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Premier confers with Malta's foreign minister

BY STAFF REPORTER

ADDIS ABABA - Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed conferred with Malta's Foreign Minister and European Affairs and Trade, Ian Borg yesterday.

Premier Abiy wrote on his X account "Welcome back to Ethiopia, Ian Borg. The ongoing efforts to strengthen ties between Ethiopia and Malta across various sectors will continue to grow."

Recall that on 12 March, 2024, the 1st Ethiopia-Malta Business Forum Kicked off in Addis Ababa with the objective of fostering the bilateral relation between the two countries.

Cooperation between Ethiopia and Malta, including the possibility of Ethiopian Airlines using Malta as a stopover for flights to the United States, were discussed during last year state visit of Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) to Malta.

See Premier confers ... page 4



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Contact Us 0911222993/ 0911208918

Ethiopia discovers over 517 tons of gold deposit

BY TSEGAYE TILAHUN

ADDIS ABABA – Ethiopia has discovered over 517 tons of gold deposit in BenishangulGumuz, Gambella, Oromia and Tigray states, Ministry of Mines announced.

Mines State Minister Million Mathewos told the See Ethiopia discovers ... page 4



Yacob Arsano (PhD)

High time for trans-boundary water governance policy :Expert

BY BETELHEM BEDLU

ADDIS ABABA- Hydro-Politics Expert advised the need to put in place trans-boundary water governance policy to fully utilize, protect and conserve shared resources among countries across the world.

Ethiopia, Egypt and upper stream countries

See High time ... page 4

Ethiopia resolute to address Abbay Dam negotiation glitches

BY EYUEL KIFLU

ADDIS ABABA- Despite Egypt's recent announcement of discontinuing its involvement in the Abbay Dam negotiation, Ethiopia has an unwavering commitment to resolve the outstanding technical and legal disparities, a technical team chairperson said.

Speaking to *The Ethiopian Herald*, Abbay Dam National Panel of Experts and Technical Negotiating Team Chairperson Gedion Asfaw (Eng.) emphasized the importance of civilized discussion to address the sticking points. "It is crucial to keep the continuation of negotiations to find common ground and address the complexities of trans-boundary water management."

The expert pointed out that trans-boundary negotiations, including the Abbay Dam talks, require ample time and patience due to the inherent challenges of balancing national interests and reaching compromises.

Drawing on global experiences, Eng.



Gedion indicated similar negotiations on cross-border resources often take more than a decade to resolve, underscoring the complexity of the issues at hand. "Ethiopia recognizes the significance of safeguarding

its national interests while acknowledging that other countries are similarly protecting their own concerns."

While convergence and agreement may See Ethiopia resolute... page 4

Ethiopia's hydro politics, diplomacy gaining momentum

BY EYUEL KIFLU

ADDIS ABABA—Burundi's admission into the Cooperative Framework Agreement (CFA) on Nile waters is a significant development for Ethiopia's hydro diplomacy efforts, Abbay Dam Negotiator said.

In a significant development for Ethiopia's hydro diplomacy efforts, Burundi has recently joined the CFA, marking another milestone in the cooperative management of trans-boundary waters, Trans-boundary River Senior Advisor and Abbay Dam Technical Team Negotiator Engineer GedionAsfaw said.

In an Exclusive interview with *The Ethiopian Herald* Eng. Gedion said that the CFA, signed and ratified by six countries, paves the way for the establishment of the Nile Basin Commission and replaces out-dated colonial-era agreements with a new management framework based on equitable utilization and cooperation.



Eng. GedionAsfaw

Eng. Gedion highlighted the success of diplomatic visits to Nile Basin countries, where Ethiopian officials have been actively engaged in explaining the benefits and importance of the cooperative framework agreement.

Consequently, he said, an increasing number of countries have embraced the CFA, showcasing the growing recognition of the necessity for

collaborative water resource management.

Ethiopia places great importance on the cooperative management of trans-boundary rivers and lakes due to the fact that approximately 80% of its rivers flow into neighbouring countries, including Somalia, Kenya, Sudan, South Sudan, and Egypt, he noted.

Engaging in hydro diplomacy allows Ethiopia to foster cooperation and address issues related to water usage, dam filling and operation, and overall trans-boundary water management, as stated by Eng. Gedion.

With the number of signatories and ratifying countries steadily rising, the cooperative framework agreement is gaining momentum. Once all six countries deposit their ratification documents at the African Union, the Nile Basin Commission will be established, ushering in a new era of collaborative management based on internationally accepted principles, he added.



Birhanu Aleka

Some 270, 000 Ethiopians benefit from overseas employment

BY ESSEYE MENGISTE

ADDIS ABABA- The Ministry of Labor and Skills (MoLS) said about 270,000 citizens have been recruited in foreign countries in the 2023/2024 fiscal year, emphasizing its role in addressing the soaring unemployment.

MoLS Ethiopian Labor Market Information System Project Office Head Birhanu Aleka told the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) that the government is hugely engaged to allow citizens to legally work and benefit abroad while their rights and benefits are protected.

Accordingly, 900,000 citizens who want to work abroad are using the Ethiopian labor market information system application technology. Out of the 900,000 citizens using the app, 270,000 have secured foreign employment, he elaborated.

From a plan to enable 500,000 citizens to secure overseas employment in the 2023/2024 fiscal year, it is managed to legally send 270,000 to the Middle countries such as Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Qatar, and Jordan.

The office head further noted that the government pays due attention to enable foreign job seekers to meet certain criteria in terms of knowledge, skill, and language of the country before allowing them to leave.

“If citizens working abroad send their money home through legal channels, Ethiopia could earn 1.9 billion USD annually in the form of remittance. Citizens' recruitment by foreign countries not only creates jobs for the unemployed, but also significantly contributes to Ethiopia's economic progress.”

In the 2022 fiscal year, some 40,000 citizens benefited from overseas employment while the number grew to 120,000 in the next year, Birhanu stated.

ERCS allots 1.2 bln Birr to conflict, drought-hit areas

BY MISGANAW ASNAKE

ADDIS ABABA- The Ethiopian Red Cross Society (ERCS) said it has delivered 1.2 billion Birr-worth support in cash and in-kind for conflict and drought-hit areas to bridge food and non-food shortages in the current fiscal year.

Approached by journalists, ERCS Deputy Secretary General Abera Lulessa stated that it has made consolidated efforts to provide food and non-food amenities to save the lives of conflict and drought-affected people.

The support is also meant to rehabilitate the affected communities and repair damaged health centers and water infrastructure as well as restore service- providing institutions in conflict-ravaged areas.

According to him, the Society has distributed such sort of support both in cash and in-kind for people who have been affected by natural and man-made disasters in parts of Oromia, Tigary, Amhara and Benishangul Gumuz states by the help of British and American governments.

During the past six months of the current fiscal



Abera Lulessa

year, the ERCS has provided humanitarian support for over one million people in drought and conflict-affected places excluding the campaign works. Also, the society has built about 1,760 houses furnished with the necessary facilities for internally displaced people in some parts of the Oromia State and helps them to lead a sustainable life.

“Protection is needed for those voluntary service providers while they are moving in the field to facilitate the support in conflict places.”

ERCS President Abera Tola on his part said that the Society channels the support it has



Abera Tola

obtained from local and international donors to drought and conflict- affected communities via bank transfer to create transparency and reach the rightful groups.

The president further underscored the Society's inability to reach all those who need support and called on donors to contribute to the drought response and prevent the situation from becoming a humanitarian catastrophe.

ERCS has six million volunteers that are engaged in providing humanitarian aid and during flood and other emergencies and they offer medical services and other vital assistance to save lives, Abera remarked.

State develops leaders to ensure peace, development

BY FIKADU BELAY

WOLKITE - Central Ethiopia State has created over 4,500 leaders with the aim of spear heading development projects and securing enduring stability, the State Chief Administrator said.

Chief Administrator Endeshaw Tasew told the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) that his administration has shaped over 4,500 leaders into seven clusters spanning seven zones and three special districts with the aim of spearheading development projects and securing enduring stability.

As to him, the state administration has been actively organizing public forums to engage with various stakeholders so as to achieve economic growth working on key priorities including investment, job creation, education, healthcare, agriculture, and the improvement of road and water infrastructure.

The administrator emphasized the state

administration's commitment to strengthening agricultural initiatives, with a particular focus on urban agriculture. This approach aims to ensure food security, boost local production, and reduce reliance on external food sources.

He noted that the state is actively supporting summer irrigation activities to enhance agricultural productivity, especially during the dry season.

Moreover, the implementation of the Yelemat Turfat programs, which introduce innovative techniques, modern technologies, and crop diversification, seeks to enhance overall productivity in the agricultural sector, he said.

The chief administrator Endeshaw also mentioned the state's efforts to reduce the cost of living and mitigate inflationary pressures. By facilitating direct interactions between producers and consumers, the state aims to eliminate intermediaries and create a more affordable and accessible market environment.

To overcome the issue of hate speech and ethnic violence, he remarked that the state's proactive measures to identify and address social media accounts that promote divisive content. Through raising awareness and fostering dialogue, the state aims to enforce the law, discourage violence, and counter the spread of misinformation, he noted.

He further stated that the state is dedicated to promoting good governance and eradicating corruption.

Corrective measures are being implemented to address instances of fraud and corruption, ensuring a fair and just system, he added.

The comprehensive approach of the Central Ethiopia state towards development and peace showcases its commitment to building a prosperous and harmonious society. With a focus on key sectors and collaboration with neighboring states, the State is poised to make significant strides in realizing its vision for a brighter future, it was learnt.

Editorial

Addressing migration's root cause better way out

When seen in the lens of global trends, pull and push factors are ascribable to illegal migration.

As tangible facts indicate, the over breaming of undocumented migrants in countries of destination could prompt the latter to ill-treat the former. Whatever the case, the destination country is morally and legally expected to treat such individuals in keeping with Human Rights conventions before returning them back home in consultation and cooperation with countries of origin as well as International Organization For Migration(IOM).

Also, as illegal migration is a global phenomenon it begs for an all-out international coordination to address its root cause. Developed nations therefore must assist developing nations in addressing the root cause of the problem such as illegal human trafficking. Cracking the network is not a task a nation could handle single handedly.

Donor countries and international development partners too are on duty bound to buttress developing countries' effort of kissing fettering poverty goodbye and fully allowing their respective citizens hop on the development bandwagon the latter set rolling in the road to affluence. Such a turnaround with the potential of curtailing both illegal and legal migrations is evidenced in South Asian countries which managed to use their human wealth, being exported previously, as an input to rise as a phoenix from the ashes.

Countries of origin for illegal migrants must also prepare themselves to welcome returnees and help them stand on their feet permanently as some individuals, even after dumped, never say die to resume their former gruesome life returning back to the place of torture they were in.

Also, developing countries must adopt the strategy of arming their legal migrants with the necessary skills much-wanted in destination countries, for such type of migration helps the aforementioned countries benefit from remittance, knowledge transfer as well as cultural and religious exchanges.

When we see Ethiopia's case against this backdrop, Ethiopia, seen a safe haven to refugees ever since it welcomed the prophet-Mohamed-sent followers, is well treating refugees that sought asylum in its bosom. To some of them it has allowed chances for education as well. It must press ahead with this show of magnanimity which must be reciprocated specially by those who tested Ethiopia's cordiality to the full.

Yet, a not insignificant number of its citizens, as undocumented migrants, are languishing in the refugee centers of some Middle East countries.

Cognizant of the aforementioned reality, the incumbent has readied itself to see to the repatriation of 70 thousand Ethiopians from there recently. A warm welcoming moment awaits them home, marked for ample natural resources which hold promise for citizens to mold their shape working in own land.

Ethiopia today is striving to ensure a leap to prosperity. If its people and the government solidify their chemistry, maintain nation's serenity and spearhead country's march on the large vista of its growth, the future will prove rosy. If Ethiopia continues to harness its bounties to better shape the fate of its citizens, citizens will cease scouring not only the Middle East but also the affluent West. Given its potential Ethiopia could be migrant's destination than migrant's origin.

In the meantime, however, churning out qualified job seekers, giving them proper orientation and legalizing their journey to destination countries, and keeping them under the radar of Ethiopian embassies abroad Ethiopia could send documented migrants to countries demanding a workforce.

Media outlets must keep their eyes pelted for the proper treatment of refugees wherever the latter may be.

Opinion

Revamping the new features to the New Flower, Addis Ababa

BY STAFF REPORTER

Dibaba.

Founded more than 130 years ago Addis Ababa has been growing year by year in terms of number of residents, width as well as the responsibility it carries as a city. When it was first designated as an urban center by Emperor Menelik II over a century back, it was chosen to be the seat of the central government of the nation.

Through time it hosted international organizations like African Union (AU), United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) as well as many international organizations, embassies, educational, medical, cultural institutions, markets, industries as well as large residential areas.

In order to accommodate all these, the city has been expanding geographically in all directions. As a result, the necessary infrastructure like roads have been stretched to many parts of it. Following these the new constructions of buildings of multipurpose have given new features to the lately developed parts of the city.

Yet, the original settlements of the city that rested in areas closer to the place where the foundation stone of the city was laid still exist. Many of these neighborhoods are so old and dilapidated that they can no longer be tolerated to exist. Had it not be the economic constraints of the country, they would have been demolished and renewed many decades back.

Still what the people and government have in hand is the political commitment and strong desire to see a renewed and revitalized feature of the city. The locations that the older parts of the city have occupied are in the heart or epicenter where a lot of development can take place. The new and modern development endeavor that would be made in these places would have multiple effect in the overall development of the city as well as the country.

Keeping these old and ramshackle buildings and narrow roads any longer would rather drag the development of the city. They are easily vulnerable to disaster like flooding, fire, disease outbreak, crime etc. Furthermore, they have occupied large swaths of land that could have accommodated hundreds of modern and large storey builds that can help alleviate the shortage of residential and commercial buildings.

People are now eager to see the new features of the city after the renovation efforts. Now the issue at hand is what is to be done to accelerate the comprehensive changes in Addis Ababa and the rest of the country? The writer of this article has some suggestions.

TO realize the ongoing process of renewing the city the following important steps are suggested as worth noting, as contributed by *Ethiopian Herald* columnist, Solomon

First, the public in Addis Ababa which is composed of all ethnic groups in the country need to realize that unity, peace and constructive dialogue is the only means way out of the deadlock in which the country finds itself.

Second the people of Ethiopia need to provide comprehensive support for the ENDF by providing blood donations and other means of support. This is very important because let alone domestic wars, the people of Ethiopia have repulsed colonial occupation by depending on their own resources.

Third, the Ten Years Perspective Plan must be implements with the highest quality of performance focusing on the pillars of the Plan including agriculture, mining, foreign trade, manufacturing industries and promotion of health facilities across the country.

Fourth, the education system in the country needs to be revolutionized at all levels primarily because education is key to the development of the country.

Fifth, both public and commercial media outlets need to be able to make practical contribution to the development of tourism and image building for the country and bring for the desired results in a more proactive manner. We need a new blood of journalists who are dedicated to fighting off commercial western propaganda on the country.

Sixth, with the renovation and rehabilitation works in Addis Ababa, there is a need to establish musical and cultural conservatories that specialize on preparation of world class symphony orchestras that are based on creative arts in music and modern and traditional paintings.

Seventh, all CSOs need to review their operations and work together for the unity of this country and the development of the national economy.

Eighth, religious organizations and their leaders need to refrain from meddling into the political affairs of the country and focus on their doctrines to teach the faithful about their religious values and ethics.

Addis Ababa belongs to every one including all African countries as it is their political capital. The city should also reflect global standards in offering quality life for citizens by focusing on lower income sections of the urban population.

Ninth, the physical reforms and renovation programs on roads and buildings certainly need to be capped with a behavioral change communication and attitudinal change on the pattern of thinking of the residents of Addis Ababa. This is a metropolitan center and not just a village owned by a specific ethnic group who are living in the past with no regard to present changes.

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



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The Ethiopian Herald

Harari expects over 30,000 Diasporas to attend annual event

BY HIZKEL HAILU

HARARI—Activities are afoot to celebrate the 25th International Harari Day in the presence of over 30,000 Diasporas, said Harari State Culture, Heritage and Tourism Bureau.

The state has made a call to the diaspora community and all Ethiopians living worldwide to participate in the event that will be held in Harar city on July 4, 2024.

In an exclusive interview with The Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA), Bureau's Heritage Protection Director Amir Remedan stated that preparations are being made to host the 25th edition of Harari's International Day that the State expects the involvement of more than 30,000 Harari-born Diasporas and friends of the Harari people.

Following the successful celebration of the 24th International Harari Day in Toronto, Canada last year, the Head of the city administration has urged members of the diaspora community to consider investing in the region.



Harari Day meetings have been held in different cities worldwide, such as Atlanta, Toronto, Addis Ababa, and Harar, allowing people from diverse locations to partake in the festivities, it was learnt.

To ensure a successful celebration this year, Amir said a dedicated technical team comprising representatives from various

public and private sectors across the region has been established to undertake a range of activities, including panel discussions, sports events, cultural festivals, and more.

He reiterated that his office is actively collaborating with all sectors of the state and the federal government to ensure the event's success.

State's Transport and Road Development Bureau Deputy Head Architect Fathii Remedan highlighted that his department is working tirelessly to provide efficient transportation services for the participants.

Efforts are being made to construct and improve primary and secondary roads across the region, connecting it to the airport, tourist destinations, marketplaces, and the city's main gate, he noted.

Furthermore, he stated that initiatives have been implemented to raise awareness among city drivers, urging them to treat the guests with politeness and respect.

This event provides an exceptional opportunity to celebrate the rich history and culture of the Harari people, Fathii indicated.

Through joining the festivities, individuals can contribute to the promotion of tourism and investment in the region. The active involvement of the diaspora community and Ethiopians across the globe will ensure a memorable and successful celebration of this significant day, Amir explained.

Ethiopia resolute...

take time, Ethiopia remains open to peaceful dialogue and firmly believes in the possibility of reaching compromises that address the concerns of all parties involved.

He further highlighted that Ethiopia's policy on trans-boundary waters centres around regional cooperation, peaceful resolution of issues, and adherence to internationally accepted principles of equitable utilization and causing no significant harm.

By adhering to its policy framework and promoting peaceful

consultation, Ethiopia reaffirms its dedication to constructive dialogue as the primary means to resolve trans-boundary water issues and foster regional cooperation.

Looking ahead, the trans-boundary rivers expert emphasized the need to capacitate Ethiopia's human resources in hydro politics and water diplomacy. Efforts to train professionals in areas including hydro-diplomacy, water policy, and integrated water resource management are crucial for effectively representing Ethiopia's interests on the international stage.

Ethiopia discovers...

Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) that the country has discovered over 517 tons of gold deposit in Benishangul Gumuz, Gambella, Oromia and Tigray states while attributing the finding to the geological survey that has been conducted for the last 15 years.

He indicated that the deposit resource would be extracted in the coming years whereas the geological survey activities would continue extensively.

The Ministry in cooperation with stakeholders, is supporting different gold processing companies to develop gold massively, Million said.

He mentioned that the organization has been licensing new companies based on their experience, human and financial capacity among others.

Likewise, the country is constructing its first huge gold processing plant in Benishangul Gumuz state, he expressed adding that extra gold processing plants would be built in Wellega, Guji, Gambella, and Tigray in the coming two years.

As to the State Minister, due attention would be given to overcome infrastructure challenges for planned projects.

He believed that gold development has brought special opportunities as the production has been hugely revamping through time with the help of modern machines.

Hence, illicit gold trade or contraband has been still challenging the sector not to be an important economic catalyst, Million said, adding that the federal security bodies in collaboration with state stakeholders have been taking necessary measures to overcome the problem.

Premier confers...

It is to be recalled that PM Abiy was given a ceremonial welcome when he arrived at Castille Square for talks with Prime Minister Robert Abela.

A new school dedicated to the memory of three Maltese people was opened in Ethiopia town of Jimma Bonga last year. Funded by Maltese donations and support from the Sigma Foundation, the corporate social responsibility arm of the Sigma Group, it was dedicated to Rebecca Zammit Lupi, Jonathan Chetcuti and Karl Pace, who all died in tragic circumstances within the past few years.

need to come together and develop Trans-boundary policy for common benefit.

Speaking with *The Ethiopian Herald*, Hydro-Politics Expert Yacob Arsano (PhD), more than 57 % of Africa is covered with Trans-boundary waters while 240 fresh water basins crosses political boundaries in the world.

However, there is no Trans-boundary governance regime as much as waters are trans-boundary across nations.

“We are lagging behind. Because of this, water is mismanaged in one country while it is protected in other country. Water need to be managed, protected and conserved in a system of arrangement throughout the basin, that is why we are

suffering in Nile Basin,” he underlined.

In the case of Nile basin, Ethiopia, as a sovereign state, is constructing a dam like Egypt and Sudan built in their respective countries, he noted.

But, if Egypt and Sudan want to cooperate with Ethiopia, they must accept that Ethiopia has such inviolable right, he stressed.

Moreover, it is vital to properly understand the characteristics of trans-boundary water. “No country cannot for free build more dams and keep water while telling other countries not to touch water,” he emphasized.

Furthermore, it is also important to note that the challenges of Trans-boundary water governance include national

interest, development levels and absence of legal frameworks and international laws on water.

Thus, countries priorities could vary due to the above reasons which make it difficult to bring those nations in to one plane and make same system of governance to benefit all.

Nonetheless, researchers, academicians, policy advisors could take the opportunity and contribute to properly utilize and manage shared resources, as to him.

“The best thing would be Egypt, Ethiopia and other upper stream countries come together, make a policy and develop the trans-boundary water for common benefit,” he underscored.

High time ...

Opinion

Why is Africa lagging behind the world?

BY MENGESHA AMARE

Possessing abundant natural resources, untapped underground minerals, mesmerizing landscapes, a number of hectares of arable land accompanied with productive and inexpensive human power, the continent of Africa has been highly labeled and recognized as underdeveloped portion of the world. What a paradox it is! As a rule, under the situation in which the African continent finds itself, cooperation and fraternity has to be taken as an urgent need for firm solidarity and meaningful regional integration.

Africa should entertain regional integration now more than any time else if it is to emancipate itself from a multitude of challenges and social, economic and political traps. Yes, regional integration allows all nations of the continent to overcome the long time witnessed costly divisions as the initiation itself is capable of bringing nations together thereby helping them integrating goods, services and invaluable market channels.

Such a bold move is of paramount importance in fostering the flow of trade, capital, energy, people, and ideas for real benefit of the entire continent at the end of the day. The process, regional integration, can be promoted through common physical and institutional infrastructure, indeed! True, regional integration is a process in which neighboring countries enter into an agreement in order to upgrade cooperation through common institutions, playing grounds and rules for the matter.

If this is so, initiatives that can potentially boost every aspect of the African continent have to focus on achieving broader socio-political and security objectives centering the latter, in fact, as all activities would be lame without it. It is also well recognized that regional integration can be organized either via supranational institutional structures, intergovernmental decision making bodies or the combination of the two.

If the continent seizes the position to avoid barriers to free trade, augment the free movement of people, labor, goods and capital across national borders, as well as minify the possibility of armed conflict and civil war citing trivial or crucial matters, Africa would take its grade as per its resources and untapped wealth.

Regional integration has been comprehended as the process through which independent national states voluntarily mingle, merge and mix with their neighbors so as to lose the factual attributes of sovereignty while acquiring new techniques for resolving conflicts among themselves.

Unequivocally, increasing the interactions between nations' components and creating new forms of organizations, companies and entities co-existing with traditional forms of state-led organization at the national, regional and continental level is of paramount importance in bringing about a difference.

The very point that needs to be taken into

a serious account in this regard is regional integration cannot be simply taken as the process by which states within a particular region increase their level of interaction with regard to social, economic, security, political, or cultural and conventional issues, instead it is the joining of individual states within a region into a larger whole. The degree of integration depends upon the willingness and commitment of independent sovereign states to share their sovereignty.

As its name bespeaks, regional integration has to incorporate the effort for strengthening trade integration in the region, the creation of an appropriate enabling environment for private sector development, the development of infrastructure in support of economic advancement and regional integration.

Furthermore, it has to attract the development of strong public sector institutions and good governance, reduction of social exclusion and the development of an inclusive civil society as well as consolidating region's integration with the rest of the world as globalization allows nations to do so.

No doubt, closer integration of neighboring economies has often been seen by governments as a first step in creating a larger regional market for trade and investment. This is thus claimed to spur greater efficiency, productivity gain and competitiveness, not just by lowering border barriers, but by reducing other costs and risks of trade and investment. Bilateral, trilateral, multilateral and sub-regional trading arrangements have to be advocated by governments as economic development tools, as they have been designed to promote economic deregulation. However, regional integration strategies as pursued by economic and national interests have also been highly contested across civil society.

Regional integration arrangements are part and parcel of the present global economic order and this trend is now an acknowledged future of the international scene. It has achieved a new meaning and new significance.

Regional integration agreements have led to major developments in international relations between and among many countries specifically increases in international trade and investment and in the formation of regional trading blocs. As fundamental to the multi-faceted process of globalization, regional integration has been a major development in the international relations of recent years. As such, Regional Integration Agreements have gained high importance. Not only are almost all the industrial nations part of such agreements, but also a huge number of developing nations too are a part of at least one, and in cases, more than one such agreement.

Undeniably, the concept of equal partners grew out of the concept of providing reinforcement to the economies to all the member countries. The various countries then agree upon the fact that they will help economies to maintain the balance of trade between and prohibit the entry of other countries in their trade process.

Regional integration is defined as a process

in which countries enter into regional agreements for cooperation in the economic and political fields through free trade areas, customs unions, common markets, economic unions, and political federation.

Greater potential gains from regional cooperation can be achieved from an open focus on regional projects of common interest in agriculture, the joint construction of transport and communications infrastructure, education and research and development, environmental issues, food security, energy management, defense and security, and monetary and fiscal policy coordination.

Furthermore, East African integration is considered as the first step, which is pushing countries into the international economy. Regional integration gained popularity and is prioritized globally, especially in developing economies, including those on the African continent. This is based on its potential to accelerate trade, stimulate economic growth, and increase access to basic necessities and to induce a sustainable increase in economic output and improved standards of living.

The transformation of the productive structure and the development of local and regional production capabilities are at the essence of the big push for sustainability.

The new complex production systems require a large variety of capacities and cannot depend on a single agent, so it is increasingly important to develop mechanisms to promote associations and synergies.

True, regional integration remains an unexploited opportunity to diversify the productive structure and achieve higher productivity growth. Nevertheless, regional integration must go beyond market integration and aim to develop regional productive capacities and regional value chains. Major industrial-policy efforts will be required alongside the convergence between the existing integration mechanisms and institutions to overcome regional market fragmentation. In this sense, key specific sectors such as the pharmaceutical, automotive, energy, sustainable agriculture or the circular economy can lead the way.

Similarly, regional integration and coordinated policy strategies will be key to ensuring the creation of digital opportunities that could transform the productive structure and the development of local and regional production capabilities while bridging existing digital divides. It helps nations promote regional productive capacities and regional value chains, push for further international trade as it plays a strong role in economic diversification, the development of manufacturing capacities and the internationalization of small and medium-sized enterprises.

They have to go beyond market integration and trade performance since the development of regional productive capacities and regional value chains is key to boosting international productive linkages, fostering economic development and increasing the well being of citizens.

It would also of significantly useful in

fostering industrialization in the region based on production complementation. This would also expand international trade of manufactured products and reduce dependency on commodity exports. Through regional integration of course, it would be quite possible to implement industrial and productive policies to strengthen the existing capacities, generate new industries, and promote regional production and research networks.

Rationalization and regional production networks offer the opportunity to foster productivity growth, higher wages and inclusive labor markets, while redefining the connection and integration of the region to international production and innovation hubs. Africa has to be ready now to boost the convergence of integration mechanisms and institutions as it could provide an opportunity to boost investments, develop productive capacity and overcome regional market fragmentation. It is quite indispensable that identifying relevant actors key sectors which could lead the way in integration and regional productive capabilities.

Unquestionably, productive integration policy making requires an integrated approach, which is largely sector-specific. Interestingly, strengthening regional economic integration will yield better results if it is accompanied by targeted capacity-building activities. This strategic approach should place a priority on carrying out the specific recommendations in this report and promoting regional economic integration generally. To increase continent's effectiveness in promoting such integration, relevant expertise and funding should be provided in response to identified capacity-building needs.

In a nutshell, as a regional economic community, the road to integration in African region is actually a set of interventions including establishment of a free trade area, macroeconomic convergence, industrial development, and investment promotion, infrastructure development, information technology, tourism development, and the development of energy, agriculture, environment and natural resources.

Politically and on the issues of regional peace, stability and security, the continent has to be engaged in active implementation of activities boosting peace and security thereby helping the entire continent consolidate regional and continental, integration. Yes, the free movement regime across borders is actually one of the critical elements in the integration agenda due to prospective multiple gains, including trade benefits, development of skills, knowledge through migration of ideas, creation of jobs and investments among others. Wake up Africa! Work hard to take the right place as deserve.

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

Business & Economy

Zone: As a thriving hub of economic growth, investment opportunities

BY HIZKEL HAILU

West Hararge Zone, located in the Oromia region of Ethiopia, has emerged as a dynamic economic center, witnessing remarkable growth and development in recent years. The zone has achieved significant milestones in revenue collection, agricultural productivity, investment promotion, and tourism. Approached by The Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA), Zone's Chief Administrator Ikram Teha delved the various facets of West Hararge Zone's economic activities, highlighting its achievements, investment opportunities, and potential for further growth.

As to her, the Zone has demonstrated its prowess in agriculture, with a focus on irrigation projects and sustainable land management. Through extensive irrigation efforts, the zone has successfully revived vast areas of degraded land, enabling farmers to cultivate winter wheat. With a planned target of 40,500 hectares for wheat production in the current fiscal year, the zone has exceeded expectations, with nearly 50,000 hectares under cultivation. This outstanding performance reflects a continuous increase from 17,000 and 30,000 hectares in the preceding two fiscal years.

"The agricultural success of the Zone extends beyond wheat production. The zone has also made significant strides in diversifying its agricultural portfolio, embracing innovative techniques to enhance productivity and sustainability. Farmers have been encouraged to adopt modern farming practices, including the cultivation of high-value crops such as fruits, vegetables, and spices. These endeavors have not only increased the income of farmers but have also contributed to food security and improved the overall quality of life in the region".

Moreover, the zone's revenue collection has been commendable, totaling 1.3 billion Birr during the first six months of the current fiscal year, positioning it as the third highest revenue generator in the entire Oromia region, she added.

Ikram further explained that the West Hararge Zone presents myriads of investment opportunities across diverse sectors. The zone has witnessed the successful transition of 60 associations from small to medium-scale enterprises, showcasing its commitment to fostering sustainable economic growth. Investors can explore sectors such as mining, tourism, hotels, coffee, and chat exports, which offer lucrative prospects for both local and international markets.

"Recognizing the vital role played by Small and Midsize Enterprises (SMEs) in driving economic growth and job creation, West Hararge Zone has prioritized its promotion and development. The Zone's administration has implemented various initiatives to support and nurture small

businesses, including providing access to finance, offering training and capacity-building programs, and facilitating market linkages. By empowering SMEs, the zone is fostering entrepreneurship, encouraging innovation, and fostering a vibrant business ecosystem".

The zone's strategic location, with Chiro town serving as an import-export corridor, further enhances the potential for businesses to thrive and maximize profits. Notably, the Zone's export portfolio encompasses wheat, chat, and coffee, catering to the demands of foreign markets alongside the local market, she noted. Additionally, the Zone boasts high fruit production, including mangoes, apples, and other fruits cultivated through innovative desert irrigation projects.

Moreover, the Zone is also blessed with rich historical and cultural heritage, making it an enticing destination for tourists. According to her, the Zone features ancient caves, captivating landscapes, religious sites, and diverse wildlife, providing visitors with a truly immersive experience. This abundance of attractions has led to a significant influx of tourists, contributing to the local economy and job creation. The Zone's administration is devoted to preserving and promoting these cultural treasures, ensuring sustainable tourism development and fostering a mutually beneficial relationship between visitors and the local community.

Recognizing the importance of creating employment opportunities, her office has prioritized initiatives aimed at engaging the youth. Accordingly, she highlighted that the Zone offers numerous avenues for gainful employment across various sectors, including urban farming, mining, and chat and coffee trade. These sectors not only provide job prospects but also serve as platforms for skill development and entrepreneurship among the youth. By harnessing the potential of its young population, the Zone is paving the way for a brighter and more prosperous future.

As to Ikram, her office actively encourages Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) to drive economic growth and enhance service delivery. Through collaborating with private sector entities, the Zone's administration aims to leverage their expertise, resources, and innovation to accelerate development projects. PPPs have been instrumental in various sectors, including infrastructure development, tourism promotion, and the establishment of industrial zones. These partnerships foster a mutually beneficial relationship between the public and private sectors, leading to sustainable and inclusive economic development.

Noting that the Zone's administration is working with development partners in achieving its development goals, she explained that the Zone's administration has actively engaged with national and international development partners, non-governmental organizations, and private sector entities to leverage expertise, access



Wheat cultivation in West Haraghe Zone witnessing success of its effort

funding, and implement impactful projects. This collaborative approach enables the zone to leverage resources and knowledge, accelerating its progress towards sustainable development.

Besides, the Zone's administrative is working ardently in building robust infrastructure development projects in a way to support its growing economy. According to her, the Zone has witnessed the construction and improvement of roads, bridges, and transportation networks, facilitating smooth movement of goods and services. These infrastructure initiatives have not only bolstered local trade but have also enhanced connectivity with neighboring regions, opening up new avenues for economic collaboration and growth.

In line with global efforts to transition towards sustainable energy sources, she mentioned that the Zone has embarked on renewable energy projects. The Zone boasts ample potential for harnessing solar and wind energy, and steps have been taken to tap into these resources. The development of renewable energy infrastructure not only contributes to the reduction of carbon emissions but also presents investment opportunities in the renewable energy sector, she added.

Additionally, Ikram mentioned that the Zone places great emphasis on environmental conservation and the adoption of sustainable practices. Recognizing the importance of preserving natural resources for future generations, the Zone has implemented

initiatives to promote reforestation, soil and water conservation, and waste management, she noted. These efforts not only contribute to environmental sustainability but also support the agricultural sector by ensuring the availability of fertile land and clean water sources.

Recognizing the transformative power of information and communication technology (ICT) for better economic, political, social and other affairs, the West Hararge Zone has embraced digital innovation to drive economic growth and enhance public services, she accentuated. As to her, efforts have been made to expand internet connectivity, establish digital hubs, and promote e-commerce and digital entrepreneurship. By leveraging technology, the Zone is fostering innovation, improving access to information, and creating opportunities for digital-based businesses.

All in all, as of the Chief Administrator, the West Hararge Zone has emerged as a thriving hub of economic growth and investment opportunities. Its impressive revenue collection, agricultural achievements, diverse investment prospects, and flourishing tourism industry are testaments to the Zone's commitment to sustainable development. Coupled with these, its youth empowerment strategy also exemplifies its commitment to holistic development.

As the Zone continues to attract investors, promote job creation, and preserve its cultural heritage, West Hararge Zone is poised to become a beacon of prosperity and a model for inclusive growth in Ethiopia.

Planet Earth

A scientific approach to strong environmental protection, expands the promising results

BY EPHREM ANDARGACHEW

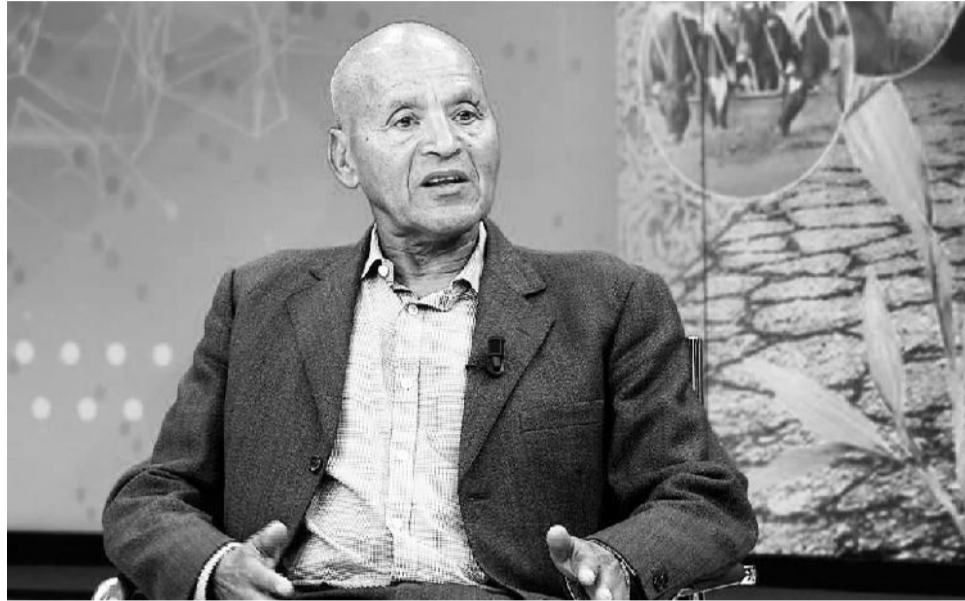
Regardless of their ideological stance or political philosophy, Ethiopian administrations have always prioritized environmental conservation and management, as well as forest growth. They have been striving to rehabilitate the deteriorated land. As a result, Ethiopia has been actively involved in environmental protection measures to solve numerous environmental concerns and promote sustainable development, including reforestation and afforestation programs.

Since the country's political change in the middle of 2018, attempts to preserve and safeguard the degraded land have also persisted. Ethiopia has thus started large-scale tree-planting initiatives, including the Green Legacy Initiative, to fight soil erosion, desertification, and deforestation. The country wants to expand the amount of forest cover and rehabilitate degraded areas by planting billions of trees.

Another historic endeavor by the country to protect the environment and the land is the use of sustainable land management. Terracing, agroforestry, and other sustainable land management techniques have been used in Ethiopia to improve soil fertility, stop erosion, and increase agricultural production. These initiatives promote the livelihoods of populations reliant on agriculture while also assisting in environmental conservation.

Due to its vulnerability to the effects of climate change, such as droughts, floods, and irregular rainfall patterns, Ethiopia is also actively supporting and putting these policies into practice. It has created programs and methods for adapting to climate change to decrease greenhouse gas emissions, support renewable energy sources, and increase community resilience.

In his 2019 academic paper titled "Efforts Initiated to Ensure Environmental Sustainability in Ethiopia," Zewde Alemayehu, a lecturer at Kebri Dehar University, noted that Ethiopia had established an environmental policy, an environmental impact assessment, a national biodiversity conservation strategy, and legal and regulatory reforms to manage its natural resources and environment through proclamation No. 9/1995. This is vital to meet the needs of the current generation without compromising the ability of future



Dr. Mengistu Wube

generations to meet their own needs. This will improve and enhance the health and quality of life for all Ethiopians and promote sustainable social and economic development through the wise management and use of natural, man-made, and cultural resources as well as the environment as a whole. In general, these initiatives must be incorporated into the next strategies, plans, and project development to guarantee environmental sustainability.

The country is indeed working to conserve biodiversity throughout the country. Ethiopia is home to a variety of ecosystems and wildlife, including the Simien Mountains National Park and the Bale Mountains National Park. To help local economies, conservation efforts prioritize biodiversity protection, habitat preservation, and sustainable tourism promotion.

Waste management systems are another crucial aspect of environmental protection. Ethiopia is attempting to lower plastic pollution, enhance waste management procedures, and encourage recycling and trash segregation. Among the initiatives are recycling facilities in metropolitan areas, awareness campaigns, and community-based garbage collecting systems.

Here, the most essential question here is whether Ethiopian environmental work is scientifically grounded or not. Why are scientific approaches necessary for environmental conservation in Ethiopia?

Environmental activist Dr. Mengistu Wube, who has conducted research in the fields of agriculture both inside and outside of Ethiopia as well as written books and conducted numerous studies on the subject of food security, told the local media that various forms of

environmental protection work are being done in Ethiopia. These works strengthen the country's efforts to protect its natural resources and the environment.

Furthermore, Ethiopia can feed the area through biodiversity preservation and growth. From this perspective, the development efforts made in recent years for soil and water protection, as well as green Legacy Initiative projects, have yielded significant advantages. Hence, it is imperative to intertwine the environmental protection task with scientific methods, he said.

According to him, "If the development works are not carried out scientifically and sustainably, the desired results cannot be achieved, so the protection of the environment and natural resources should be strengthened accordingly".

Ethiopia should indeed implement scientific methods to address various environmental problems since guiding these efforts by scientific methods and research is important to inform decision-making bodies, policy development, and implementation of environmental protection measures. The government also should follow scientific methods for research and data collection, monitoring and evaluation, modeling and forecasting.

Besides, Ethiopia may benefit from scientific discoveries and technical developments to strengthen environmental protection efforts. Remote sensing, geographic information systems (GIS), drones, and other instruments are being used to map, monitor, and manage natural resources. Another key area for environmental activity is capacity building and education, since investing in scientific competence among government

agencies, research institutions, and communities may help them better comprehend environmental challenges and support sustainable behaviors. Education and awareness-raising efforts are also important in cultivating an environmental stewardship mindset.

According to him, to scientifically support the country's environmental protection efforts, the education system should begin teaching about environmental protection in preschool, and the role of indigenous knowledge-based institutions should be expanded. This is critical for sustainable natural resource protection, land management, and land use policy. Soil and water conservation efforts play an important part in preserving the country's food supply.

Humans' brutality to nature and natural resources is producing several crises and environmental issues around the world, particularly in Ethiopia. Thus, establishing scientific techniques and implementing a climate-resilient plan is critical to reversing the danger of climate change on food security and its consequences. In this context, the summer wheat development, yeLemat turf, and Green Legacy Initiatives, which the government is focusing on, are promising, he stated.

Specifically, in the second phase of the Green Legacy Initiative, the country intends to plant 25 billion tree seedlings over four years. As a result, 60 percent of mixed forest plantations, 35 percent of forests, and 5 percent of urban beauty saplings will be planted. The project is part of Ethiopia's attempts to achieve food security. As a result, adopting this scientifically will help the country much, he stated.

For the benefit of current and future generations, Ethiopia generally seeks to address environmental concerns, conserve natural resources, and advance sustainable development. Therefore, incorporating scientific methodologies into Ethiopia's environmental management procedures can help the country make well-informed decisions, carry out focused actions, and succeed in resolving environmental issues. To further enhance the nation's ability to safeguard the environment and advance sustainable development by scientific means, Ethiopia should cooperate with scientific institutions, research groups, and international partners.

Art & Culture

Post-Colonial hangovers in Africa- tradition versus modern education

BY MULUGETA GUDETA

The contradictions between tradition and modernity are nowhere more pronounced than in Africa's educational systems. The struggle is vividly expressed in the struggle between traditional African educational systems which have been and still are threatened of displacement and replacement by the modern educational system largely copied and pasted from Western educational systems. The colonial legacy in Africa has subverted African education in such a way that it has given rise to the duality of the system which is expressed in the uneasy coexistence of the weakened traditional system alongside the modern one.

According to some studies traditional African educational method is expressed in or based on what is known as, "the didactic approach which is a method of instruction in which the teacher transmits knowledge to students through lectures, readings or other forms of presentation." According to another definition, "Traditional African education was based apprenticeship and each young person had to learn a trade or profession, which was an informal form of education."

There are many theories of African education and one of them maintains that, "An African philosophy of education is an enterprise which has three constitutive aspects: firstly, to be reasonable in one's articulation, secondly, to demonstrate moral maturity and thirdly, to be attuned to deliberation."

Any theory of education should be put in its cultural context because the African philosophy of knowledge, like any such philosophy anywhere in the world, is "an epistemology that is deliberately situated within a particular cultural context."

In olden days, Africans were organized into the smallest units as tribal entities and their identities varies according to the natures of the tribal groups. Ethnicity is a relatively recent and a higher form of organization when tribal members organize into higher forms of communal units due to their growth in numbers, activities and geographic context. Then came the nation states that are the modern form of African identity with nationalism at its core.

As many researchers agree, education in Africa was primarily traditional based on the various forms of organizations and each tribe or ethnic group had, and still has in many parts of the country, its traditional or church or mosque-based educational facilities with family values serving as cultural and educational transmission belts from one generation to another. In Ethiopia for instance the family and then the church in the case of Christian families and Islam in the case of Islamic believers taught their children the basics of the Bible or the Koran in accordance with their traditions.

The situation in Ethiopia is not different from any other country because it is located within the context of the Christian or Islamic cultures that shape its values, including its educational values. "Ethiopia maintains two educational systems. The traditional system is rooted in Christianity and Islam. Christian education at the

7 Indigenous African knowledge systems you should know



primary level is often conducted by clergy in the vicinity of place of worship."

The erosion and marginalization of the traditional educational system in Africa as well as in Ethiopia was a slow process that started within the colonial era and continued even after the collapse of colonialism. As the traditional educational system took shape over a long period of time, so does the post-colonial education in Africa before it is slowly replaced by the so-called modern education imported form or imposed by the Western powers.

Colonialism in Africa is not only about territory and identity, it was also about educational subversion and the erosion of the traditional value systems. Colonialism not only occupied territories, and communities. It also conquered people's minds and hearts and reshaped them in the image of European societies and called the process a "civilizing mission". In the 19th and 20th centuries, colonialism reinvented African politics, economics, society and culture and mostly of education.

With the emergence of the pseudo-modern state in Africa, European education was cut and pasted on the minds of young Africans with the notion that in order to become a modern and educated person, one had to be educated in the European traditions of the earlier centuries. Reviving the old traditional schools was considered backward, traditionalist, archaic and passé. The basic message was: "If you want to be a modern African, turn your eyes towards the European man and try to be like him". This is what Franz Fanon was saying in "Black Skin, White Mask", the title of one of his books in which he analyzed the psychological, cultural, political and educational aspects of race relations during the time of European colonialism. Fanon's analyses are based on Algerian realities but also apply to other colonized and post-colonial Africa.

The 20th century came with a mixed mission, mixed message and mixed purpose. On the one hand it depicted African traditional education as unscientific and backward,

irrational and illogical as it relied on African traditional religious and ethical systems. Modern education or European education was conceived as scientific, technological and rational in the sense that it has become secular or non-God centered or non-religion-centered. Secularism by simple definition was, "the separation of religion from civil affairs and the state and may be broadened to a similar position seeking to remove or minimize the role of religion from any public sphere."

Another definition of secularism maintains that, "Secularism means separation of religion from political, economic, social and cultural aspects of life, religion being treated as a purely personal matter. It emphasized the separation of the state from religion and full freedom to all religions and tolerance of all religions."

According to the above definition, education was supposed to have nothing to do with religion and the state if it wants to be scientific, modern, progressive and individual-centered. Yet, this is better said than done. In Ethiopia for example, the so-called modern educational system adopted by the monarchy at the turn of the 20th century was neither non-religious or implemented by non-state actors or private institutions separated from the feudal state. The Haile Sellassie government in its bid to modernize education in Ethiopia maintained both traditional religious institutions as well as "modern" Christian denominations in order to promote its policy.

The first tendency or policy, i.e. the need to maintain traditional religious schools or church-run educational institutions, was understandable in the sense that the government could not make a critical leap from feudalism to modernity in the space of a few decades or by will power alone. It took centuries for the church-backed schools to grow and it is bound that they need more centuries to hand over their authority to the modern school systems. The same goes to Western education that is still to a certain degree influenced by modern religious

institutions and churches despite centuries of secularism.

When the feudal state decided to adopt Western education to Ethiopian realities, it did not do so critically analytically or in a way that was most suitable to the country's diverse cultures and traditions. It introduced modern education in a sweeping way by edicts and by forcing parents to send their children to "askqala" or modern school in Italian. The church-sponsored schools retreated but were not totally defeated or destroyed. It remained on the margin for a long time and it is still occupying a marginalized existence within the overall modernization drive in the educational sector simply because religion is a deeply rooted psychological and identity phenomena in Ethiopian societies irrespective of their ethnic differences. Religion imbues not only culture and education but also politics and social behaviors to this very day.

The feudal state in Ethiopia cannot be accused of failing to introduce Western education compatible with Ethiopian values and needs. It tried and failed but it had no alternative models to choose from and modernization was considered as synonymous with Europeanization. Modern education or 20th century European education did not work for Africans not because they were or are lazier by nature than their European counterparts.

The colonial powers tried to impose their educational systems on Africans by coercion or by fiat without looking into the we may call problematic of relevance or the need to assess whether or not European education was compatible with African psychology, traditions and needs. They did it in haste and had not enough time or political will to do the necessary appraisals or analyses before imposing their educational values on African societies.

All said and done, Africa in general and Ethiopia in particular are still facing the daunting task of searching for an educational system or systems that are compatible with Ethiopian or African identity, values, traditions and needs. Education in African still consists of passing through the various school hierarchies and reaching college levels and earning degrees and then going to work whether the education they received was relevant or not to societal needs and aspirations. Traditional education was relatively social, communal or collective. Modern education, as imposed on Africa by the West, has increasingly become more private, individual and selfish. In brief, it has become a certificate for overcoming poverty at the individual level without caring much for the collective aspiration. It has become a passport for power and privilege.

Now that Africa has embarked on the journey to self-assertion and renewal, it would be relevant to look into how the education of Africans could be improved or reformed in such a way as to serve Africa's identified political, social and economic challenges and better serve and promote African unity or live up to the 2063 agenda of continental unity or total integration of Africa. If at all African education needs to be modernized, it has to be reformed in an African spirit and not on the old copy-paste formula that has long proved irrelevant and even destructive.

Society

Working more on preventing road accidents

BY FITSUM GETACHEW

Ethiopia is a country of more than 120 million people but the number of vehicles circulating on its roads has reached the million milestones just recently. In fact, even though most of the cars imported from Europe or the Middle East markets are used cars, there have been an increasing number of vehicles which are new or have been assembled locally. This means that the quality of the cars has improved significantly.

However, road accidents have continued to be a prime issue and everybody is worried about why there are so many road accidents. It is true that this is a major issue in most developing countries and the reasons could be many. The sad reality is that most of the accidents are very easily avoidable with a bit of caution and attention and only a few only of them could really be accepted as pure accidents. In many cases, the accidents are deadly because speed is a huge factor in the process.

Car accidents in our country have several reasons, most of whom are avoidable according to repeated surveys carried out by the relevant authorities. First of all, the checking of the drivers' ability should be revised carefully in multiple scenarios particularly because there have been alleged cases of corruption in the process of obtaining the driving license. Many people say that there is a problem with the authority that issues licenses to drivers because; no matter how strict the control may be, there are still many who manage to secure their driving licenses without adequate preparation and skills.

Besides the ones that could obtain genuine licenses from the roads authority, there are also others who somehow got forged licenses that could not be identified without serious inspections which may not be so practical. The fact that there could potentially be so many drivers without the necessary skills and know-how means that there are people who care little if they put on the roads drivers that could, not only endanger the lives of others, but also of the drivers themselves! Unfortunately, there are still records of those groups of unscrupulous people who continue to risk the lives of people for financial benefits and, what is even more alarming is the fact that there are people who are eager to drive on the roads putting at risk their own lives.

There have been talks of chains of corrupt officials who are engaged in the issuance of certain driving licenses and we have seen that some accidents could never have happened without the driver being incapable of driving. We find many drivers on the streets without having the required minimum capacity or know-how while trying to drive particularly in certain circumstances in a city for instance such as Addis with a lot of traffic congestion, both vehicles as well as pedestrians. We have seen them provoke certain delays in the traffic due to the poor confidence and ability of these drivers who somehow have



obtained their license evading the normal process.

Hence, the preparation of drivers is a huge factor in avoiding certain road accidents and; still remains an issue not addressed effectively.

Drivers need to be prepared not only technically but also psychologically and stay alert to making any decision while driving using the roads along with multiple other users to avoid accidents. Drivers must understand that the roads are to be shared among multiple others who have the same rights to use them equally and the mentality of total egoism results in easily evitable accidents but that could result to be severe and even fatal at times.

The reports coming from traffic authorities show that the number of road accidents in Ethiopia has been consistently high and this has created concern for them. Efforts have been exerted using every means available such as the controls on the streets, the strict application of traffic rules, the annual inspection rules of vehicles and the posting of as many traffic signs on the streets as possible. There are also continuous awareness raising campaigns on the roads with messages persistently conveyed to both pedestrians and motorists by traffic authorities. These people advise all those who use roads to be prudent and conscious of what they are doing, especially while driving in certain crowded urban areas. All these measures are expected to reduce the number of traffic accidents to acceptable levels and not be such a huge public concern. The challenge continues to be quite big because many believe that a lot remains to be done from all parties.

Research has been carried out to identify exactly which kinds of accidents are occurring where, how and why and the experience of other countries has also been tapped into in order to curb the number of road accidents and limit the damages not only to the families involved but also generally on the country. According to recent reports, 1.3 million people die yearly in the world due to road accidents,

and that means every 23 seconds a person dies. This is a huge number and the number of accidents that occur in the developing world is the big majority. Unfortunately, this is also true of Ethiopia where according to the latest records about 5,000 people lose their lives to road accidents yearly.

Moreover, the economic losses are also very painful. Accidents create disruption and chaos in family life but also in social life in general. In many cases, those who lose their lives are the breadwinners of families which cause social disruption as well psychological pain. Because of all these consequences, there have been extra efforts on the part of the relevant authorities working around transport and traffic agencies to reduce these accidents. More and more public messages are being transmitted on every media available so that everyone comes to appreciate the losses and various negative consequences that follow road accidents that could have been avoided in most instances.

The survey that has been carried out on why we experience so many road accidents has come up with various points. Why the efforts of the roads authority did not bring about such a change to limit to the minimum the rate of accidents' is one question it had to pose. Campaigns have been carried out for days every year to sensitize the public about the gravity of the situation because things should not be minimized and accidents should not be taken for granted when in many cases they can be avoided. Speed has been the first culprit in this list of causes of accidents but the preparation of the driver, the technical state of the vehicle and the conditions in which we drive are also parts of the issue.

The conditions of the streets where the vehicle is being driven could also be another source of accidents because streets could have their own weaknesses due to their old age or the climatic conditions have reduced them to little practicability. The state of mind of the driver is important because if people are struggling mentally with other issues while not paying attention to where they are driving or what exactly

is happening on the roads, this is an easy cause for an accident. Drivers must pass certain rigorous attitudinal tests in terms of personality and health issues such as hypertension or other visible physical liabilities especially for those whose profession is serving the public in the transport sector.

We have come to see that many who are engaged in the public transport sector by driving across the country have been found to take little rest and engage in round the clock ventures in order to maximize profits using certain stimulants. Drivers who do not take enough rest and enough sleep are the ones who very easily get involved in road accidents.

Vehicles which are hardly road worthy should be banned from the streets because they are often causes of grave accidents. We have seen in the past few years that there have been facilitations of credits for people serving in the public transport sector to replace their old vehicles with new ones and pay while working. People are encouraged to use well-kept vehicles and if they are not good enough to fit the roads, they should not be used endangering lives.

Hence, we can say all in all there are still more efforts expected from all sides to reduce the rate of road accidents and also reduce the gravity of the same because in many cases drivers lose control of the vehicle. The inspections and controls of the government authorities cannot have brilliant results unless they are corroborated by the public, most particularly those who are users of vehicles.

Pedestrians as well have their own share of duties and responsibilities while motorists should make sure that they drive under ideal circumstances every day they sit in the driver's seat. People should not die of road accidents that can very easily be prevented. There should be the right awareness on this issue and the cooperation of all forces involved in this operation of doing away with road accidents is crucial. We should convince ourselves that 'No one should die in a car accident!'

Law & Politics

Ethiopia's crucial role in ATMIS

BY EYUEL KIFLU

In a promising step towards stability, Somalia is witnessing significant progress with help of peacekeeping missions, with the AU Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS) taking the lead. As the nation navigates its path to lasting peace, ATMIS, along with Ethiopia's unwavering support, has emerged as a crucial force, working hand in hand with Somali authorities to establish security and lay the foundation for stability.

Somalia, a country long plagued by internal conflicts and terrorism, has seen its fair share of challenges. However, recent developments have brought a renewed sense of hope, thanks to the collaborative efforts of the African Union (AU), the United Nations, the Somali government, and Ethiopia, among other countries.

ATMIS, established in 2022, represents the AU's commitment to supporting Somalia's transition to self-reliance in matters of security and governance. The mission's primary objective is to build the capacity of Somali security forces and institutions, ensuring the country can independently address internal security threats.

Over the past two years, ATMIS, bolstered by the vital contributions of Ethiopian troops, has played a pivotal role in training and mentoring the Somali National Army (SNA) and the Somali Police Force (SPF). These combined efforts have led to notable improvements in the capabilities and professionalism of the Somali security forces. With ATMIS and Ethiopian support, the SNA has effectively launched and sustained counter-terrorism operations, targeting extremist groups such as Al-Shabaab.

Recently, in his visit to the Force Headquarters of the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS), the Deputy Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission (DSRCC) for Somalia, Sivuyile Thandikhaya Bam, commended the African Union troops for their commitment and role in restoring peace and stability in Somalia. The DSRCC who toured the Headquarters, on Saturday, to familiarise himself with the Force's operations urged the troops to continue the good work of helping Somali Security Forces (SSF) secure the country. "Since 2007, it has been a long road for all of us. There has been great sacrifice, and effort from you in ensuring that the mission runs successfully and optimally," said Bam.

"I am proud of the work that you have done and keep up the good work. I am proud to be among a team of men and women who are dedicated to finding a solution," he added. He assured that ATMIS was focused on formulating a withdrawal plan that will not compromise the security gains achieved. Echoing the DSRCC's remarks, ATMIS Deputy Force Commander in charge of Operations and Plans Maj. Gen. Marius Ngendabanka expressed confidence in the troops' abilities to stabilise Somalia

"The African Union peacekeepers have made a lot of sacrifices in Somalia by conducting



Deputy Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission (DSRCC) for Somalia, Sivuyile Thandikhaya Bam, commended the African Union troops for their commitment and role in restoring peace and stability in Somalia

successful operations against Al-Shabaab and other armed opposition groups," he said. Maj. Gen. Ngendabanka, noted that joint operations with SSF across the Federal Member States have also been instrumental in fulfilling the Mission's mandate.

The DSRCC also toured the Joint Operation Centre (JOC), which plays a crucial role in enhancing coordination and planning between ATMIS and SSF. Additionally, the centre facilitates collaboration and operational planning in accordance with the ATMIS Concept of Operations (CONOPS). He received briefings on ATMIS military operations and the current security situation in the country. ATMIS Chief of Staff Gen. Kindu Gezu and other senior military officers were present during the visit.

In similar vein, Ethiopia's role in stabilizing Somalia cannot be overlooked. Ethiopian troops have made significant sacrifices and suffered casualties while working towards pacifying Somalia and strengthening the administration in Villa Somalia. After President Siyad Bare's rule, Somalia faced fragmentation without a central government. In response to the peak of Somali piracy in 2008, regional countries, including Ethiopia, Kenya, and Djibouti, came together to form the Djibouti Code of Conduct, which aimed to counter this menace. Subsequently, Ethiopia and other nations entered Somalia after conferences held in Addis Ababa, leading to the establishment of a transitional government and the subsequent entry of AMISOM, which greatly improved the country's stability.

Ambassador Muktar Mohamed, Ethiopian ambassador to Somalia, in his recent stay with The Ethiopian Herald said that the multifaceted engagement of Ethiopian troops in Somalia. Besides participating in peacekeeping missions, Ethiopian troops have been actively involved in enhancing Somalia's security apparatus through the provision of military training to Special

Forces. Ethiopian troops have been providing military training to the state's Special Forces, known as "Darwish," in the South West State of Somalia. Moreover, Somalia's soldiers have been receiving training in Ethiopia through bilateral arrangements, further strengthening their military capacities.

Since the establishment of Somalia's transitional government, the Ethiopian government has trained numerous Somali police and defense forces, contributing significantly to the country's security. Ethiopia has also offered scholarships for training Somali cadets and military generals, demonstrating its commitment to building the military capacities of Somalia, he said.

Through continued collaboration and investment in capacity building, governance reforms, and socioeconomic development, Somalia's vision of a peaceful and prosperous nation can be realized, bringing hope and stability to its people and the region as a whole.

Recently, ATMIS conducted intensive training for 25 Criminal Investigation officers from the Somali Police Force (SPF) on investigating financial crimes to aid the Federal Government in combating terrorism backers. The training focused on detecting crimes such as money laundering, terrorist financing, and other illegal activities. These capacity-building initiatives by ATMIS contribute to the Somali Police Force's ability to assume full security responsibilities when ATMIS exits Somalia later this year.

The sacrifices made by various entities have played a pivotal role in improving the stability of Somalia. Neighboring countries, including Ethiopia, have made significant contributions. Furthermore, the unwavering support and commitment of the African Union, the United Nations, and other organizations have played a crucial role in creating the current state of relative peace in Somalia.

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Ephrem Endale
Contributor

Between you & me

Criticizing 'A' Doesn't Always Mean Aiding 'B'

"Whenever A and B are in opposition to each other anyone who attacks and criticizes A is accused of aiding and abetting B." Those were the words of George Orwell. He's quit in the news these days, isn't he? All of a sudden the world is saying "He has said it all and we didn't listen to him."

But looking deeper in the above mentioned quote it seems to hold a lot of truth. We don't have to personally experience such things to know the impact they would have on individuals and even within the society they live in. So people even though not directly affected would most likely be affected in other ways. Someway down the line this notion of placing everyone in one or other group seem to have taken hold and refuses to let us go. One reason that we seem so backward in discussing issues without any string attached, or without being accused of things we never imagined. It is not only about only politics or about issues not far from that world this trend persists. You witness a lot of it within the day today lives of the society we live in.

Take every common example of marriage disputes between couples. I remember touching on this issue a couple of times. I have a couple of friends who have been involved in resolving such issues. There is this trend where if you are seen being part of the peace seeking team the calls come repeatedly even from people you barely know; the underlying understanding seems to be you've the experience.

However, many times than not it is difficult to escape being accused of being biased against one side. By the way one of my friends I mentioned has totally given up involving in marriage disputes because he had enough of being accused of rooting for one side. In fact, in one instance he lost a very strong friendship which persisted for a couple of decades because the family of his own friend accused him siding with the bride. All he tried to do was try to be logical by trying to raise the positive and negative sides of both. But the family his friend having concluded that their son was the perfect husband have already put the blame on his wife. Well, here is one storyline you can't lay down on the table. He knows a few secrets about the husband, and all this weighed down on him. The only thing he could do was give the wife the credit he believed she deserved. Unfortunately, it backfired and cost him a friendship. YO don't such issue aren't places where you just off your chest and go away smiling with rounds of applauses seeing off. You have to tell it to someone.

So just to prevent your boat from being rocked you're forced to choose your words. Now here is where you really find yourself in real dilemma. The so-called 'chosen words,' because they don't express your real thoughts weigh down your tongue and probably your heart. I talk like I've been through it all, don't I? I mean there is nothing as nasty as being accused of aiding someone when you're nowhere near any

of it. In fact to be frank you might despise B more than you despise A. But then A doesn't know it. Even if he knows it most of the time he'd not be taking that neutral logical stand; "Well the guy sticks to his own principles and I don't see anything wrong with that." If he says these words he probably must be an angel in disguise.

Your very innocent and unbiased intentions are rewritten multiple times and turned against you. And you know what? A new you would be fashioned and refashioned among the ranks of the society; a new you which doesn't come anywhere close to sharing the strong groundwork of behaviors and principles that made you the person you are. All this just because you've spoken your mind about some person called A.

"I wanted to ask you something but I don't know why I feel I might offend you?"

"What made you think as such?"

"Well you know the days have changed and so do have people."

"You're saying I might have changed too."

"Maybe...maybe...Any way I heard that you've some very heavy words for A."

"What does that exactly mean?"

"Well the talk of the town is that you're making a real monster out of the fellow everywhere you go. People talk, you know!"

"Look, I know where this is leading to. If

you want to say just because I don't like the guy or many of the things about him it doesn't mean I'm a foot soldier for those who don't like him. Am I getting through to you?"

"You're trying; but it doesn't mean you're making any impact on me."

"Bravo! That is a very candid answer. You saved me a lot of breath and red blood cells. Anyway, let's change the subject shall we? What are you been doing with your life these days."

Here is an interesting story. There was this guy I know who had the habit of throwing in English words when he actually speaks in Amharic. I don't know how and when he started this habit. But presently he wasn't doing it to impress anyone or to show off his English language prowess. It was just another habit he's finding hard to throw off. One day he was having a nice time with friends when this gentleman who knew a couple of them joined them. Now our guy just kept to his habit of throwing in English terms. The gentleman left after a few minutes frowning and without any sign of having had a good time. He later told one of them that our guy inserted all those English words to offend him. What? Yes, that was what he said. So just take it easy inserting those English words especially among people who don't know you well!

Anyway returning to our main point criticizing A doesn't always mean aiding B!

Cooling Down the Hotheads

A couple of weeks back good old Arsenal was in a quarter final match and they finally made it through on penalties. And what happened? That's a very unwise question. Well they jumped all over the place and Arteta was study of happiness; that's what they did. Show their unlimited happiness in their ways. But we're not talking here about London or all the singing and chanting in the whole Emirates. We're talking here about our own city.

I heard from credible sources that in a couple of places that quit a number of Arsenal fans took things too far and nasty things happened. I could imagine some people saying "Again!" Yes, again. Another football match somewhere in Europe disturbs the peace of innocent citizens which were minding their own business. I don't want to go into details, because these days much if the mis/disinformation comes in the details. But then we're not talking about dislocated jaws or bloody noses in case there were any. We are talking about whatever led to fights over something that happened in another part of the globe in another time zone. The irony of it all is that over there were just expressing their happiness in ways they preferred. We have seen no report of fans who went out to beat up others because their team won!

These disturbances, and the chaotic behavior because of what happened between European soccer teams never seems to end. Of course these days we don't hear of horrific things like

injuries and even loss of life in a few instances we were accustomed to sometime back. Still doesn't seem the water is clear as the recent happenings have shown. The question is simple and direct; should the results of foreign soccer teams really concern so much as to lead us go out searching for fights. The funny thing is this time it was not that the other team had fans ready to fight back. The trouble I was told wasn't between fans of opposing teams as it is the case most of the time. In fact I wonder if any of fans of the big English Premier League teams really know the existence of the team which The Gunners beat to make it through to the next stage. Usually skirmishes or even full blown bust up are instigated by individuals; individuals some of whom might have real hot and uncontrolled spontaneous temper not responding to any logical reasoning. Such souls mostly might be medical cases and could only be solved with the interference of the medical professionals.

But then even more worrying are those who look for the slightest excuse to start fights. Some of these too might be medical cases. But there are those brutes that enjoy hurting others; others who have done them no harm at all and the result of soccer matches could be the perfect launching grounds. What makes the recent case worrying is the fights, according to the reports were started by fans of winning team while there was absolutely no sign of the losing team having any fans at all!

Look, talking about football fans who just love creating mess whether their team loses or wins might not sound interesting. "Look you're talking about bums who wouldn't hesitate to do anything to create chaos would be waste of time. It would be like pouring water on stone where the water just rolls down to the ground."

"Don't you think such a conclusion is a little harsh? I mean there could be some who are open to logical reasoning as long as it is delivered in ways they could understand. Forget the technical jargon and talk to them in everyday language. I think such an approach would pull back many from the edge of the cliff."

Isn't that what they call ironical! You wonder if such guys have ever heard of that there's this a concept (!) called calmness. Yes, even in football, calmness should be must be hidden somewhere in all the confusion that much of the time follows some games, especially between the heavyweights of soccer.

Say, it's supposed to be any other day for most. You know that day which cases with such frequency it sends you if days are indeed cloned or something. Had it been possible to say, "Isn't that the same day I 'lived' yesterday?" People are getting on with their lives all over the place and like always the weekend football TV shows are on.

The day's normal progression goes into a nosedive after one major EPL game is over and

there are these hotheaded youth who are out for some rumble and jumble. Here, too, it isn't about football. It is about behaviors; it's about how the nation's youngsters are supposed to act and how they're actually acting; it is about the existential-sounding question of why some among youngsters are always out for bust-up and the only thing they crave for is any reason which allows them to full their wish of punches landing on jaws.

Things seem to be happening over and again because we aren't doing our jobs; because there are gaps in bringing up youngsters the right way as most of those involved on the soccer troubles are teenagers. Talking of bringing up children the way they should be brought up there was this scene that shook every active cell in my system. I was in this home and the three-year-old kid played with a water gun. He was aiming at all of us and you'd have thought there was an innocent child being just another kid. But the way he aimed kneeling on one knee, ducking and acting like he was hunting some enemy while all the while shouting "You! Stop I'll kill you!" And I'm telling you this as eyewitness. You can imagine the kinds of films and games he watches. And to add insult to injury his parents smiled all the time! Only He knows how long those smiles stay!

Be it European soccer or any other sector of daily life I think cooling down the hotheaded youngsters is one way ensuring them the better future they're entitled to.

In Pictures



Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed hosted an Iftar dinner for second-generation Ethiopians who are currently in Ethiopia as part of the 'Back To Your Origins' campaign launched earlier this year.



The Ministry of Finance consulted with a Chinese high-level delegation on the new economic cooperation between the two countries, especially on Belt and Road Initiative key projects.

Peacefulness, piousness and friendliness

BY NAOL GIRMA

Minister of Foreign Affairs Taye Atske Selassie met and discussed with the African Union (AU) high-level panel on Resolution of the Conflict in Sudan.

The foreign minister received at his office a Panel on Sudan, led by Muhammad Ibn Chambas, convened by the African Union's Peace and Security Council for the purpose of finding a lasting solution to the crisis in the Sudan.



Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed's recent discussions with religious leaders and various sections of the society would play a big role in building sustainable peace said Ministry of Peace State Minister Kairedin Tezera