives aimed at benefiting local communities. This includes supporting education and healthcare projects, providing employment opportunities for nearby residents, and engaging in corporate social responsibility activities. By prioritizing social and environmental responsibility, the soda ash industry in Ethiopia contributes to sustainable development and the well-being of local communities.

Additionally, the head emphasized that works and studies have been undertaken in order to inaugurate phase II Shalla lake soda ash production project. This will also enhance the economic development of the area and create job opportunities for the local population. The Shalla Lake soda ash production project aims to extract and process soda ash, which is a valuable mineral used in various industries such as glass manufacturing, detergent production, and chemical processing.

During phase two of the project, further research and studies have been conducted to ensure the efficient extraction and processing of soda ash from Shalla Lake. This includes evaluating the lake's resources, implementing advanced technologies, and establishing sustainable practices to minimize environmental impact, he added.

All in all, the abundant reserves of soda ash in Ethiopia, coupled with the operations of the Abijata-Shalla Soda Ash Share Company, have brought significant economic advantages to the country. By substituting imports and promoting domestic industries, Ethiopia has reduced its dependence on foreign sources and fostered economic growth. The employment generation, revenue contribution, industrial diversification, and commitment to environmental sustainability make soda ash production a crucial component of Ethiopia's economic development strategy.

As the industry continues to thrive, it is poised to contribute even more to the country's overall progress in the years to come. The country can further position itself as a key player in the global soda ash market, driving economic growth and prosperity.

Art & Culture

Inconsolable from conscience pang

(Short Story)

BY ALEM HAILU G/KRISTOS

“Those who walk uprightly enter into peace; they find rest as they lie in death!”

As custom bids, an invitee, I had to attend a luncheon thrown to commemorate the 40th-day death memorial of a gentleman in the neighborhood. Earlier in the morning a tombstone inauguration was held. According to orthodox religious belief, such a day is seen as the day of retribution for the deceased. Therefore, the bereaved throw a luncheon or a breakfast ceremony on this special day and invite the destitute as well as people they know to the boon so that they soothe the bereaved with “May God forgive the soul of the deceased!”

A white tent was pitched near the main house to accommodate invitees. When I got inside the tent after I got my hand washed by a youngster standing by the door with a jug full of water extracted from a pail, I saw a picture of the deceased in a frame placed on a table. He was a spectacled middle-aged man with gray head. Beholders could discern serenity as innocence was stamped on his face.

A fat and tall candle bearing tears was lit in front of the photo symbolizing the brevity of our existence as we approach our destruction by every flitting second. It reminded me what the philosophers assert ‘Given a guy say Mr. A it is possible to claim, ‘A is A and A is not A’ as it simultaneously draws closer to its end with every flitting second.’

Dressed in full black making a sharp color contrast with the tent, relatives and family members of the deceased were sat, side by side, on a long chair.

Heading to a table bearing an array of dishes and picking my preferences I headed to the back row of chairs laid out for people called to attend the occasion.

Among the bereaved an angelic lady who displayed symmetry in facial arrangement and physical appearance was silently weeping time and again wiping her tears with a handkerchief. Though those who sat by her right and left were goading as well as prevailing on her to stop shedding many tears, she proved inconsolable. Those who had had their feel of the feast were bowing out wishing for the repose of the soul of the deceased. Some were trying to pat the lady to contain her emotion in vain.

Raising from his chair, clearing his throat and scanning the tent, a priest with a turban, of course, the confessing father of the bereaved said “As we believe in life after death we must not lament when someone parts us to go to our heavenly father for judgment especially when he is a pious person like the deceased. Of course, it is natural to weep when the soul of a person parts from his body, when his body leaves his home and when he is committed to the ground. We could weep remembering his kindness and the good time we spent together. Nothing more or nothing less! We better mend our missteps

after repentance. Such days must serve an alarm call to do introspection and gravitate towards God,” then heading to the lady he somewhat hushed her down and returned back to his seat.

By chance it was beside an ill-filled-sack-looking virago living next door to me I sat. When a lad with a glass approached me to pour out *Tella* (a home-made beer) from a big white kittle the virago commented “It is alcoholic. You will like it. It dispels melancholy. I drank three glasses yet I’m thirsty,” she extended her glass to the chap to add more.

With my chin pointing to the inconsolable lady, obviously the wife of the deceased, and looking at the photo of the deceased I asked the virago “How long did they stay in marriage? You see I’m a new settler in the village.”

“Over 20 years.”

“She is cute. She must have been smitten by a harrowing grief. What a pitiful lady,” I tried to mirror the lady’s grief with my face.

“People judge by outward appearance, but the Lord looks at heart,” the virago smirked quoting Samuel 16:7.

I posed “What do you mean by the outward appearance? Is she lacking in character?”

“Their marriage was a picture-perfect one. It is not based on the untruth of the saying ‘In love the opposite attracts’. He was a faithful and responsible man who gave number one priority to his family .But she was a bit liberal.”

“I winced aghast at her slackness in faith. Is it from conscience prink she has become inconsolable?”

“What else could it be then? He did forgive her once finding her red-handed in consensual intimacy in his bed with his close friend. You see her husband suddenly returned back home from a field tour following a car accident that claimed the life of the driver. He too did suffer a minor injury on his arm.”

“It was a double-edged blow on him because it was a double betrayal,” I projected a horror-stamped face.

“When we were expecting he would divorce her he forgave her believing the lame reason it was simply a hormone activity,” he put her right arm on her head and smirked.

“It could not be so as it was planned. How could the untrustworthy friend paid a visit, while his best friend was away?” I looked at virago seeking an affirmative answer. She winked at me and laughed sarcastically by way of saying “how smart you are?”

“But due to her dalliance she lost her reputation and strength because people began looking down on her ‘the unfaithful.’ You see when she endeared herself to him she was an errand girl in the organization where he was a deputy executive. After affiancing her he helped her to pursue education from high school up to university level in extension



programs. I cannot tell you the grand graduation ceremony he threw when she graduated. All and sundry were invited. He was never remiss in helping out the needy in the village.”

“I presume he cut a cherished corner in the hearts of the villagers,” I looked at the multitude of invitees packed in the tent.

“Have you not seen the flood of people that attended his funeral procession?”

“I was abroad for training,”

“I see, you didn’t hear about the cause of his death,” she craned her neck to funnel a secret.

“More often than not spending a quality time in night clubs along with boozing circles the subject of our discussion used to come late at night to knock the door a bit tipsy. Topsy-turvy the deceased used to get home late in the afternoon,” she once more smirked.

“How selfish and irresponsible she was?”

“She was facing a reckless endangerment. Though her husband and confessing father tried to make her to see to reason she turned a deaf ear. One cursed night, tugs in the village got embroiled in a clash while dividing the money they stole. You see thieves quarrel while they divide the wealth they acquired in a filthy way but not when they steal it.”

“What happened?”

“While they were hurling stones at one another split into two groups and when stones were smashing corrugated sheets the deceased ran out of home thinking his wife was in danger caught in the crossfire of stones.”

“Did he meet his end?”

“Yes, a stone banged the back of his neck. Though he was taken to hospital he proved brief. Unconscious he was uttering his wife’s name.”

“Oh my gush! Did she arrive on time?”

“No, she was tardy in coming as her mobile was switched off. Those who know where she hung out got her in person and informed her about the tragedy. She fainted but woke up soon.”

“A river of tears could not wipe out the pile of sins committed on this innocent man. The biblical excerpt Isaiah57:2 put on the invitation card is meticulously selected to portray the deceased,” I pulled out the card and showed it to the virago.

“Having shallow emotions I can assure you she will forget him soon. It is crocodile tears she is shedding,” the virago said gulping down the glassful of *Tella*.

“Yes, there is a saying ‘your attitude shows your altitude’, behaviorally the spouses were diametrically opposite,” when I got up to leave the tent she followed suit. When we bowed out, heading to the lady in point, the virago tapped her back “Bear it up we will let you back in shape.”

Outside the compound “as the priest indicated we have to engage in introspection and try to walk upright. Repentance without the conviction to change is futile,” I shook her hands goodbye.

“Yes, if you drag a just washed dress on the mud, it will rather gather more dirt,” smirking and laughing till her sides splat the virago went her way.

Science & Technology

Transferring climate technology requires international cooperation

BY GIRMACHEW GASHAW

The world we live in is rapidly changing to the worst due to the ever-increasing carbon emissions. Understanding the adverse effect of climate change, many countries have been conducting scientific researches and coming up with pertinent findings or solutions.

Apart from conducting researches, scientists are now coming up with new innovations that have significant value for the reduction of carbon footprint. The technologies or innovations can transform developing nations' economic and technological landscape. With advancements in artificial intelligence, the internet of things, and electric vehicles, these nations have a burgeoning potential to leapfrog traditional developmental stages.

The third world countries, which are highly exposed to climate change related impacts, do not have the capacity to get the green technologies which have great significance in terms of minimizing carbon emission.

Yong Jun Baek (Dr), is a researcher in Energy and Environment Policy. He told *The Ethiopian Herald* that international cooperation is highly needed to transfer tangible and intangible climate technologies to third world countries. However, transferring tangible climate technology alone is not helpful to these countries to resist climate crisis, building their soft power is also equally imperative.

The Korean Institute of Green Technology in which he is currently working is performing various tasks on transferring green technology. The institute is also making them with funding. The institute is focusing on policy, matchmaking those technologies that are developed in Korea and trying to transfer them to the developing countries through international cooperation.

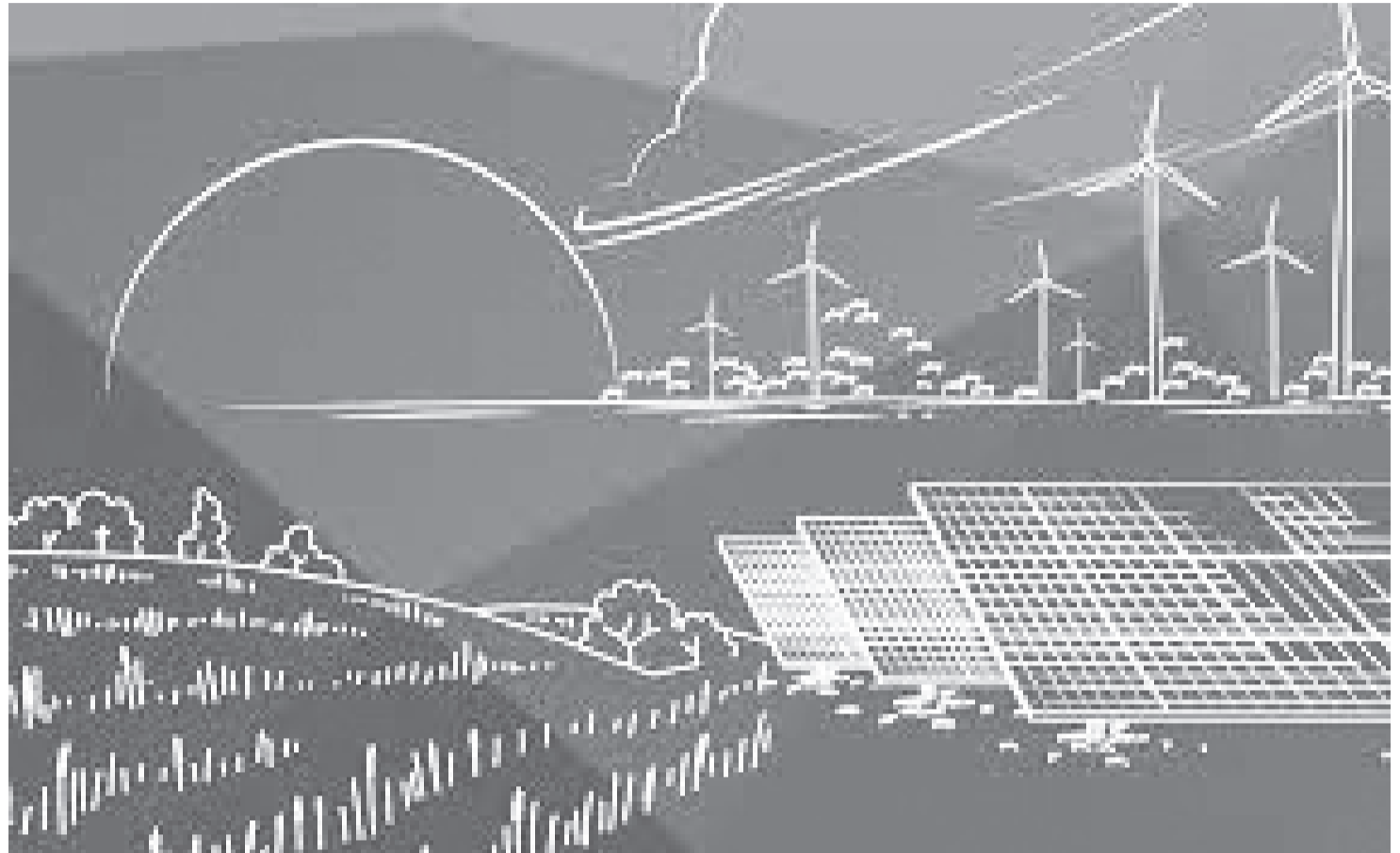
"Institute like us supporting the developing countries under the UNFCCC. We have the CTCN which provides technical assistance to the developing countries. It is a need-based one. If a given country requests a climate technology, we try to fine-tune them with various kinds of technologies."

"At the end, what we need to achieve is to create a climate technology market. In this regard, I personally think ODA - a government aid designed to promote the economic development and welfare of developing countries, is very important."

Funding the Small and Micro Enterprises to innovate appropriate technologies that fit the need of the recipient countries and arranging short and long term capacity building trainings are the missions given to the Institute, he said.

All the developed countries have done Research and Development on ways of transferring the advanced technologies to the recipient countries. With these climate technologies, they are not only helping improve climate resilience but also assisting the development their economies.

Pointing that it is hard for the developed countries to support businesses abroad,



Yong Jun Baek (Dr)

It is important to combat climate change as the world reached to a record high level of carbon emissions and the situation is getting worse and worse

his country for instance, support SMEs to invest in the business of the African countries. The climate technologies can be transferred to the African countries through following as a win-win approach. "That is why I am focusing and emphasizing on the importance of international cooperation and technological transfer."

When countries are developing, they rely heavily on development projects which contribute to the severe damage of the environment. They do not have given enough space for the environment protection or preservation. After they reached to the turning point, the countries are urbanized enough devoid of focusing on the environment.

As the country develops, the environment pollution level will come down. That is a traditional path way which the African countries should not expect to pursue. These countries still use coal or more fossil fuel instead of turn much quicker from the customary way to applying climate technologies.

Ensuring sustainable development and climate change are the two important things that the Africa countries need to overcome. At this juncture, the third world countries need to have access to the state of the art technologies and disseminate knowledge across their respective countries. When we think of transferring technologies to the developing countries, the important thing that comes to our mind is the Official Development Assistance (ODA).

Even though the government funding is important, there is a limit to how much a government can do. Government runs with taxes as the assistance coming from the pocket of its people. So, there is always a limit on how much it can fund.

What I think ODA can do is start things off or kicks start. This in itself is not an end or

goal. Eventually, developed countries need to create a climate technology market. So, ODA is a system that developed countries are helping the third world countries and ODC is a committee that processes the ODA. Business should be able to be a part of that ecosystem for them to come in.

So, we start off with public sector financing and eventually move towards private sector which is really difficult for them to as they are established to make profit. However, climate technology is not the business area where investors preferred to engage in as it is not make them profitable. It is important to combat climate change as the world reached to a record high level of carbon emissions and the situation is getting worse and worse.

However, it is not the role of private business to handle social issues such as climate change. Even though the money is there, the private sector does not have a reason to jump into it. The government has to do it because it is one of its roles. As it is a global issue, countries in the world get together and work to redress the climate change impacts.

In order for attract the private sector to green technology; companies need to get some kind of incentive. That is where the ODA try to pull them in. Large companies have enough resource and manpower to involve in the sector interested in. However, small and medium enterprises have the technology or innovation but they have not have the resources. So, we help them through various funding and help transfer technology to different countries.

In our green earth program, our institute tries to help all small companies that have the climate technology but do not have the funding or resources or network to create business out of it. We are helping them find networking or areas their technologies make use. So concerning them we are match making with the developing countries that requires to have these technologies.

Society

Nurturing reading habits

BY MENGISTEAB TESHOME

Countries give due value for the habit of reading and invest hugely to nurture it through various activities. In turn, countries that can promote and develop a high reading culture towards their citizens are able to generate skilled human power and an informed community that could think logically and rationally as well as respond to adversaries.

Ethiopia is also undertaking various activities to instill the culture of reading among its young generation. Because it is a valuable mechanism to achieve academic excellence, develop skilled human power as well as for continuous self-improvement, aside from being a lifelong wisdom, it is striving to inculcate reading habit among the young generation and make it their all-time activity.

Along with the other activities vital to cultivate the culture of reading, by organizing reading festivals and book fairs, it is endeavoring to make reading a culture among the people.

This year's City-Wide Reading Festival and Book Fair was also organized and held for five consecutive days, from 25 January to 1st February, 2024 at the premises of the Addis Ababa Museum under the theme "Reader Generation for Nation's Prosperity".

At the festival, the city's renowned publishing houses and distributors, booksellers, public and private university libraries, various embassy libraries, and others took part.

Subsequent to the festival, *The Ethiopian Herald* approached Library and Documentation Information Communication Technology Directorate Director with the Addis Ababa Culture, Arts and Tourism Bureau Addisu Mekonnen (PhD) to share his expertise and the activities the Bureau has been carrying out to cultivate and redevelop the culture of reading among the generation.

Reading has a number of rewards not only at individual level but also nationwide. Cognizant of the return, the Bureau organized the 8th round Addis Ababa City Reading Festival in collaboration with higher education institutions, reputed book publishers and distributors in a bid to raise awareness towards reading habits. The festival was celebrated under the motto 'Reader Generation for Nation's Prosperity.' The prime goal of the festival was to increase awareness on how to nurture reading culture within the community.

According to him, families should provide children with reading materials and space; and above all, they should be role models by engaging themselves in reading to kindle their desire to read.

Though reading is regarded as the most important value that we all should nurture in a more organized and sustainable fashion, the habit is getting dwindled alarmingly. Social platforms have eroded

Though reading is regarded as the most important value that we all should nurture in a more organized and sustainable fashion, the habit is getting dwindled alarmingly

the reading habit in many ways. Thus activities are ongoing to mend the crack; and families and schools are working on it for the common good, as to him.

Many young and adolescents as well as children spend more time bantering on trifle activities and watching useless videos, as well as chatting on social media platforms.

The Bureau has been organizing reading festivals to create opportunities for families and students to let them get different reading materials, trigger reading culture among the community and enable them to contribute their part to their country.

Referring to the feedback gathered from visitors, he said the festival was productive. Over seventy thousand residents of Addis Ababa visited the reading festival, and a number of publishers participated. The communities and schools are sensitized on ways to nurture reading culture,

Ethiopia needs more reader citizens who think logically and rationally. This aspiration could be met through promoting reading habits and investing time, energy as well as capital to this end.

He also called on pertinent stakeholders to strengthen efforts and nurturing reading culture amid the digital world. "In my view, working on improving reading



culture within schools and out of school is a game changer activity to ensure quality education."

What is more, schools need to create inspiring and engaging reading spaces for children because appealing reading spaces are essential to entice students' interest and make reading a captivating experience. Reading classrooms should also be designed with the interests of children in mind. In nutshell, it should be more attractive and embellished with age-appropriate decorations than their home. Generally the spaces should have some kind of visual that could spark curiosity and capture attention.

The Bureau has exerted utmost effort to create distinct sections for various genres like fiction and non-fiction, mystery, adventure, as well as fantasy, in bid to allow students to find books that align with their interests.

"I think this kind of approach could allow students to immerse themselves in their chosen books," he added.

The Bureau is at the helm of promoting early age reading habits because it improves children's vocabulary, helps to improve academic performance as well as could serve as a source of entertainment for people of all ages. Moreover, it creates opportunities in enhancing self-confidence and a more knowledgeable generation.

Academicians and acclaimed psychologists agree that reading has a far reaching positive effect in supporting the development of critical thinking and enhances creativity and self-expression of an individual in many ways. Thus, they urge families and early childhood schools to tame children with reading habits at early ages because young people who view reading as enjoyable are much more likely to continue reading into their adulthood and enjoy these benefits.

Feraol Mulugeta is a fourth year Software Engineering student at Addis Ababa

University Institute of Technology. As he stated, reading is an important tool that has the power to develop one's mind. It offers an excessive knowledge and lifelong wisdom that could shape personality in many ways, paves ways to understand the world around us in a better fashion. The final outcome of reading is making our mind active, and enhancing creative ability, which means it has across-the-board impacts on quality of life.

"At my early age, I used to read books at home. My father was trying to provide me with various books. The books helped me a lot though he could not keep it up for various reasons. Without doubt, my early reading habits shaped my reading habits instilled to endurance, helped me to join a higher education institute."

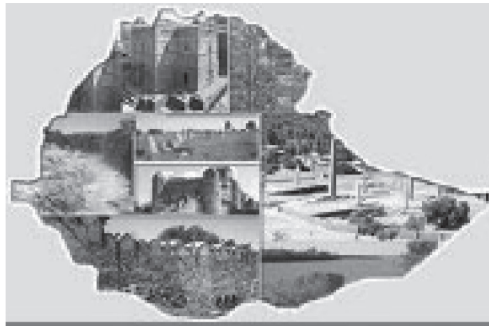
According to him, reading habits among the youth are deteriorating for various reasons and studying [reading] for exams is becoming common among the higher education students.

"My father used to tell us fairy tales. I am feeling that this kind of culture is fizzling out because of modernization, but it should revive as it has the power in shaping the skill and knowledge of children," he opined.

The effort of the Bureau is commendable because it allows injecting the value of reading and opening opportunities for families to access reading materials for the reason there is shortage of reading material in a number of households and schools.

"My advice to parents and caregivers is that they should keep on encouraging young children to take time for reading at the earliest age," he concluded.

At the festival, senior citizens and writers read poems and some chapters of books for the viewers. At the panel discussion stakeholders discussed the concerns they are facing providing library services at proximity and possible ways to undo the challenges through practical action.



This is Ethiopia

Agew horse riders' festival towards boosting tourists inflow

BY TEWODROS KASSA

The Agew Horse Riders Festival is a cultural extravaganza that has been captivating audiences for centuries. This vibrant celebration of tradition and horsemanship has gained recognition worldwide, attracting tourists from far and wide. With its rich history and captivating performances, the festival has become a major contributor to boosting tourist inflow in the area.

The Agew Horse Riders Festival is deeply rooted in the customs and traditions of the people. This annual event showcases the equestrian skills and bravery of the riders, who perform breathtaking stunts and maneuvers on horsebacks. With colorful costumes, traditional music, and lively dance performances, the Festival presents a vibrant spectacle that leaves spectators in awe.

The Festival is an annual celebration that takes place in the *Awī* Zone. This festival has been a part of the Agew culture for centuries and serves as a platform to showcase their deep-rooted equestrian traditions. Visitors have the opportunity to witness extraordinary horse riding skills, colorful parades, and traditional performances during this grand event. The Festival offers a range of experiences that captivate the hearts and minds of tourists. From watching skilled horse riders compete in various equestrian disciplines to exploring local handicrafts and delicacies, there is something for everyone. Visitors can immerse themselves in the vibrant atmosphere, which is filled with music, dance, and jubilation.

Since recent years, the Festival has emerged as a major tourist attraction and tourists from around the world visit the Festival to witness the spectacular horse riding displays and immerse themselves in the vibrant cultural experience. This influx of tourists has not only benefited the local economy but has also spurred the development of tourism infrastructure in the Amhara State.

In addition, the Festival could be developed through availing more touristic services to the international and local visitors.

Awī Zone Culture and Tourism Office Head Leykun Sisay told the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) that every member of



the Agew community is well prepared to celebrate the annual Agew Horse Riding Festival warmly and colorfully, which is the largest horse riding festival.

This year, the community is well prepared to celebrate the 84th Agew Riders' Festival with the theme "Patriotism for Peace and Brotherhood".

A committee led by the Chief Administrator of the Zone has been formed and started working to undertake all the necessary preparations to hold a well-organized festival that keeps the traditional values of the people and attract more foreign and domestic visitors, he expressed.

Leykun added that besides celebrating the Festival, various traditional foods and handicrafts will be displayed to revitalize and promote tourism in the Zone.

In addition, the Head stated that the Zone Tourism Office is working with the relevant stakeholders to facilitate infrastructure and avert security problems during the Festival.

The Zone has some 6,200 community leaders who are capable of promoting tolerance and peace in the area, he stressed.

The Festival does not only reinvigorate the Zone's tourism activities and enhance social interaction, it also stimulates the economy, he noted.

According to Leykun, over 2,000 riders of the 62,200 members of the Agew Horse Riders' Association would participate in this year's festival.

He also called on the people to preserve the traditional values of the festival and hospitably serve guests with Ethiopian courtesy.

For travelers seeking an authentic cultural immersion, the Agew Horse Riders Festival offers a unique opportunity. Visitors can witness the traditional customs of the Agew people and interact with the local community. From trying traditional cuisine to learning about age-old traditions, the Festival provides an

unforgettable experience that goes beyond the ordinary tourist activities.

The horse riders' performances showcased during the Festival are a sight to behold. Skilled horse riders demonstrate their expertise in various disciplines, such as show jumping, horse racing, and traditional games. These performances not only entertain the audience but also serve as a reminder of the deep bond between the Agew people and their horses.

What is more, it also provides a platform for local artisans and businesses to showcase their craftsmanship. Visitors have the opportunity to purchase intricately designed handicrafts, textiles, and artworks, directly supporting the local economy. Additionally, the Festival boosts sales for restaurants and accommodations in the area, creating a ripple effect that benefits the entire community.

Furthermore, the growing popularity of the Agew Horse Riders Festival has had a positive impact on the local economy. The increased tourist inflow has led to the growth of the hospitality industry, including hotels, guesthouses, and restaurants. Local artisans and vendors also gain economic opportunities by selling their crafts and products during the Festival. This economic boost has uplifted the livelihoods of the Agew community, contributing to the overall development of the State.

In sum, the Agew Horse Riding Festival has successfully blended tradition and tourism, attracting a growing number of visitors to the area. This celebration of equestrian skills and cultural heritage has become a significant driver of tourist inflow, boosting the local economy and preserving the cultural identity of the Agew community. With its vibrant performances and immersive experience, the Festival promises a unique and memorable adventure for all who attend it. With its rising popularity, the Agew Horse Riders Festival has the potential to become a major cultural event on the global stage.

The festival organizers are actively working towards expanding its reach and attracting more visitors each year. With improved infrastructure and marketing efforts, the Festival aims to position itself as a must-visit destination for cultural enthusiasts and adventure seekers alike.