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Capital market augments role in supporting commercial banks, economy

BY BETELHEM BEDLU

ADDIS ABABA- The capital market could offer alternative resources in commercial banks, boost individual wealth, and embrace a huge part of the community thereby stimulating the Ethiopian economy, experts in the area said.

Speaking to The Ethiopian Herald, Addis Ababa University Capital Market Senior Advisor Dakito Alemu (PhD) stated that the capital market enables commercial banks to diversify their earnings as they could participate as an intermediary, issuer, and investor.

Also, the banking industry could develop unique products that is compatible with capital market products and may well

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Linguist insights ON cross-border languages in regional cooperation

BY MISGANAW ASNAKE

ADDIS ABABA - Ethiopia ought to develop and utilize trans-border languages to ease trade exchange and bolster socio economic ties with neighbors, Linguistics Scholar suggested.

Approached by *The Ethiopian Herald*, Addis Ababa University Linguistics Professor Zelalem Leyew stated that cross-border languages ease trade activities, facilitate conflict resolution process and enhance communication among societies in border areas.

“In Ethiopia, many cross border languages are spoken and this

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Photo: Gebabo Gebrie

Belete Molla (PhD)

Ethiopia eyeing e-government, e-commerce for digital transformation

• *Installs over 587 e-governance systems*

BY ASHENAFI ANIMUT

ADDIS ABABA – Among the digital strategies, e-government and e-commerce are highly contributing to the success of the country’s digital transformation, the Ministry of Innovation and Technology (MinT) said.

MinT Minister Belete Molla (PhD) made the above remark during the panel discussion held on Tuesday in relation to the performance evaluation forum on mid-term digital transformation 2025.

The Minister made the statement in line with the country’s development goals, See Ethiopia eyeing... Page 3

Ethiopia, Japan solidifying education partnerships

• *Japan offers MEXT scholarship to university students*

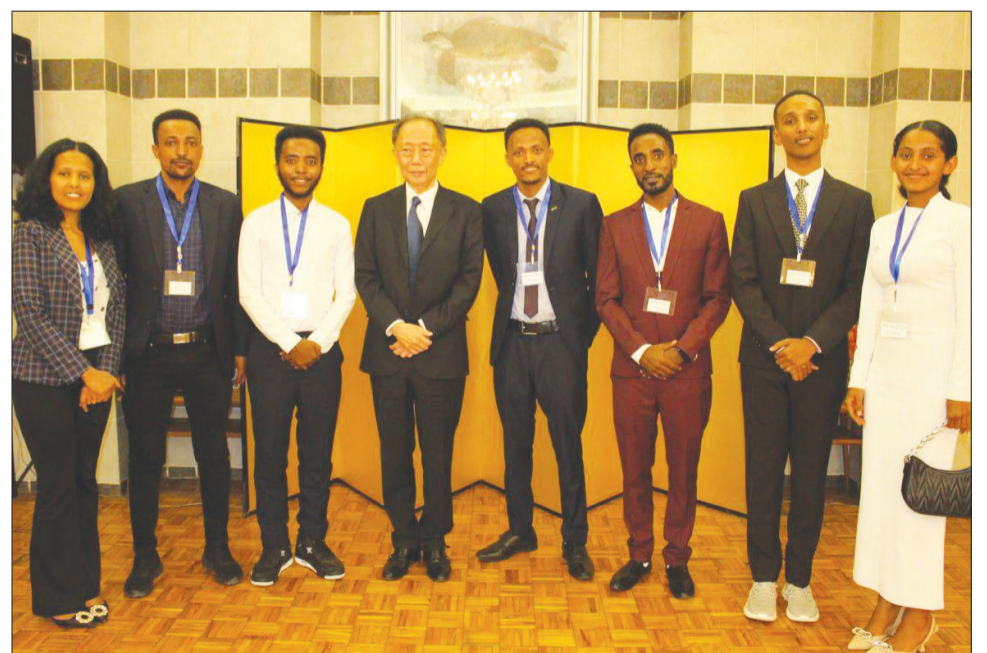
BY MESERET BEHAILU

ADDIS ABABA- Japan needs to expand and deepen its diplomatic and economic relations with Ethiopia through education and people-to-people ties, the country’s ambassador said.

Ambassador Shibata Hironori made the above remark yesterday while his government gave a MEXT scholarship for eight Ethiopian students in various universities including Hokkaido, Osaka, Nagoya, Tohoku, Kyusyu, and Okayama.

Among the different activities the Japanese Embassy has been doing to maintain and develop the multifaceted ties, it has capitalized on Ethiopian alumni who have obtained MEXT Scholarship, JICA training, or other schemes and are currently working in their home country.

According to him, the new batch of students would become a bridge in the Ethio-Japan cooperation in higher education and also boost the overall ties. “For instance, a noted scholar Professor Afework Kassu, who studied at Tokushima University, and Bahir Dar University President Firew



Tegegne (PhD) are the alumni who have been greatly contributing to advancing the two countries’ diplomatic relations and promote academic partnership.”

Ambassador Hironori further expressed his country’s desire to proactively support the development of the Ethiopian economy, society, and security aspirations.

Addis Ababa University Civil Engineering Instructor and a member of the Japan Ethiopia Alumni Society (JEAS) Essayas Gebere Yohanis (PhD) said, “I received a JICA Scholarship in the Master’s program in 2003. Two years later, I pursued my PhD studies at Tokyo University and acquired a

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Deputy PM highlights agricultural proliferation significance

BY MESERET BEHAILU

ADDIS ABABA – Deputy Prime Minister Temesgen Tiruneh stated that increasing production and productivity is a key to address a numbers of problems.

Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) yesterday organized the National Agricultural Lime Supply and Distribution Launch Program for 2016/17 Ethiopian fiscal year of Crop Season under the theme : “Soil Health for the Survival of the Country” aiming at treating acidic soils.

Speaking at the launching program, Deputy Prime Minister Temesgen Tiruneh said that there is a need to boost production and productivity to solve nation’s problems such as food insecurity, high cost of living, and the likes.

He said: “The country should give due emphasis to preserving soil fertility based on effective plan and research keeping the required discipline and expanding experience in the agricultural filed to bring remarkable outcomes.”

MoA Minister Girma Amentie (PhD) on his part said that treating acidic soils through limes should not solely be left to a single body as it demands working cooperatively so as to preserve soil fertility at a sustainable manner.

As to him, over the past years, research institutes in agricultural extension announced that it was possible to increase crop yield and productivity by treating acidic soil with agricultural lime.

“Fields treated with agricultural lime has so far showed significant increase in yield. For example, it was possible to increase Wheat product by 71 percent, Barley by 100 percent and Corn by 28 percent, as well as Beans by 88 percent,” he noted.

Girma further stated that 43 percent of the cultivated land is affected by soil acidity, of which 28 percent is affected by strong acidity, which covers 3.1 million hectares of the cultivated land. However, Ethiopia has large amount of lime that can be used to treat acidic soil whilst it is a good opportunity to protect soil fertility in the years to come.

The program was attended by Ministers, State Ministers, senior government Officials, and representatives from various states of the country.

Public raises over 19 bln Birr for Abbay dam construction

• Office launches Abbay dam Bond Week

BY TSEGAYE TILAHUN

ADDIS ABABA – Public raised over 19 billion Birr for the construction of Abbay dam over the past 13 years, said Coordination Office.

The Office of National Council for the Coordination of Public Participation on the Construction of the Abbay Dam launched Bond Week yesterday to augment contribution to the construction of the dam via bond sales, 8100 SMS, donation and others schemes.

Yesterday, the Office, Commercial Bank of Ethiopia (CBE) and Ethiopian Development Bank (DBE) jointly expressed their readiness to sale bond coupons to public at large . Accordingly, they planned to collect about 100 million Birr in the Bond Week.

Speaking at the occasion, DBE Vice President Getachew Wakie said that over the past 13 years, over 16.8 billion Birr collected via



bond sale. During the past eight months, the country has collected more than 767 million Birr.

He hoped for more fundraising in connection with the special 13th year of the launch of the flagship dam construction. For this year’s bond week, it has prepared worth of 9.5 billion Birr bond coupons. The bond coupons are now available in all branches of the CBE, DBE and others across the country.

On her part, CBE Customers’ Relations Director Bethel Tadesse said that the bank

itself has purchased over 200 million Birr bond during the past 13 years. It also collected over 9. 8 billion Birr from bond sales apart from collecting over 319 million Birr via donation.

Furthermore, the bank collected 61 million USD, 1.6 million pound and 49 million Euros the construction of the dam from members of Ethiopian Diasporas .

In her finial message ,she called on public to renew commitment till the finalization of Abbay dam construction .

Ministry plans to purchase 460 TB testing machines

BY ESSEYE MENGISTE

ADDIS ABABA- Ministry of Health (MoH) disclosed that it has planned to purchase 460 TB testing machines this year.

MoH Control and Prevention of TB, Leprosy and other Lung Diseases Desk Head Taye Leta told the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) that it has set to buy 460 TB testing machines this fiscal year, 2023/2024.

He also said that 503 TB testing machines were purchased for the prevention and control of TB over the last 10 years. Work is being done to increase the number of machines to 1,100. Some 460 TB testing machines will be purchased this year and work is being done to address 900 districts at the national level.

He said: “There are more than 4,000



governments and over 10,000 private health institutions, in the country. Although the existing and the new TB testing machines that will be purchased are not enough, efforts are being exerted to make them accessible to all districts. The health facilities located

near the districts and Kebeles are treating patients freely.”

As to him, earlier, TB was diagnosed by asking patients about symptoms, but currently, it is being investigated using x-rays and artificial intelligence. Therefore, this year, 200 devices supported by artificial intelligence have been purchased and brought so as to diagnose TB.

According to the World TB report, 156,000 people in Ethiopia are infected with the disease. Some 136,000 have diagnosed and 20,000 of them are being investigated.

He further said that to find these 20,000 TB patients, it is necessary to complete the testing machines that the world has reached. Ethiopia is one of the seven countries in the world that have achieved the goal set from 2015 to 2022.

EDIF set to amass 6 bln Birr premium

BY MESERET BEHAILU

ADDIS ABABA – Ethiopian Deposit Insurance Fund (EDIF) said it is working to collect some 6 billion Birr premium this fiscal year.

EDIF’s CEO, Desalegn Ambaw (PhD) told the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) that his organization is working hard to collect 6 billion Birr from financial institutions and smallholders as a premium this budget year.

As to him, protecting and guaranteeing micro finances, banks, and smallholders who are depositing money is the priority of the EDIF.

He believed that his office builds the confidence of depositors and realizes financial stability.



Desalegn Ambaw (PhD)

Over 97% of citizens have not more than 100,000 Birr deposit, he mentioned referring a research conducted in 2021.

He further stated that the nation is ranked

148th in the world in establishing EDIF whilst a lot of activities are remain to be done specially in addressing the smallholders.

As to the CEO, EDIF is preparing to sign a memorandum of understanding with the Ministry of Finance and National Bank of Ethiopia soon in order to realize proactive response in financial affairs.

In a similar manner, it is working with international originations like the World Bank to fill the skilled human power gap and technology limitation, he noted.

Furthermore, EDIF will prepare “Risk Adjusted Premium” to encourage financial stability and it will provide loan after five years, it was learned.

Huawei partners with 30 Ethiopian universities

• Commences Digital Week 2024 with focus on digital education acceleration

BY YESUF ENDRIS

ADDIS ABABA –Chinese global technology company-Huawei announced that it has teamed up with more than 30 Ethiopian Universities to expand digital education.

Huawei's Ethiopia Digital Week 2024 commenced yesterday with a focus on expanding smart learning classrooms and digital education in Ethiopia.

In his opening speech, Huawei Northern Africa Vice President, Rock Qin said that the Corporation is supplying technological apparatuses of smart classrooms and technical supports.

Huawei has been collaborating with Ethiopian government and institutions for the past 25 years and it is committed to continue supporting the digital journey of

Ethiopian education, he expressed.

Guest of honor at the event, Addis Ababa University President Samuel Kifle on his part highlighted Ethiopia's enthusiasm to expanding digital education, particularly through the implementation of smart classrooms.

He emphasized that his University is actively digitalizing its teaching and learning processes, with the guidance of the Ministry of Education and the help of international organizations.

The President announced the inauguration of smart classrooms in the university, which enable students in remote areas to access quality education from experienced teachers.

He also disclosed the completion of the state-of-the-art digital studio and outlined plans for further infrastructure expansion in the university's digitalization efforts.

The impact of digital education and its potential to enhance various socio-economic phenomena is critical so that it will play a crucial role in improving overall societal development, he added.

United Nations Education, Science and Culture Organization Representative for African Union and Ethiopia, Rita Bissoonauth also emphasized that digitalization and Artificial Intelligence are needed to empower students who are receiving low quality education.

Women students, who are now minority in number, particularly in Africa, would be beneficial of digital education, she said.

She however stressed the need of humanizing the digitalization of education to overcome existing challenges.

The summit was held under the theme "Accelerate Digital for Education," The Ethiopian Herald learnt.

Ethiopia, Japan

great deal of knowledge and experience in the process."

Essayas (PhD) advised the students to try to learn and understand the values and cultures of the Japanese people which would help

them to develop their network, and to make the future of the two countries' relationship auspicious.

Students who received the scholarships expressed commitment to studying hard,

learning the cultures and values of the Japanese people, and contributing to the advancement of the two countries' relationships. They also vowed to serve their home country in their respective areas of profession.

Linguist insights...

plays significant role in fostering of multinational cohesion and reinforce socio economic ties between peoples and nations," he said.

Prof. Zelalem noted that the Ethiopian people speak trans-border languages and communicate with Eritrean, Kenyan, Somali, and Sudanese and Djiboutian counterparts.

For instance, Somali, Tigre, Afaan Oromo and Amharic languages of Ethiopia are spoken in other Horn of African nations such as Somalia, Kenya, Eritrea, Sudan and Djibouti thereby fostering trade and socio economic relations in the region, the scholar added.

As to him, language touches and exists in politics, social, educational, health, and court system serving as a communication tool for better cooperation.

Mentioning the recent launching of teaching Amharic language by some countries, the Scholar indicated that it has a huge benefit for Ethiopia to promote the language and increase country's international influence.

He said some other languages in Ethiopia aren't integrated into school system so that they need to start educating students in their mother tongue by preparing text books and dictionaries among others.

He also underscored the need to rescue and develop endangered languages that are

close to extinction.

Moreover, he said, teaching children in mother tongue has huge benefit in boosting their understanding about what they learn, and the environment.

"We need to develop Ethiopian languages in order to foster growth as well," he expressed.

Prof. Zelalem has presented his research under the topic "Language Diversity in Education in Ethiopia" during the celebration of Mother Tongue day held on Tuesday organized by Addis Ababa Culture, Arts and Tourism Bureau in collaboration with Addis Ababa University.

Ethiopia eyeing...

which includes the Homegrown Economic Reform Agenda that this organization has been developing and deploying various e-service platforms to offer accessible online services.

Accordingly, he said, the government has undertaken multifaceted activities ranging from policy framework revision to infrastructure expansion, especially from the telecom sector that has greatly contributed to nation's digital transformation journey in the past three years.

Despite many financial challenges that

faced since the launching of digital strategy, he expressed that the country has managed to generate a fruitful achievement.

"Various infrastructure development activities are also made by prioritizing legal frameworks, strategic planning, institutional development, telecom infrastructure expansion in the past three years, thus, attracting a huge amount of local and international investments," he pointed out.

Moreover, issuing digital ID, applying digital payment systems and delivering financial technology services are among

the achievements of the strategy, he added.

The Ministry has launched over 587 e-governance service and e-commerce platforms, Belete said, adding that currently, pertinent institutions are offering reliable and fast services through deploying digital infrastructures.

"The digital transformation strategy aligned with other key policies is highly believed to contribute to nation's job creation, forex generation and economic development," he noted.

As to him, the government is also

Capital market ...

diversify the banks' earnings by collecting resources.

Economic accuracy is another important benefit of the capital market as it enables commercial banks to make healthy loans, repayment of principals as well as interest and fees on other accounts, and limit the counterparty risk, he elaborated.

Besides market expansion, the capital market offers effective tools for hedging risks including interest rate risk, currency risk, and credit risk. Likewise, the capital market could result in boosting investment which allows commercial banks to mobilize more resources.

Citing research, Dakito mentioned that banks and capital markets not only compete to serve a limited pool of investment projects but also cooperate. Another study that was conducted in 2019 indicated that the capital market constitutes 50% of the world's total wealth which was 360.1 trillion USD.

The AAU School of Commerce Capital Market Project Coordinator Tamrat Mengesha said for his part that the coming into force of capital market is not only essential for banks but also for the growth of the entire economy.

Noting the capital market's significance in mobilizing the entire economy, Tamrat stated that it also allows banks to engage in subsidiary services such as underwriting, intermediary, and issuer. "The money that used to be gained from financial institutions such as banks would be covered by the capital market. Given the fact that capital market would introduce new ideas, it would open various doors and stimulate the economy."

The U.S. and European countries' experiences exemplify the role of capital market in a given economy and by putting a well-functioning capital market in place; states could have planned economies.

Hence, he stressed the need to ensure the inclusivity of Ethiopia's business model. Also, the capital market authority, which is the regulatory body, should take into account that the market is complying with fairness and market integrity.

Ethiopia needs to devise viable legal frameworks as well as create adequate awareness to participants of the capital market through various platforms, the expert emphasized.

undertaking various activities on policy framework revision, awareness creation and establishing platforms the support startups to steadfast the development of e-commerce.

Digital infrastructural developments are not the end but they are the means, therefore, it is important to create value addition the help benefit the community. Trained manpower equipped with digital knowledge and skills are required to expand and sustain the digital transformation aspirations, the minister emphasized.

Opinion

Ethiopia's ongoing efforts in addressing refugee crisis

BY ADDISALEM MULAT

The continuous praiseworthy handling of refugees in Ethiopia has been getting higher in the Horn of Africa more than ever before. Following the commitment and dedication of the federal government, refugees in Ethiopia have been in safe haven.

In the face of challenges, Ethiopia has continued hosting and protecting refugees coming from various parts of the Horn region and beyond. No matter what happens, the country does not give the cold shoulder to refugees wherever they come from except welcoming them cordially and treating them with great care.

Apart from unlocking doors and creating a conducive environment for refugees fleeing their homes due to various reasons, Ethiopia has been playing a commendable role in creating a better place for refugees. In terms of shielding refugees, the country is turning out to be a model for other nations worldwide.

Above and beyond, Ethiopia, every once in a while, leaves no stone unturned to safeguard and land a helping hand to refugees. In the present circumstances, as the federal government is at the ready to give refugees asylum and protection, each and every one has been forwarding praise to Ethiopia.

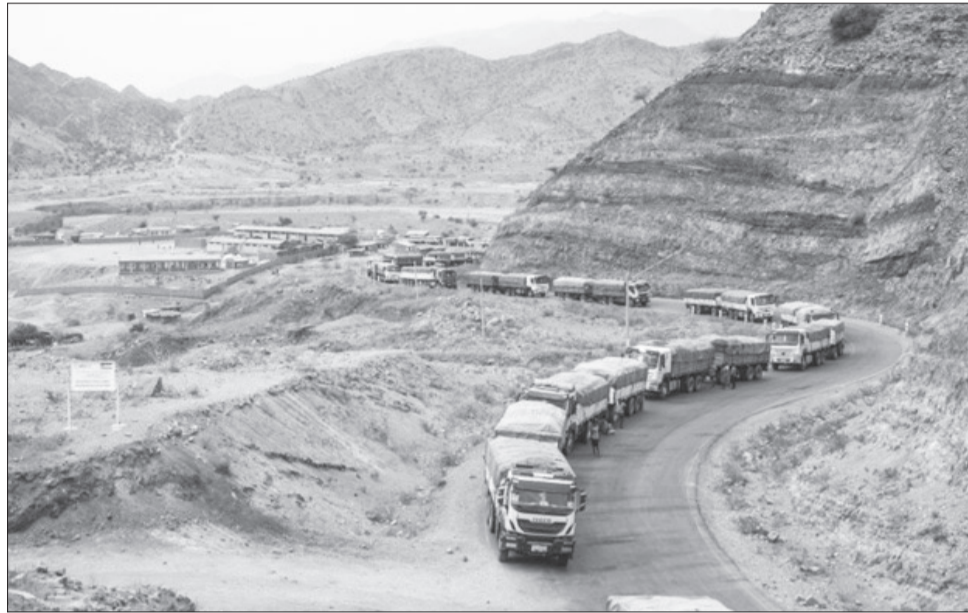
In consideration of the foregoing, refugees residing under the umbrella of Ethiopia have been feeling at home on numerous occasions. In actual fact, following its active role in supporting refugees, Ethiopia has been receiving a pat on the back from the wider international community.

All things considered, Ethiopia has been committed to working in close collaboration with pertinent bodies to improve the lives of refugees residing in various parts of the country making use of a wide spectrum of effective techniques. Despite challenges, Ethiopia has been providing the whole kit and caboodle required for internally displaced people and refugees hailing from various parts of the world and beyond.

In point of fact, the country has been working around the clock with various entities to transform the lives of refugees fleeing their homes from numerous parts of the world on account of various whys and wherefores.

With a focus on improving the lives of refugees, Ethiopia has been becoming involved with manifold fruitful activities with multifarious entities. The Refugees and Returnees Service (RRS) officially issued digital National ID cards for refugees for the first time in East Africa that will enable the latter to access critical services.

Speaking at the launching ceremony, RRS Director General Teyiba Hassen recently stated that they have partnered with the UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, and the National ID Program to issue digital IDs that will include refugees and asylum seekers into the Ethiopian National ID



system.

Teyba also stated that Ethiopia has been working to realize an inclusive approach for refugees and it has been improving refugees' inclusivity from time to time. "Ethiopia is hugely known for hosting refugees globally and it has been making hosting refugees its culture."

As a result, the global community cherished Ethiopia for issuing digital IDs for over one million refugees that have been sheltered in the country. Launching refugee ID cards is a showcase for Ethiopia's priority for humanity, embracing its neighbors and encouraging refugees and maintaining their rights, she elaborated.

The new system would enable refugees to conduct some basic activities including opening bank accounts, accessing healthcare, jobs, receiving cash transfers and subsidies, applying for government documents, getting social protection and education and empowering them with greater control over personal data, the director general remarked.

The National ID program Executive Director, Yodahe Arayaselassie, on his part said that the government passed a grand strategic decision to benefit refugees living across Ethiopia. The new system would reduce challenges to access services and discourage attempts to obtain services in forged documents.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Ethiopia Representative Andrew Mbogori indicated today's pilot stage, rolled out in Addis Ababa with the issuance of refugee ID cards is a huge step in including refugees in national systems. "This will be gradually rolled out in all locations in Ethiopia and will benefit nearly one million refugees mainly coming from South Sudan, Somalia, Eritrea, and Sudan."

This new refugee ID will allow them to access critical services like obtaining a SIM card, healthcare, school enrolment and others. It will also help them improve their access to financial services and permit them to open bank accounts and engage in financial transactions.

It is crystal clear that Ethiopia has been

proving refugees with educational opportunities ranging from primary education to higher learning institutions over and over again. As education plays a paramount role in changing the lives of everyone, they can engage themselves in various fruitful work activities that can change their lives and family members.

Quoting researches on the area, the education of refugees is crucial to the peaceful and sustainable development of the countries that have welcomed them, and to the future prosperity of their own countries. The inclusion of refugee children and youth in national systems can provide the necessary tools for the successful integration of individuals and communities and can foster mutual acceptance, tolerance and respect in situations of social upheaval. More globally, education for refugees can provide hope and long-term prospects for stability and sustainable peace for individuals, communities, countries and global society.

The right to education is important for every child, but for displaced children it can provide the knowledge and skills to rebuild their lives and chart a path to a more peaceful and prosperous future for themselves and their families. Education is the primary way by which displaced and marginalized migrants can lift themselves out of poverty and participate meaningfully in their societies. Providing the opportunity to learn and flourish through learning can empower refugee children and adults to lead fulfilling lives.

In the recent past, speaking to the Ethiopian Press Agency, Refugees Affairs Senior Communication Officer, Engize Ketema (PhD) stated that refugees were attending education in preschools, primary schools and secondary schools.

He went on to say, "Totally, 168,269 refugees are attending formal education in 65 preschools, 53 primary and 11 secondary schools. In addition, some public schools nearby in refugees' camps are also delivering services. Public universities are also receiving and providing scholarships to refugees without any special requirement and any refugee who had a pass mark in university entrance exam are also being treated equally."

Ethiopia is the third African country for hosting refugee students following Uganda and Sudan. South Sudanese, Somalis, and Eritrean students take the largest number of refugee students in Ethiopia. Addis Ababa, Gambella, Somali, Benishangul Gumuz, Afar, Amhara, and Tigray are hosting a large number of refugee students, the officer elaborated.

Ethiopia is operating durable solutions for refugees and adopted a comprehensive plan of action to grant refugees the right to work, movement, access to formal and non-formal education and other privileges. The government has also made several commitments in legal frameworks to support refugees and they are included in the sixth series of educational sector development plan and management information system.

In the present climate, Ethiopia has been distributing humanitarian aid in collaboration with international donors to countless needy people residing under the umbrella of Ethiopia.

The Government of Ethiopia, in cooperation with international donors, has been distributing humanitarian aid to 6.6 million people, according to the Ethiopian Disaster Risk Management Commission (EDRMC).

EDRMC Public Relations and Communication representative, Atalel Abohay told local media that assistances, both in cash and in kind, have been consolidated to the victims of man-made and natural disasters. He said that food and non-food items as well as cash have been distributed in six months of the fiscal year.

Accordingly, over 894,000 quintals of grain and 540.5 million Birr cash have been given to the needy. In the first and second rounds alone, the commission extended assistance to 7.3 million citizens and to 6.5 million people in the third-round. In total, Atalel stated that 15.2 billion Birr worth support has been distributed in kind and cash.

The humanitarian aid was provided to inhabitants affected by natural and man-made disasters in Afar, Tigray and Amhara regions, it was learned.

The representative further said that the Government of Ethiopia has provided 894,302 quintals of grain from reserve food warehouses to fill the gap created by donor organizations. International donor organizations that had stopped providing aid have been persuaded to continue their support through diplomatic engagement, he noted.

Accordingly, the organizations have provided 400,000 quintals of aid, which covered 30 % of the assistance, in the third-round. Atalel further stated that the commission, in collaboration with donor organizations, has continued providing assistance for 6.6 million people in the ongoing fourth-round.

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

Editorial

Investing in digitalization key for nation's prosperity

Recently, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) has underscored the necessity of investing in digitization initiatives in order to ensure Ethiopia's prosperity. According to him, besides reshaping the overall performances, digitization initiatives are vehicles to expedite Ethiopia's journey to prosperity.

Last Tuesday, a forum that evaluated the nation's digital performance was conducted under the theme: Building inclusive and prosperous digital Ethiopia. The forum identified that the country has aggressively been implementing digitization strategies in various institutions to improve different circumstances and remarkable achievements have been registered as a result. Emphasizing the importance of digitalization, the Premier also said, "The productivity of sectors such as industry, agriculture, mining, and tourism among many others will not be realized without leveraging the digital era."

Indisputably, the digital economy is based on the process of generating and accumulating data that would build bridges among sectors in a way that promotes knowledge and experiencing sharing. Hence, the importance of data mining and well facilitated data accumulation cannot be overemphasized. This process plays crucial roles in making the digital age journey more accessible.

The Prime Minister said that the private sectors and innovators are also game-changing actors that play a crucial role to the development of digital economy aspirations. Indeed, they play a crucial role in the development of a digital Ethiopia. For instance, they can provide the necessary funding for building and upgrading digital infrastructure, such as telecommunications networks, internet connectivity, data centers, and broadband services. Realizing their roles in expanding access to digital technologies across the country, the government has been encouraging the private sector. Besides this, private sectors can support innovation and technological advancements through investing in research and technologies.

Moreover, as digital technologies expand, the private sectors continue investing in the new businesses and these in turn contribute a great deal in creating employment opportunities and contributing to the overall economic development of the country. Overall, the contributions of the private sector and investors are essential for the sustainable growth of the digital economy in the country. They play a vital role in driving the digital transformation of Ethiopia by investing in infrastructure, fostering innovation, creating jobs, developing skills, supporting startups, and collaborating with the government. Interestingly, realizing their commendable roles, the premier has reaffirmed commitment to create a favorable playground for private sectors and startups in terms of finance, policy and strategy shift among other supports.

Consequently, well-cultivated digitalization will certainly accelerate the intended prosperity. It can contribute to economic growth by increasing efficiency, productivity, and innovation across various sectors such as agriculture, manufacturing, services, and finance. Moreover, it speeds up digital financial services, such as mobile money and digital banking. It can also help expand financial inclusion by providing access to formal financial services for previously underserved populations.

Furthermore, well-developed digitalization can facilitate e-commerce, enabling businesses to reach a wider market both domestically and internationally. It can improve the delivery of public services, enhance transparency, and reduce bureaucratic inefficiencies, leading to better governance and public sector performance besides supporting education and skills development, empowering the workforce with the necessary digital literacy and technical skills for the modern economy.

In sum, the roles of digital initiatives in reshaping national development and ensuring the intended prosperity are so vital. Hence, huge and wise investment in cultivating digitalization is incomparably essential. Private sector and innovators have pivotal contributions in accelerating the development of digitalization. Subsequently, well-cultivated digitalization plays fundamental roles in ensuring Ethiopia's prosperity.

Opinion

Preparation is underway for green legacy initiatives across the country

BY EPHREM ANDARGACHEW

The Ethiopian government started a nationwide reforestation initiative in 2019 called the Ethiopian Green Legacy Initiatives. Planting billions of trees nationwide is the initiative's main objective in the fight against climate change, land degradation, and deforestation. With the ultimate objective of planting billions of trees, the program intends to plant 4 billion trees during the rainy season annually. In addition to restoring Ethiopia's degraded landscapes, this large-scale effort hopes to boost the nation's biodiversity, lessen the effects of climate change, and generate employment possibilities, particularly for women and young people.

The Initiative has been carried out in two stages thus far. The Green Legacy Initiative's first phase, which aims to plant 4 billion trees during the rainy season, ran from 2019 to 2022. This stage was centered on establishing the groundwork for a national forestry initiative, increasing public knowledge of the value of reforestation, and inspiring communities and government organizations to take part in tree-planting events.

The second phase of the Green Legacy Initiative, which began in 2022, builds on the previous phase's success by aiming to increase tree-planting initiatives. The second phase focuses on not just planting trees, but also caring and maintaining them to ensure their survival and long-term influence on the ecosystem. The second phase also intends to incorporate additional stakeholders in tree planting activities, such as schools, companies, and civil society groups, to establish a more comprehensive and long-term forestry effort.

Accordingly, the Green Legacy Initiative's two phases show Ethiopia's ongoing dedication to reducing the adverse effects of climate change, with a greater focus on sustainability, community involvement, and long-term impact. Ethiopia made a major contribution to increasing community participation in tree-planting events and spreading knowledge of the value of reforestation during the Green Legacy Initiative's initial phase. The effort drew public attention and encouraged popular involvement by aiming to plant 4 billion trees in a single rainy season. The initial phase also formed alliances with corporations, civil society groups, and government agencies, laying the foundation for a national forestry initiative.

In addition, the Green Legacy Initiative's second phase is anticipated to have an even bigger impact since it expands on the first phase's success and attempts to plant even more trees. The second phase aims to secure the long-term survival and influence of the planted trees by emphasizing not just planting them but also caring for and preserving them. Furthermore, the second phase intends to build a more complete and sustainable forestry effort by including a larger range of stakeholders in tree planting activities, such as corporations, civil society groups, and schools.

Given these facts, tree seedlings are being prepared for this year's rainy season. Since the Ethiopian winter approaches, a variety of activities have taken place such as creating awareness, preparing locations, planting seedlings maps, and so on.

Ethiopian Prime Minister Dr. Abiy Ahmed said, "Ethiopia's Green Legacy Initiative is more than just planting. It is an integrated management of existing forests and biodiversity, restoring mass degraded landscapes and improving our ecosystem. As we prepare for this year's planting season ahead of us, seedlings are under preparation throughout the country".

Ethiopia's Forestry Development Green Legacy

and Plantation Forest Executive CEO Aberu Tena said that 5.5 billion saplings have already been prepared for this year's Green Legacy Initiative development. Forest seedlings account for 2 billion, bamboo for 60 million, the rest are "agroforestry" saplings.

He further explained seedlings that are ready for planting are more than 25 cm tall and must be authorized by specialists. In total, it is planned to prepare 6.5 billion seedlings for the second phase of the Green Legacy Initiative development this year. The remaining one billion tree seedlings will be prepared quickly since they are not time-consuming.

Particularly, among the prepared tree seedlings forty percent of the total planting program is forest seedlings and the remaining sixty percent is agroforestry, that is, fruit and vegetable crops and fodder plants used for human and animal food.

Apart from tree seedling preparation and the existing 99 thousand 810 seedling sites for Green Legacy development, the concerned body prepares additional tree seedling mapping sites. This is critical to know where tree seedlings are situated, to closely monitor how much they produce and their preparation process, and to distinguish those who are permanently employed for seed production from those who are new to seedling production, he explained.

In addition, this year, unlike so far, the preparation of seedlings will be done on 700,000 hectares of land for planting. For this, four hundred thousand 899 hectares of land has been identified and a map has been prepared for 289 thousand 869 hectares and the rest will be completed in the next few months, he said.

Since its inception, Ethiopian Green legacy initiatives have been important for several reasons

It assists the country in planting trees and creating green spaces, combating deforestation, reducing air pollution, and providing homes for animals, all of which are critical to preserving the earth for future generations. It is also important for reducing climate change, improving human health and well-being, conserving biodiversity, engaging communities, and providing education.

Additionally, the Green Legacy programs provide locals a chance to gather together and support environmental conservation activities. They also inspire people to take action to save the environment and increase awareness of the value of nature.

Despite the initiative's importance, the nation's forest expansion should be directed and controlled by scientific methods to achieve the desired outcome, lessen the adverse effects of climate change, and guarantee food security, he added.

In summary, both stages of the Green Legacy Initiative have helped Ethiopia's reforestation efforts by raising awareness, organizing communities, and establishing the groundwork for a more sustainable and comprehensive approach to tree planting. The success of these programs will be monitored over time as the planted trees mature and contribute to environmental conservation and climate change mitigation.

Therefore, the preparation of tree seedlings should continue using scientific techniques, as it is critical to safeguard forest resources for future generations and reap the benefits of forest sustainability. Furthermore, preparing various types of tree seedlings with particular locations and mapping can provide an economic source for farmers, city people, and neighboring countries. In addition to their economic benefit, these efforts are critical in reducing the world's air pollution.

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



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Business & Economy

Endeavoring for lucrative coffee production

BY MENGESHA AMARE

Being home to agrarian society, agriculture is widely exercised in Ethiopia producing a number of crops such as cereals, oil seeds, fruits and vegetables and even cash crops. Of the multitude of produces, coffee is one of the most widely internationally traded commodities, and has become one of the most and prime contributors to the national economy of its place of origin. Though patience is a virtue in agriculture, people need to eat. However, coffee plants take several years to bear fruit and become productive.

The Ethiopian Herald approached Kedir Hundaol, an agriculturalist graduated from Haramaya University, to have a piece of information about the contribution of coffee to the national economy of the country and some other related facts.

He said, “Ethiopian Coffee is internationally considered fine coffee. Particularly some of the well known Ethiopia’s brands like Yirgacheffe, Sidama, Limu and Harar have secured export market.”

As to him, Ethiopia has long history of coffee production and export though it still has not met the global competency it deserves to arrive at. With huge production potential, ecological advantage, diversity of cultivars, indigenous knowledge and conducive policy and structural facilities, both productivity and yearly production volume exhibits incompatibility to the context.

“People most of the time prefer buying organic coffee beans from local roasters because they like its freshness and complex aroma. Coffee plants prefer shade, but this makes them more difficult to tend and harvest. To make it easier to grow and harvest coffee, many conventional coffee producers plant hybrids that are developed to be happy in full sun,” he added.

According to Kedir, as it turns out, organic coffee tastes so good precisely because producers don’t use growing methods that jeopardize human and environmental health. Organic coffee farmers don’t use synthetic chemicals or fertilizers. They work with nature and use only organic fertilizers, which produce beans with more healthful antioxidants. These antioxidants may even improve the flavor of the coffee.

Kedir said cultivating organic coffee in the shade within an agro forestry system actively contributes to reducing deforestation, nurturing the soil, and preserving precious environment. Operators have to receive training and support to implement a mixed agricultural system encompassing drought-tolerant crops, fruit trees, and agro forestry techniques. This ensures diversified yields, long-lasting prosperity, and the appreciation of the land.

“Along the very sites in Ethiopia, organic coffee planting is becoming an essential livelihood for communities as an alternative cash crop, designed to reduce pressure on natural resources and create new sources of income. The process of selling coffee is integrating local communities into economically sustainable coffee production



Coffee cultivation, nurturing and harvesting needs to be well run for a better production

systems. Farmers have introduced shade-grown coffee in the buffer zone in degraded areas, and carved fields between lines of crops,” Kedir said.

At the forefront of the country’s effort, the production of Arabica Organic coffee, a gourmet product, is highly esteemed in the international market. Not only such a positive trend caters to the discerning tastes of coffee connoisseurs but it also plays a crucial role in boosting ecological restoration. The drive breathes new life into the local community by harmonizing coffee cultivation with revitalizing deforested areas through inter cropping native trees alongside coffee plants.

According to Kedir, in due course of moving towards a more sustainable future, Ethiopians must continue promoting climate-smart agriculture in conservation areas to protect natural resources, improve food security, and support economic development in rural communities.

True, he said the country has been becoming a prime example of how conservation and sustainable agriculture can work together to promote environmental stewardship and rural development and the forest is becoming verdant again, one coffee tree at a time.

Ethiopia had been the origin of coffee as coffee plant was initially found and cultivated in the Kafa province, colonized the world with its natural significance. Globally, coffee plays a significant economic role and serves as a major source of foreign earnings in many producing countries. The importance of coffee is embedded within the growing culture of attraction to the socioeconomic significance intrinsic to it.

He said all effort on harnessing the prevailing potential of increased production and quality of coffee, working in the value chain – winning uniqueness through branding as land of origin and working on institutional competency and quality delivery is highly advisable in order to balance the socio-cultural value of coffee at hand with the economic one.

True, organic coffee farming encourages sustainability, multilayered crop production and a rich array of wildlife. Farmers who practice organic coffee farming methods depend on organic matter to fertilize plants and by using these materials, mimic the natural processes of growth and decay. Organic coffee farming encourages beneficial insects and a healthier, more resistant crop.

Mulching with organic materials and growing coffee under a canopy of trees decreases the need for irrigation and conserves water.

A lot remains to be done on how specific crops can transform communities, regional states and the nation at large, coffee stands out as a prime example, here.

As coffee also have the potential for transformation, many entrepreneurs, and business partners use coffee as the power of motivation for generating their thoughts, initiated venture and forged binding force to transform into actions.

Ethiopia is the past-present-and future home of Coffee Arabica. It is originated in Kafa, and at present the production potential, the possession of wide diversity excelling from all global countries makes the possibility to achieve the leadership in quality coffee production and export.

Perhaps coffee can generate high foreign earnings. In the future when the planet suffers climate change induced cultivar extinction, the world will turn its face to the most coffee diverse country- to this great ancient nation Ethiopia! Ethiopia would be the center of answers for all coffee variety needs of the global community.

Ethiopia is proud to be the birthplace of coffee. Beyond its historical roots, the daily coffee ceremonies are a vibrant part of life here. Coffee is really much more than daily brew, and it plays a pivotal role in bolstering Ethiopian economy. As the continent’s leading coffee producer and ranking fifth globally, the coffee industry is a major contributor to its economy, bringing in essential foreign currency and strengthening its position in international trade.

The top 5 Coffee Producers Worldwide are Brazil, Vietnam, Colombia, Indonesia and Ethiopia.

Coffee isn’t just a crop in Ethiopia; it’s a lifeline. It’s the country’s number one source of export revenue, accounting for about 30-35 % of the nation’s total export earnings. All the coffee produced here is of the Arabica variety.

But beyond the numbers, coffee is deeply woven into the socio-cultural fabric of Ethiopia. It plays a pivotal role in the spiritual and daily life of its people.

Ethiopian coffee is not just any coffee; it’s a premium coffee. This means it’s of the highest

quality, often grown in specific favorable conditions, and has unique flavors that set it apart.

Not only does Ethiopia’s coffee global demand boost Ethiopia’s economic standing but it also connects the country to a vast network of international trade and partnerships.

Elements of the coffee economy include, not limited to, importers, transportation, including shipping and trucking, roasters and packaging, sweeteners, disposable products, indirect services such as accounting, marketing, and promotion as well as induced spending by those working in the coffee economy.

“For Ethiopia to be economically competent, the agriculture sector needs to be well transformed tackling traditional methods with insufficient market information, unstable price, poor quality, lack of trust among trading partners and uncoordinated markets. The bulk of the country’s export earnings come from the agricultural sector basically coffee as it is being dynamic with credibly immense potential,” Kedir opined.

As to him, though the impact of coffee exports to the Ethiopian economy is insignificant in short run mainly for poor production, delay in ports, lower price, its effect is substantial in long run showing expansion of domestic production, value addition and price improvement will generate more export revenue.

In general, ensuring adequate production for the plantations of the coffee requires support from the government in terms of additional investment of the construction which negatively influences the ecosystems. Ethiopia’s coffee farmers therefore deeply understand the importance of forest conservation as much Ethiopian forest coffee is simply sold as bulk, low-grade product due to poor marketing and processing, unfortunately. Principally, he said the coffee cultivation system and the industry across the value chain needs to be made selfsame sustainable in Ethiopia.

Agro forestry management has to be well focused on as it is of paramount importance in maintaining or increasing the sustainability of traditional coffee-growing localities in the case of sudden climate change. Hence, expanding coffee growing areas is timely as it is useful in cultivation of coffee thereby fostering economic growth and sustainable development, too.

Art & Culture

The Tiger on the sky: Brigadier General Legesse Tefera

(Adoration of a hero is magnifies his footprints for would-be heroes to follow suit)

(This article is adopted from the biography about Brigadier-General Legesse written by Major Eyob Abate in Amharic in connection with the hero's 5th death anniversary/Edited by journalist Eyob Demek and translated into English by Alem Hailu G/Kristos)

Brigadier General Legesse Tefera was born to his father Tefera W/Selassie and his mother Tenagne G/Welde on August 26 in 1942 here in Addis Ababa at a village called Shola commonly referred to LamBeret.

When he came of age Legesse was sent to a close by school called Dejazemache Wendyerad to attend elementary school education .He attended his high school education at Haile Selassie Secondary School (Kokebe Tsebah).It was successfully he completed his school leaving examination.

Out of his fervent interest to serve his country as a soldier joining the Haile Selassie Military Academy on 11 October 1965 he became a nominee cadet of the 7th batch of the academy to join the famous and the time-honored Ethiopian Ground Force.

After pursuing Military Leadership courses in the academy for two years and half as he successfully passed the exam which allowed him a green light to take the training that entitles nominees the skill to fly fighter Jets, he joined the Ethiopian Air force.

Simultaneously attending the courses in Harar Military Academy, he graduated with a diploma at a rank of second lieutenant on 15 October 1965.

Back into the Ethiopian Air force at Debrezeit, he completed his education successfully.

General Legesse marked for his athletic posture was among the finger-counted army members of Ethiopia who were knowledgeable both in the infantry leadership and fighter jet flying skills.

He started job in the 9th squadron of the Air force. Aside from executing tasks he was assigned to carry out in battle fronts, he was delivering courses at the Ethiopian Air Force. Thus he had helped a lot in churning out able pilots much-needed by the country.

To allow Legesse hone his fighter jet skills and learn about F-5E interceptor, he was sent to the Arizona-based American Air Force College. Concluding the training with flying colors he returned back to his country.

When Emperor Haile Selassie I welcomed Kenyan president Jomo Kenyatta in late 1960th a military parade was staged here in Ethiopia. Prominent among the air force pilots that showed their acrobatic prowess in the sky was found the then Sergeant Legesse Tefera.

In 1977 when the bellicose Seid Barres troops armed to the teeth with modern arsenals encroached on Ethiopian territory 700km deep in the southern and eastern part of the country on their sway demolishing police stations and military units dotting the map, the then Major Legesse Tefera, among his peers, played a pivotal role in annihilating invaders' fighter jets in the air as well as tanks and arsenals on the ground. These valorous

sons of Ethiopia succeeded in rumpling enemy forces driving terror into the core of the invaders' being. At that demanding time Ethiopia faced, Legesse and friends spared it destruction and shame.

In its first mission, deploying General Legesse and friends, aside from disarranging the Somalia Ground Force, the Ethiopian Air force emasculated the Somalia air force. Following the air-to-air fight waged by the pilots individually and in group for two months heroic sons of Ethiopia destroyed 12 Mig 21 and 13 Mig 17 jets. Altogether they shattered 25 jets. They compelled the Seid Barre's jets not to stir a wing obsessed by their military adventures. In such a way Ethiopian pilots ensured the country's air sovereignty.

The main and sticking one among such Ethiopian hero pilots was the tiger of the sky Legesse Tefera who shattered to pieces 6 Somalia fighter Jets and who craftily forced two Somalia Mig 21 jets clash with each other in the sky while loaded with bombs and rockets meant to shower Ethiopian army with. Making a circular motion soaring in two the sky Legesse began chasing the Somalia jets from behind that soon clashed with each other out of fear and rude surprise they encountered.

His and his contemporaries' heroisms were not only confined to dog fights in Ethiopia's sky to put Somalia's fighter jet out of use and to force them retreat with their tails between their legs. But they also spanned to flying into Somalia airspace to destroy and burn the helicopters on the run off fields of Hargessa and Berbera air force bases.

The valorous pilots of Ethiopia as well turned Somalia's logistic bases into rubles. They burnt arsenals, mines and fuel depots. Fuel tankers were put on fire. Stripped of a spine, leave alone flying on Ethiopia's sky, Somalia's fighter jets could not flap their wings in Somalia's run off. As the backbone of the Somalia's Air Force was broken it was forced to take a few of its remaining jets, reduced to a state of useless vehicles, to the southern part of the country that abuts the Mediterranean Sea.

Alert round the clock, General Legesse and friends put Seid Bare's Air force out of shape.

In their second mission General Legesse and friends without able contenders devastated and disarranged the mechanized Somalia ground force. They made Somalia's infantry, artillery and air defense system out of shape. They targeted the front and back flanks of the Somalia infantry.

On the Dire Dewa front to dislodge enemy along with Ethiopian ground force, Ethiopian pilots scoured forces in Jeldesa, Hurso, Hawele, Shele, Albahene and Aysha.

On Harar front they targeted Babile, Bisdemo, Fedisa, Kambolcha, Arifkalid and Omarkilo.

On Jiggiga front they targeted Karamara, Fafeme, Hadew, Kore, Chenaksen, Fike and Kebri beyah.

On Ogaden front Degehabure, Kebre dehar, W arder, Welwel, Aemi, Gode, Kelafu, Mustahili, Wabeshebele shelekos



Piercing into Somalia's sky and conducting sorties in Hargesa, Berbera, Kalekayu, Logran, Ferandi bridge they had carried out their duties effectively by dismantling enemies arrangement. At long last defeated the enemy troops were compelled to evacuate Ethiopia's land and not to dare recklessly invade Ethiopia's sky.

Those external forces and historic enemies who were eagerly awaiting Ethiopia's defeat in vain suffered a congealing shame. Among the fighter pilots engaged in the counter offensive mission, Brigade general Legesse's role is prominent. He proved a lightning out of clear blue sky For Siad Barre's pilots.

Like their fighter jets, after the infantry and mechanized troops of Somalia were evicted from the south eastern part of Ethiopia crushed and defeated, once more organizing defeated and disarrayed troops, Said Barre attempted a new wave of invasion on the southern part of Ethiopia then called the Sidama province.

Though Ethiopia's ground force there was waging a counter offensive it needed the support of the Ethiopian Air force. So Legesse and friends who were dislodging enemy troops on the eastern front were summoned to receive order to give air coverage to Canberra bomber aircrafts and to do reconnaissance work.

General Legesse who spent the whole day on duty on the eastern front neither taking a bite nor taking a rest, outright pierced the sky to Feletu climbing on his F-5A Jet again.

As the invaders understood that the Ethiopian Air force had taken the upper hand on the eastern front, they were well prepared with surface-to-air anti-jet launchers, with which they were ceaselessly plowing the sky on the southern front.

With their jets, out of a sudden, Legesse and friends soon began the earth and the sky of Feletu to reverberate forcing enemy troops to jump out of their skins. The Somalia troops were at a loss what to do. Launchers were being fired from earth to sky and from sky to earth. As conflagration took place no green leaf was left unburned.

Descending down, the dare-devil Legesse began doing reconnaissance tasks checking enemies' deployment strategies at a close

range and tipping the Canberra bomber Jets. Suddenly in enemies' random shooting surface-to-air anti-jet launchers intercepted Legesse's jet. About 75 percent of the jet was pierced by bullets. Smoke emerged from the back part of Legesse's jet. As the radar of the jet was struck in the attack Legesse's communication with friends was disrupted.

Legesse parachuted to land into Feletu's forest. While jumping he sustained a leg injury. Famished, thirsty and injured he tarried in Feletu's forest for two days unable to contact Ethiopian forces that were busy searching for him. Drowsy reclining on a grassy land he was caught by Somalian troops tipped by some confused Ethiopians.

Several investigations were conducted on him by various officials all along the ladder up to Feletu's Front enemy leader who later replaced President Seid Barre to be president of the Somalian Transitional Government. The remark this official, Colonel Abdulahi Yesuf, was giving to his immediate boss via a radio communication was intercepted by Ethiopian spies. Pertaining to Legesse, the Colonel was heard saying "...this man is more indignant than a tiger. He doesn't think he is in the hands of enemy. When one is held captive one ducks his head. A captive tries to provoke the pity of those on whose mercy his life suspends by a thread. With a square shoulder Legesse doesn't give a fig to our brow beating. His composure in the situation he is in provokes irk. When I send him to you it is with the behest that you must deflate his colossal ego or squeeze out such pride out of him. He must learn who we are..."

Thrown into a dark and isolated cave-like prison, made by fascist Italy, sleeping on dry cement he led a harrowing life. Barely fed he spent 11 gruesome years. During those cloudy days he sought to embrace death in vain.

When the dark horizon was pierced by dawn one fortunate day, 23b August 1987, following the agreement reached between Ethiopia and Somalia to exchange prisoners Birg-general Legesse, along with other prisoners came back to his motherland.

In a ceremony he 14 Sep 1979 he was conferred the rank of Birg-general in a ceremony held at Meskel Square. His father took commendations on his behalf.

He was also decorated with the highest order medal (Yekatiti 66 highest order medal). Appreciative of his military verve the government of Revolutionary Cuba did accolade him in the same manner.

Bedridden he was being accorded all necessary medical care. At long last the dexterous Legesse succumbed to infirmity and feebleness.

Following government change he was living in America in exile. At age 75 on 5 Oct 2016 Legesse breathed his last in Virginia.

He is survived by a son and two daughters. He was laid to rest in the Holy Trinity Cathedral Cemetery here in Ethiopia in the presence of patriots, dignitaries and many nation-loving citizens.

Indepth



Rwanda is using drone technology as an effective and innovative way of eradicating malaria in breeding sites. Credit: Aimable Twahirwa/IPS

Proven control interventions needed to stem infectious diseases in Africa

Experts recommend that the current prevention of malaria in highly endemic countries in Africa should integrate “locally appropriate” control measures to cope with the highest burden of mosquito-borne disease on the continent.

The latest 2023 World Malaria Report shows that the life-threatening disease remains a significant public health challenge, with both malaria incidence and mortality higher now than they were before the start of the COVID-19 pandemic on the African continent.

According to a World Health Organization (WHO) report, the effects of climate change and other issues pose a threat to the advancement of the disease-fighting effort.

Official statistics show that the African region disproportionately bore the brunt of the malaria burden in 2022, accounting for 94 percent of global malaria cases and 95 percent of all malaria deaths, which were estimated at 608,000, a nearly 6 percent increase since 2019.

WHO’s Africa office’s Tropical and Vector Borne Disease Lead, Dr. Dorothy Fosah-Achu, told IPS that vector control interventions in Africa have remained challenged, with bednets being one of the most effective vector control tools the continent is relying on.

“Most endemic countries [in Africa] are adopting new treated bednets to replace those having the issue with resistance, but these improved nets are more expensive, which makes it challenging for countries to cover large zones using this intervention,” Fosah-Achu said in an exclusive interview.

The latest WHO report on malaria places a

special focus on climate change as a critical factor threatening progress in the fight against malaria. Climate-related disruptions, such as extreme weather events, may have exacerbated the spread of the disease.

Alongside climate change, other issues are threatening efforts to fight malaria.

The funding gap has grown, the report says. “Total spending in 2022 reached USD 4.1 billion—well below the USD 7.8 billion required globally to stay on track for the global milestones of reducing case incidence and mortality rates by at least 90 percent by 2030 (compared with a 2015 baseline).” This funding would include both control, diagnosis, preventative therapies, and treatment.

Growing resistance to available control tools, such as insecticides and antimalarial drugs, remains an increasing concern.

According to experts, most African countries do not have enough bednets. They do have insecticides that can be used to spray homes at breeding sites, but those interventions are very expensive.

While the high proportion of the population without access to quality medicines for malaria in Africa continues to be another issue, Fosah-Achu is convinced that the consequence of high mortality in Sub-Saharan Africa is also related to the limited health facilities and hospitals that provide access to treatment in a timely manner to the population living in remote zones.

In addition, health experts say that any success of antimalarial interventions in endemic countries in Africa will require appropriate coordination of efforts in terms of fighting against the resistance of vectors

to insecticides and the resistance of parasites to medicines.

According to experts, another challenge is that endemic countries in Africa have technical capacity gaps because their national health facilities are not equipped with the right human resources who are able to manage programs and monitor some of these biological threats, such as vector resistance.

The latest estimates by the World Health Organization (WHO) show that in Africa, an estimated 233 million cases of malaria occur each year, resulting in approximately 1 million deaths. More than 90 percent of these are in children under five. Official statistics show that currently the African region bears the heaviest malaria burden, with 94 percent of cases and 95 percent of deaths globally, representing 233 million malaria cases and 580,000 deaths.

Dr. Ludoviko Zirimenya, a medical researcher at the Uganda Virus Research Institute (UVRI), told IPS that the changing climate across many endemic regions in Africa poses a substantial risk to progress against malaria.

“Africa is the most affected due to a combination of factors, the major one being climate change,” Zirimenya said.

In Rwanda, like other endemic countries across Africa, malaria is often found in rainy seasons, and meteorological factors and altitude are described by experts as the major drivers of malaria incidence on the continent.

Both Zirimenya and Fosah-Achu believe that the burden of malaria transmission on the continent can be reduced when countries put in place appropriate mechanisms to strengthen the data management system to

ensure they have strong surveillance systems.

Public health experts observe that climate change is a growing issue, and countries in some endemic countries have little support to set up programmes to counter its impact.

The WHO report acknowledges this saying: “Equally crucial is the need to position the fight against malaria within the climate change/health nexus and to equip communities to anticipate, adapt to, and mitigate the effects of climate change, including the rise of extreme weather events. As you will see in the report, there are a range of actions—strategic, technical, and operational—that countries and their partners should begin to pursue now.”

Currently, numerous interventions to control malaria have been implemented across many African countries, but experts note that the incidence of the killer disease has increased in recent years.

“There are financial capacity gaps to be filled by some countries. Most African governments still need to learn how to mobilize resources and ensure that [malaria interventions] programs deliver on the plans that they have developed themselves,” Fosah-Achu said.

Despite these challenges, there have also been achievements. Recent progress includes the launch of the first malaria vaccine, RTS,S/AS01, and the endorsement by WHO of a second vaccine, R21/Matrix-M. Additionally, the use of new dual-active ingredient insecticide-treated nets and expanded malaria prevention for high-risk children have been crucial advancements, offering new avenues for combating the disease

(SOURCE: INTER PRESS SERVICE)

Law & Politics

Ethiopia: A place of hope for refugees

BY EYUEL KIFLU

Ethiopia, a country renowned for its rich history and diverse culture, has been garnering international attention for its commendable humanitarian efforts in hosting refugees from various nations. According to the UN Refugee Agency, Ethiopia is currently home to more than over 1 million refugees and asylum seekers, making it one of the largest refugee-hosting nations in Africa. The majority of these displaced individuals originate from South Sudan, Somalia, and Eritrea.

The country's open-door policy towards refugees has received widespread praise from international organisations and world leaders. The government has implemented progressive refugee laws that grant refugees access to education, healthcare, and employment opportunities. Moreover, Ethiopia has been commended for its efforts in promoting peaceful coexistence between refugees and host communities, fostering an environment of tolerance and acceptance.

Ethiopia has been a preferred destination for refugees from countries like Yemen, who seek safety and stability. Refugees from Yemen have found sanctuary in Ethiopia's capital, where they are employed in various sectors such as bars, restaurants, and fast-food establishments. The refugee-friendly policies and the hospitality of the Ethiopian people have made Ethiopia an attractive and safe haven for refugees.

Ethiopia has a long-standing history of hosting refugees and maintains an open-door policy that allows humanitarian access and protection to those seeking asylum on its territory. In 2004, Ethiopia enacted a national Refugee Proclamation based on international and regional refugee conventions, including the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol, as well as the 1969 OAU Convention.

Earlier last year, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the European Union lauded Ethiopia's refugee-friendly policies during the closing ceremony of a five-year project implemented in the Horn of Africa since 2017. The country's endeavours to repatriate migrants and improve legal rights and protections for those seeking employment opportunities have been acknowledged by the European bloc and the international community.

Among the notable refugee populations in Ethiopia are the South Sudanese refugees who have fled violence and conflict in their home country. The Ethiopian government, in collaboration with humanitarian organisations, has tirelessly assisted these refugees, including vital provisions such as food aid, shelter, and medical care.

In addition to hosting South Sudanese refugees, Ethiopia accommodates refugees from Eritrea, Somalia, Sudan, and other countries in the region. Despite grappling with challenges such as limited resources and overcrowded refugee camps, Ethiopia



The State Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Birtukan Ayano (left side), US Assistant Secretary for the Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration, Ambassador Julieta Valls Noyes (right side)

continues to embrace those fleeing persecution and violence with open arms.

Refugees from different nations have been flocking to Ethiopia mainly because of the hospitality of the Ethiopian people and the refugee-friendly policy of the country. In addition to giving sanctuary to citizens of neighbouring countries, the country is also sheltering Syrian and Yemeni refugees. Like Ethiopia, countries in the region also host refugees from the countries. The crisis has worsened lately due to the renewed fighting in Sudan. Ethiopia's hand for Sudanese refugees is also remaining open arms.

The commitment and efforts of Ethiopia in hosting Sudanese refugees have recently been commended by U.S. Population and Refugee Bureau Assistant Secretary, Julieta Valls Noyes.

A week after her official visit to Ethiopia and Chad, Noyes issued a webinar press briefing emphasising the essential roles played by both countries in the Sudan response and broader humanitarian efforts. Ethiopia has welcomed nearly 50,000 refugees from Sudan since early 2023, demonstrating its critical support for displaced populations in the Horn of Africa amidst great instability, she said.

Assistant Secretary Noyes acknowledged the Ethiopian government's close collaboration with humanitarian actors to establish new refugee sites and provide life-saving aid to tens of thousands of newly arrived refugees. The support extended by Ethiopia to Sudanese refugees fleeing violence in their country is invaluable.

"The United States expresses profound gratitude to the governments and people of Ethiopia and Chad for their leadership in welcoming refugees escaping violence in Sudan and beyond," said Assistant Secretary Noyes. Addressing the Sudan emergency necessitates a ceasefire and unhindered

The Ethiopian government, in collaboration with humanitarian organisations, has tirelessly assisted these refugees, including vital provisions such as food aid, shelter, and medical care

humanitarian access, and the United States remains committed to working with Ethiopia, Chad, and international partners to provide life-saving support to the millions affected by the devastating conflict in Sudan.

According to Assistant Secretary Noyes Ethiopia and Chad have consistently exhibited tremendous generosity in receiving and supporting refugees for an extended period. While the responses may differ, both countries face unique situations. Ethiopia has been hosting refugees from various countries, including Eritrea, Sudan, South Sudan, Somalia, Yemen, and Syria. Currently, Ethiopia accommodates

approximately 1 million refugees and 4 million internally displaced persons. Ethiopia possesses greater resources of its own, enabling it to dedicate efforts to address these pressing challenges. Ethiopia has refugees from I believe 27 other countries currently living in Ethiopia, she added.

During Assistant Secretary Noyes' visit, she engaged in extensive discussions with Ethiopian officials, primarily focused on the Sudan response. However, they also addressed the United States' ongoing role as the largest humanitarian assistance donor in Ethiopia, providing over a billion dollars in the previous fiscal year and nearly 89 million U.S. dollars to date this fiscal year. This support encompasses life-saving aid for refugees, asylum seekers, internally displaced people, stateless individuals, and others affected by conflict, drought, and food instability, she said.

While Ethiopia faces the issue of internally displaced persons, including those from the Amhara and Oromo regions, it remains committed to supporting vulnerable populations. The United States reaffirms its support for Ethiopia's humanitarian needs through the funding provided, reinforcing its dedication to alleviating the plight of all vulnerable individuals, Noyes said.

Ethiopia continues to demonstrate its unwavering commitment to providing refuge and support to those in need. Recent events, such as Addis Ababa residing refugees from different countries taking part in an Iftar dinner with Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed during Ramadan at the Grand Palace, showcase the country's hospitality and compassion. Despite internal unrest, Ethiopia's determination to host many refugees is commendable and sets an inspiring example for countries worldwide, showcasing the power of compassion and solidarity in times of crisis.

Women in Focus

Turning challenges into opportunities: The inspiring journey of *Fayiza Shemsu*

BY BETELHEM BEDLU

Fayiza Shemsu, lecturer of Material Engineering in Jimma University. She is the winner of the Biruh Ethiopia's Entrepreneurship Idea Competition. The following is her stay with the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) where she talked about her experience and life journey.

Fayiza was born in Gurage Zone and raised in Addis Ababa. She attended her primary and secondary education in different schools in Addis Ababa. After accomplishing her preparatory education in Addis Ketema School, she then joined Adama Science and Technology University.

Her passion for chemistry did not allow her to join any other field but material engineering. Unlike other students who feared joining the department, for it was newly opened and considered as the toughest, she did not want to think twice to join the department. Using her passion as an engine to achieve her goal, Fayiza was able to fulfill her educational pursuit.

Right after her graduation, she was hired by the university as a lecturer. In the next year, the university offered her an opportunity to further her education, and she was able to hold her Master's degree in the same field and kept on lecturing her pupils.

As a lecturer, she used to advise her students to give due attention to their research paper so that it would be useful in curbing problems in the society. Using her experiences together with the books she read, Fayiza used to inspire her students to be practical rather than mere readers. This is especially true for those female students that have a vision to achieve their goals despite the hurdles life set before them. "That's why I developed the habit of showing my students videos during my lecture to positively influence them in this regard."

"Despite the promising achievements that have been made by the government, a lot of work is needed to enhance women empowerment especially in technology and science fields. Creating an enabling environment and opportunity to female students should be the major priority in the country. Women are innovative and critical thinkers naturally. So, they need to withstand the challenges they face in various fronts."

The fact that she has deep affection for research, Fayiza has conducted different studies while she teaches in the university. She believes that researches should not be left on the shelves rather they need to be implemented and make an impact to solve challenges faced by the country. With this



in mind, her research papers are written focusing to alleviate socio-economic challenges of the country.

One of her researches which is centered on producing bricks made out of charcoal is a good indication how Fayiza has a concern for the construction sector which is consuming a great amount of cement. She noted that used charcoal has same properties just like cement. Thus, rather than disposing of the ash and damaging the environment, the charcoal could be reused to produce clay bricks. She also said, the good thing about clay bricks is that, if it gets cracked, it has the capacity to repair using moisture.

The other innovation Fayiza was able to introduce to the society is sanitary pad which is made out of false banana and this innovation enabled her to win Biruh Ethiopia's Entrepreneurship Idea Competition, which envisions identifying the underlying challenges of the society. According to her, the certificate and the financial award she earned from Biruh Ethiopia has added her an inspiration and pushed her further to make her other researches a reality.

When asked how the idea of making sanitary pads out of false bananas came into her mind Fayiza said that the experience she once had in Uganda while attending a conference with a group of women drawn from Uganda and American students had inspired her to produce sanitary pads which are environmentally friendly and reasonable in price. While attending

the conference in Uganda Fayiza's mind was wandering around to look for every possible solution that can help her producing the pad out of false bananas.

When she returned to Ethiopia, she realized that the idea could not be implemented as planned. However, this did not discourage her from exerting her energy and knowledge. While immersing herself in research, she also considered that most rural Ethiopian women use false banana during labor or menstruation. As a little girl, Fayiza had the opportunity to witness many women, especially those giving birth, using Enset, or 'false banana'.

The false banana tree has a significant capacity for holding water for an extended period, as does the soft part of the branch. Therefore, once she confirmed that Enset-False banana was commonly used among Gurage women, she decided to proceed with her research. After extensive research and experimentation, Fayiza developed a women's pad using the plant, which ultimately led her to win the prize of 260,000 ETB in the Biruh Ethiopia's Entrepreneurship Idea Competition in 2023.

Mentioning that she tried to check on other pads that are on the market, she said most of the pads were made of plastic which are harmful to human body. Moreover, the plastic has the tendency to become burning and irritating during warm seasons.

Not only that the majority of the materials that are imported from different countries

are getting more expensive, but the fact that it takes many years to decay could potentially harm the environment. On the other hand, pads that are made from false bananas are environment friendly as they are made from biomass. Moreover, they are affordable and could easily decay.

Fayiza was not satisfied with the pad that was made of the false banana and she tried to come up with reusable pads to support those who could not afford to buy the one on the market. Therefore, she started manufacturing the reusable pad in her house.

However, the response was a bit disappointing as most women in the capital do not use the reusable pads. Though she planned to reach women in the rural areas, she found it difficult because she did not have governmental or non-governmental institutions to work with.

"My plan was to reach out to the women in the states and mostly in the rural area as they are the one who face the major challenge when it comes to accessibility of pads be it reusable or the usual one."

She said she would welcome any institutions that are ready to work with her. Likewise, she urged concerned institutions to provide her with working area so that she could broadly engage in the business and address women's pressing challenges. With regard to the reusable pads, she highlighted that a charity organization could join hand with her to distribute the pads in remote areas.

Society

Discharging corporate social responsibility for the common good

BY MENGISTEAB TESHOME

In the modern world, corporate social responsibility (CSR) has become a significant issue, with the underlying concept being to gain a competitive edge in the business world. Experts in sociology emphasize that both private and public institutions should embrace CSR in order to align their business practices with social, environmental, ethical, human rights, and consumer concerns as part of the organization's core strategy.

Public and private institutions that are socially conscious and dedicated to fulfilling their social responsibilities for the betterment of society waste no time in carrying out their duties. They prioritize high moral values and obligations, viewing this as essential for achieving sustainability within the institution and ensuring long-term viability and success. Engaging with stakeholders, including employees, customers, suppliers, and local communities, is a key aspect of CSR. By listening to the needs and concerns of various stakeholders, companies can build stronger relationships and ensure that their business practices align with societal expectations.

Recognizing these benefits, numerous local and international companies are engaging in CSR activities to reap the rewards. Ethio telecom, for example, is renowned for its exceptional performance in fulfilling its social responsibility obligations.

Recently, the company donated assistive devices to students with physical disabilities, aiming to create a conducive learning environment and support their daily activities.

During the device handover ceremony, ethio telecom's Chief Communication Officer, Mesay Wubshet, emphasized company's commitment to CSR in health, education, and humanitarian efforts. The donated items, including hearing devices, wheelchairs, tricycles, crutches, canes, and walking frames, are valued at over eight million Birr.

In addition to providing assistive devices, ethio telecom has established a digital learning center and improved internet access for students with disabilities to enhance their learning experience. The company also offers financial support to low-income individuals on a monthly basis, demonstrating its dedication to creating an inclusive and supportive environment for all students.

Executive Director of the Federation of Ethiopian National Association of Persons with Disabilities (FENAPD), Abayneh Gujo, expressed gratitude for the support provided by ethio telecom, which benefited 500 students with physical disabilities across the country.

The assistive devices were distributed to 199 students in Addis Ababa, with plans to distribute the remaining devices to students in other parts of Ethiopia.

In an interview with The Ethiopia Herald,

FENAPD Communication and Public Relations Head Tadesse Meshesha, acknowledged the commendable CSR efforts of Ethio telecom and urged other local and international institutions to follow suit in fulfilling their social responsibilities.

Tadesse emphasized the importance of creating barrier-free environments to facilitate the use of assistive devices and mobility aids by people with physical disabilities. He highlighted the high demand for such devices and stressed the need for collaborative efforts between public and private institutions to ensure access to appropriate devices and information for the disabled community.

Providing assistive devices to students with disabilities has a positive impact on their quality of life, enhancing their mobility within the community and to school, instilling confidence and building social capital. Furthermore, increasing access to assistive devices is crucial for individuals with disabilities and is integral to any development strategy.

Mulu Abiy, a Special Needs teacher at Tsehay Chora primary school, shared that nine students at her school benefitted from the donated wheelchairs, walking crutches, and hearing devices. She also expressed her appreciation for the impact of Ethio telecom's CSR activities in enabling children to attend school, emphasizing the ongoing need for more assistive devices to meet the high demand.

Mulu noted that these devices not only enhance students' academic skills but also improve communication with teachers, classmates, and family members. Overall, practicing corporate social responsibility is vital in shaping the mindset of company leaders towards engaging in socially responsible actions without external pressure.

Indeed, as one can witness from the deeds of ethio telecom Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) plays a vital role in addressing various social and economic challenges faced by communities.

By integrating CSR practices into their operations, companies can make a positive impact and contribute to societal well-being to the society. This includes environmental sustainability, ensuring social warfare and ethical standards and provision of equitable opportunities for all citizens.

Social warfare is one area where CSR ensure better life for the society. As witnessed from Ethiopia's experiences, CSR programs that support education is significantly improving the quality of life for individuals in need.

What is more, the role played by CSR to create equitable opportunity to the society is worth mentioning. For example, as witnessed from the experience of ethio telecom several individuals with disability have become beneficiaries from the support.

Implementing CSR initiatives brings about



numerous positive outcomes, such as mitigating risks by preventing problematic situations. This includes avoiding discriminatory practices against employees, respecting natural resources, and eliminating unethical misuse of company funds, thereby reducing the likelihood of legal issues and lawsuits.

Several literatures are indicating that CSR encourages companies to think creatively and develop innovative solutions to social challenges. By harnessing their resources and expertise, businesses can address pressing issues such as poverty, healthcare access and education through innovative initiatives that benefit both society and the business itself.

Environmental sustainability is one of the areas where CSR is playing a leading role to mitigate climate change. Many companies are focusing on CSR initiatives aimed at reducing their carbon footprint, promoting energy efficiency, and supporting conservation efforts. By embracing environmentally friendly practices, businesses can help combat climate change and protect natural resources.

What is more, CSR has significant role in upholding ethical standards and transparency. By adhering moral values within the company CSR can build trust with their stakeholders and contribute to a culture of integrity within the business community. Moreover, practicing social responsibility benefits society by reducing negative impacts on the environment, which is increasingly important to consumer.

Companies that exhibit a strong commitment to CSR often enjoy a positive reputation and increased consumer loyalty, ultimately impacting their financial performance positively.

Overall, Corporate Social Responsibility plays a crucial role in driving positive social change and addressing complex challenges faced by communities worldwide. By committing to responsible business practices and investing in CSR initiatives, companies can make a meaningful difference and contribute to a more sustainable and inclusive future for all.

The company donated assistive devices to students with physical disabilities, aiming to create a conducive learning environment and support their daily activities



Published Weekly in Collaboration with Haramaya University

HU, Finland joint COPAFEU kicked off in Helsinki

A workshop to begin the COPAFEU project took place in Helsinki, Finland on March 14-15, 2024, in collaboration with the Hanken School of Economics.

COPAFEU is an innovative initiative that stands for “Co-producing Knowledge on Sustainable Development through Case-based Pedagogy between African and European Higher Education Institutes”. The project aims to promote collaboration between universities in the northern regions (Finland and Greece), and those in the southern regions (Ethiopia, Tanzania, Nigeria, and South Africa).

Haramaya University, a key participant in the project, joined other Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in this collaborative effort. The project, spanning three years, seeks to bolster the capacity of HEIs to align the skills and knowledge of graduates with the demands of the local and global job market, while actively contributing to sustainable local growth.

COPAFEU aims to develop an innovative



Enhanced Service-Learning methodology (E-SL) that produces and disseminates high-quality open-access teaching materials for knowledge sharing and sustainable

development.

Haramaya University is represented by Professor Mengistu Urge, Vice President for Academic Affairs, and Dr.

Yilfashew Seyoum, Academic Program Director of HU and PI of the project.

(Haramaya University Public and International Relations Directorate)

Tshisekedi, Kagame blow hot and cold in pledge to end tensions

The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) President Félix Tshisekedi and his Rwandan counterpart Paul Kagame have both agreed, or at least publicly pledged, to meet and discuss how to end war in the east of the Democratic Republic of Congo.

But then, they accuse one another of being the problem to those very efforts to end the conflict that has raged Eastern DRC for the last 30 years, but most recently centred on their tensions.

Angolan President João Lourenço, AU’s envoy for the Great Lakes and the region’s mediator into the tensions, has recently tried to implore on both sides to choose dialogue. On Thursday March 21, high-level Congolese and Rwandan delegations met in Luanda to prepare for the meeting between Félix Tshisekedi and Paul Kagame.

But on Monday in an interview with Pan-African media outlet Jeune Afrique, President Kagame accused his Congolese counterpart of having “created misunderstandings in

the region between the leaders and between Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the East African Community (EAC).”

Paul Kagame was critical of his Congolese counterpart’s approach to peace, which has included refusing some rebel groups like M23 from a dialogue possibility and instead going for their throats in force in collaboration with SADC troops.

Ideally the AU, SADC and EAC have been working on reviving talks between the two leaders and possibly also with the rebels. Regional and international organisations are calling for the Luanda and Nairobi processes to be relaunched. The former refers to dialogue directly between Kinshasa and Kigali while the latter is dialogue between Kinshasa and armed groups in Eastern DRC. Both had appeared collapsed or stalled.

And there is mistrust in there. Kagame accused Kinshasa and SADC forces of working alongside genocidaires, referring

to the FDLR rebels fighting in Eastern DRC and who are composed of remnants of the 1994 Rwanda genocide perpetrators.

EAC Chairperson and South Sudan President Salva Kiir on Monday completed his mission in Kinshasa, where he met President Tshisekedi as part of a regional peace tour that had taken him to Kigali and Bujumbura in February.

An EAC communiqué issued from Kinshasa stated that the two heads of state “called for a rapid solution to the secretarial crisis in the region, which is adversely affecting the functioning of the bloc”.

“The two presidents called for the urgent relaunch of the Nairobi and Luanda peace processes initiated respectively by the EAC and the AU”, the statement added.

Yet against this backdrop of anticipation of the resumption of peace talks, renewed fighting was reported on Monday in the town of Sake, near Goma in North Kivu

Province.

Meanwhile, authorities in Kinshasa denounced “Rwanda’s support for M23 rebels.” On the diplomatic front however, DRC authorities welcomed the “progress” made in the search for peace.

Tshisekedi while hosting a press conference alongside Salva Kiir in Kinshasa declared: “The crisis with Rwanda has nothing to do with the people.”

“The Rwandan people have not come to invade DRC. It is a regime led by an individual who has become fond of these kinds of crimes. And it is this regime that is attacking the DRC. There is no problem with the people of either country. It is the regime, and as you know, the regime is not eternal. One day it will all come to an end, one way or another, and we will once again be able to live happily together as neighbours.”

Source : The East African

China launches new satellite for atmospheric, space environment monitoring

China successfully launched a satellite for environmental monitoring from the Taiyuan Satellite Launch Center in north China’s Shanxi Province on Wednesday.

A Long March-6 rocket, carrying the satellite Yunhai-3 02, blasted off at 6:51 a.m. Beijing Time.

The satellite has entered the preset orbit.

It will be mainly used for tasks such as atmospheric and marine environment detection, space environment monitoring, disaster prevention and reduction, and scientific experiments.

The launch marks the 514th flight mission of the Long March carrier rocket series

Source: CGTN

