



The Ethiopian Herald

Vol. LXXX No 153 7 MARCH 2024 - Yekatit 28, 2016 **Thursday** Price Birr 10.00

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Ethiopian Airlines, Boeing partnership advances Ethio-U.S relations: *Ambassador*

BY STAFF REPORTER

ADDIS ABABA - The cooperation reached by Ethiopian Airlines and Boeing will greatly contribute to strengthening the economic relations between Ethiopia and the United States, according to the country's ambassador.

The U.S. Ambassador to Ethiopia Ervin Massingamade the above remark on Tuesday while the Ethiopian Airlines Group signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Boeing Company to purchase 20 Boeing 777 X9 aircraft, the first of its kind in Africa.

Ambassador Masinga further stated that the aircraft purchase agreement between the Boeing Company and Ethiopian Airlines will move the strong relationship between the two institutions into a new phase. "Not only this, but the agreement is also beneficial for the growth of the economies of Ethiopia and the U.S."

Speaking at the occasion, the *Ethiopian Airlines* Group CEO Mesfin Tasew stated that the order is the first of its kind in Africa.

The CEO pointed out that the airline will take delivery of eight of the 20 Boeing 777 X9 aircraft that it has ordered by 2030. "The planes have a capacity of carrying 440 passengers each and are able to maintain the comfort of customers. This will take Ethiopian to a higher level."

Boeing Company Senior Vice President of Sales and Marketing Brad McMuller said that the companies are strategic partners for a long. "We



See Ethiopian Airlines,... Page 3

Ambassador Ervin Massinga

RRS issues digital IDs for refugees

• *Some 1 mln immigrants to get service*

BY TSEGAYE TILAHUN

ADDIS ABABA – 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 TeyibaHassen 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."

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AFLEX, UN sign Letter of Intent to drive SDGs 2030

BY MESERET BEHAILU

ADDIS ABABA – The African Leadership Excellence Academy (AFLEX) and The United Nations yesterday signed a "Letter of Intent" to drive the Sustainable Development

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Abbay Dam construction reaches 95 percent

• *To commemorate 13th anniversary*

BY ASHENAFI ANIMUT

ADDIS ABABA – Some 95 percent of the construction of the Abbay Dam is completed, the coordination office said, urging Ethiopians and foreigners of Ethiopian origin to reinforce their support.

In a press briefing she gave here yesterday, Abbay Dan National Coordination Office Deputy Director FikirteTamir said that that the construction of the dam has been executed carefully, responsibly and without interruption. Accordingly, the dam has been transferred from water filling to power generation phase in the last four consecutive years.

She further stated that the government has given top priority to the project, which would be an engine to the industrialization of the country. The successful execution of the dam has also created a great enthusiasm



Photo: Hadush Abreha

Fikirte Tamir

among the community in replicating such noble achievement in political, economic and social arenas.

"Apart from generating power, the project,

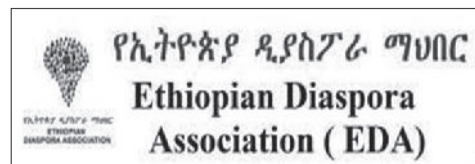
which is also Ethiopia's policy landmark, is now on the final stage of completion and becoming a means for the society's social cohesion and common legacy."

During the briefing, it was indicated that the dam managed to amass over 42 billion meter cubic water in the past four consecutive water filling phases.

Through holistic participation and support of Ethiopians and foreigners of Ethiopian origin living at home and abroad, the office has managed to collect over 18.9 billion Birr since the inception of the iconic project, she added.

In this regard, the office plans to collect 300 million Birr in the dam's 13th year anniversary event and a total of two billion Birr the current Ethiopian fiscal year. "So far, two turbines have been generating power and others are on the pipeline to

See Abbay Dam... Page 3



EDA vows unfettered support for nat'l dev't

BY MESERET BEHAILU

ADDIS ABABA – Ethiopian Diaspora Association (EDA) reiterated commitment to strengthen support to enable the country achieve holistic development.

EDA's Vice President Demeke Negassa told The Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) that 5,000 Ethiopian Diasporas organized under the Association are participating in various development activities in the country.

The Association also gives immediate response when the country faces natural or manmade disasters. Besides, some 32 health professionals invited by the Association have come to treat patients in Ethiopia, he added.

Similarly, Demeke stated that the Association has provided Wheelchairs to Bella Medical and Rehabilitation Center to help citizens who injured during the war held in the northern part of the country.

In addition, feminine hygiene products, soaps, and medicines have been provided by the Association to different institutions, he mentioned.

He further stated that the Association strives to construct residential homes for the Diaspora members and involves in various greenery activities to motivate others to achieve sustainable development of the country.

According to the Vice President, the Association had signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Ovid Group and Jenboro Real Estate to realize the housing construction for its members.

It would also continue supporting the development activities to realize country's prosperity, he noted.

Forum highlights women economic empowerment virtues

BY ESSEYE MENGISTE

ADDIS ABABA- Women's economic empowerment is crucial in increasing and improving their political participation, according to different stakeholders in the issue.

The Coalition of Ethiopia Civil Society Organization for Election organized a women role models' experience-sharing workshop in collaboration with Ethiopian Women Lawyers' Association, Ethiopian Political Joint Council, TIMRAN, EMWA, and the Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy. The European Union funded the workshop.

Kidist Giram, Executive Committee Member of EZEMA party said at the occasion that "a woman should have freedom of thought to come into politics. Before she comes to politics, she must be economically independent, economically independent means she gets a freedom card."

She added, "An economically independent person enters into politics, which means that they think politics according to their living standards. A woman should have a freedom of thoughts and her freedom begins when she is no longer dependent on others."

Many women are economic dependents of their husbands, fathers, and families. A woman who is economically dependent



must first get out of poverty to enter into politics and join political party she wants.

Kidist further highlighted that women's economic empowerment is crucial to enhance their political participation and enable them to protect their rights and freedom. "For women to be self-sufficient economically, it may be through the work they do, it may be through the institution where they are employed, make themselves a better economic beneficiary and then they will be able to contribute better when they enter politics."

Africa Women Peace and Security Institute Deputy Director Tadelech Hailemichael (Amb) said for her part that there are various challenges for women

to participate in politics including lack of favorable political environment and lack of information. Women's misperception about themselves and their economic dependency and knowledge gap are also factors.

According to the veteran woman rights advocate, universal support and work from all stakeholders is crucial to increase women's political participation.

Cherer Aklilu, Gender and Human Rights expert said that as women's economic self-sufficiency plays an important role in increasing their participation in politics, enabling economic and legal conditions must be created, strategy must exist, and it needs mandatory women's quota in politics.



Ethiopia to plant 25 percent forestry trees along Nile Basin

BY TSEGAYE TILAHUN

ADDIS ABABA –Ethiopia has set to plant 25 percent of forestry seedlings along the Nile Basin in the coming rainy season, Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) disclosed.

MoA Natural Resources Protection and Usage Lead Executive Officer Fanosie Mekonnen told the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) that the country would plant 6.5 billion saplings in the coming rainy season.

Agroforestry and forestry trees respectively cover 60 and 40 percent of the total seedlings prepared to be planted this year as part of

the Green Legacy Initiative, he said, adding that some 25 percent of forestry saplings would be planted along the Nile basin.

According to Fanosie, Ethiopia has been working to protect Abbay Dam from sedimentation by strengthening natural resource protection and conservation activities within the Nile Basin.

He pointed out that the Ministry has been working together with all states' leaders to meet the target.

The general public has been also implementing basin and green legacy initiative development activities, he added.

Moreover, he stated, the country has been working to plant 50 billion seedlings in the first and second phases of the Green Legacy initiative.

Over the last five years, some 32.5 billion seedlings were planted across the country and this year's biological, soil and water conservation activities will be carried out under this initiative, he noted.

To realize the plan, Fanosie indicated that the development of seedlings is taking place in nurseries across the country.

The Officer also called on the public to strengthen the preservation and conservation of planted tree seedlings.

Ethiopia's economy to grow by 7.9 Percent: *Ministry*

ADDIS ABABA- The better performance in most of the macroeconomic indicators of the second quarter of the fiscal year would help the Ethiopian economy to grow by 7.9 percent, Planning and Development Ministry said.

In the presence of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, the Council of Ministers commenced the second quarter performance review on Tuesday.

The review began with presentations on activities undertaken, focusing on four sectoral areas of governance and justice, social, and economic sectors, it was indicated.

Planning and Development Minister, Fitsum Assefa (PhD) presented the economic performance report of the second quarter of the fiscal year.

In her report, she pointed out that Ethiopia's economy grew by 7.2 percent in 2023.

The country's economy is also expected to grow by 7.9 percent in the current 2023/2024 Ethiopian fiscal year that started on July 8, the minister added.

According to her, the performance recorded in the main macroeconomic sectors during the past six months indicates the projection will be attained.

For example, Fitsum indicated that a total harvest of 496.9 million quintals has been obtained over the past six months alone. It has increased by 65 million quintals compared to the same period last year.

She explained that this is one indicator that a 7.9 percent economic growth will be recorded.



Similarly, the minister added that 10 percent growth was recorded in the industrial sector.

In her report, she pointed out that the performance during the past six years is better in many aspects, particularly in the export sector. For instance, Ethiopia has earned over 4.5 billion US dollars from service export alone.

The Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) sector has also registered better performances.

On his part, Education Minister Professor Birhanu Nega presented the social sector performance report and he revealed better activities have been recorded in the spheres of education, health, women and social affairs as well as culture and sports.

For example, he pointed out that education for the generation movement alone has helped to improve the standard of more than 14,000 schools and built more extra schools in six months.

Justice Minister Gedion Timothewos (PhD) said that Ethiopia has achieved considerable legislative activities in the justice system during the past six months.

Among the better performance witnessed in the sector, the minister mentioned that the transitional justice policy document was prepared in a participatory manner.

According to him, the document is expected to become effective as of its date of approval, ENA reported.

RRS issues...

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 to improve their access to financial services and permit them to open bank accounts and engage in financial transactions, he added.

Ethiopian Airlines, Boeing...

plan to work together based on the demand of the airliner."

The agreement was attended by the Ethiopian Airlines Board Chairperson and Air Force Chief Lt. Gen. Yilma

Merdasa, as well as Ambassador Massinga and representatives of the Boeing Company.

It is to be recalled that Ethiopian Airlines recently signed an agreement to purchase

a total of 84 passenger aircrafts from Boeing and Airbus in November 2023.

The airline aims to increase its annual revenue to 25 billion USD by 2035 and carry 67 million passengers annually.

Abay Dam...

produce more."

"Having graced various income-generating programs including bond week, exhibition, public campaign, and resource mobilization among others, this year's anniversary is slated to be commemorated under the theme: "Together we can."

Lauding the unwavering commitment and support made for the project, the deputy director urged the public to maintain their support for the best finalization of the mega dam.

Goals (SDGs) in Ethiopia and the African content at large.

ALFLEX Chief Zedig Abreha and UN Assistant Secretary-General and UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator Ramiz Alakbarov (PhD) signed the agreement yesterday. The accord is said to be instrumental in advancing academic and thought leadership and the production and exchange of ideas to drive progress towards the SDGs.

Zedig said on the occasion, "AFLEX aspires to become a place where academic rigor meets worldliness. It is also; here in AFLEX we aspire to become bridge builders amongst the academia, civil society, the public and private sector, the leaders of African countries, generation of African leaders and Africa and the globe."

AFLEX, UN sign Letter...

He added, "With this view in mind, together with institutions like the UN systems we will work towards generating world class leaders for both Ethiopia and the continent at large. And with this effort, we can safely say that we can achieve Agenda 2064 and SDGs. In doing so, Africa shall make the 22nd century a truly African century!"

Alakbarov (PhD) on his part said that this partnership will serve as a framework for identifying and nurturing the next generation of leaders who must lead Ethiopia's development narrative. "Particularly, the agreement with a focus on young people and marginalized groups, leadership grounded in the African context and an aspiration is indispensable for realizing the SDGs in Africa."

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs International Organizations Director General Leulseged

Tadesse on his part said that Ethiopia has always been a strong advocate of the importance of multilateral relations for global challenges.

The government of Ethiopia appreciates what the UN has been doing to the realization of SDGs 2030. Among others, AFLEX would like to foster the culture of dialogue and strive for sustainable development, peace, and inclusive growth.

Furthermore, the Ethio-UN collaboration will focus on the food system, energy access and affordability, digital connectivity, education, jobs and social protection, climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution. The collaboration will also involve close partnership with the Ministry of Planning and Development and sectoral ministries, Leulseged remarked.

Opinion

Karamara and beyond:

Ethiopia's historic battles for sovereignty

BY ADDISALEM MULAT

Since the beginning of history, Ethiopia has been distinguished for its exceptional ability to fend off and conquest its foes across its gigantic and miscellaneous land. It is common knowledge that the people of Ethiopia leave no stone unturned to defend their motherland whenever the country's is under sleigh from foreign powers. Above and beyond the call of duty, Ethiopians give prominence to the well-being of their nation by manifesting a deep-rooted commitment to defending their country.

To the surprise of everyone, this profound conviction of devotion and nationalism is entrenched within the fabric of all Ethiopians. More to the point, the unique nature of Ethiopians is whenever their country stumbles upon offensive intrusion; they move heaven and earth to chase them away from every corner of their territory in the shortest possible time.

Their combined strength becomes evident on the grounds that they act in concert to sacrifice their own well-being for the sovereignty of their motherland. To cut a long story short, nothing makes them happier than safeguarding their motherland.

It is evident that March 5, 1978 marked the victory of Karamara over the invading Somalia army under the leadership of Siad Barre. During the war, the untied force of Ethiopians irrespective of their ethnic and religion diversity poured cold water on his efforts and set in motion harvesting the fruits of accomplishment.

In actual fact, since the dawn of history, Ethiopians are known for driving their adversaries from the length and breadth of their territorial with flying colors at the earliest possible. Whenever their country is invaded by foreign forces, they do not bat an eye to defend their sovereignty with one accord no matter what the cost may be.

From the dawn of history, Ethiopians have been defined by their people unyielding spirit and determination to safeguard their country. The heroic victories of the past, such as Karamara functions as enduring reminders of the Ethiopian people's resolute commitment to protecting their nation's sovereignty and maintaining the heirloom of resilience and harmony that has well-defined their history.

The Ogaden war, a brief but costly war fought by Ethiopia and Somalia that ended in Somalia defeat and withdrawal in the summer of 1978, was viewed differently by different sides. To the Ethiopian government, it was a war of aggression, and the Ethiopian Army was fighting to defend the territorial integrity of its country. To Ethiopian Marxist radicals on the other hand, it was a "reactionary war" which diverted attention from crucial national, political and economic issues, according to some sources.

The African governments by and large condemned Somalia as the aggressor, citing the sanctity of the colonially fixed boundaries accepted by the OAU at the Cairo Conference in 1964. When Somalia invaded Ethiopia's



Ogaden region in September 1977, the OAU condemned the move and as a consequence, the irredentist claim of Somalia found little or no support at all in Africa.

Each year, Ethiopia celebrates the anniversary of the victory of Karamara at Ethio-Cuba Friendship Park colorfully. People from all walks of life play a part in the ceremony from every corner of the country making use of various entertaining programs marking the day.

It is worth recalling that Siad Barre, the military ruler engaged in combat against Ethiopia with the intention of setting up Greater Somalia that join together all Somali-speaking countries by taking hold of Ethiopia's territory. Following Somalia's evil acts, Ethiopia got back at mobilizing hundreds of thousands of its troops and raced the attacking army and trapped all the areas that were occupied by the Somali army on the 5th of March 1978. Notwithstanding the fact that the war claimed the lives of countless civilians, Ethiopia at the end of the day turned out to be victorious over the invading force.

At that particular moment, Ethiopians from all walks of life demonstrated awesome adventure by putting an end to the occupying armies. In the recent past in the 43rd anniversary of the victory of Karamara, former members of the Ethiopian armed forces who fought in the Battle told local media that the war cost lives but Ethiopia was honored as it routed the belligerent army from its territory. The army officers also said the Ethiopian army showed amazing feat by destroying the invading army on land and air.

Members of the army said many sacrificed their lives for the sovereignty and integrity of the country, and urged Ethiopians to remain vigilant and guard sovereignty.

"General Legesse Teferra, Colonel Ashenafi Gebretsadik, Colonel Berhanu Wubneh and others destroyed 25 fighter jets that took off from Hargeisa in air combat. This tilted the power balance which was in favor of Somalia," Brigadier General Hailemelekot Mamo revealed.

The non-commissioned officer, Hussen Gobena said Ethiopians should safeguard their motherland from any threat. "No Ethiopian can live without the motherland. We must therefore stand guard for the motherland. All Ethiopians stand together for a free and strong Ethiopia."

Lieutenant Bekele Belay stated, "A united people are victorious and strong. We inherited the heroism of Karamara from Adwa. And Karamara is another milestone in Ethiopia's struggle to preserve its sovereignty and territorial integrity." On the subject of the day, a veteran army officer said Ethiopians have to build patriotic sentiment and ensure the sovereignty of their motherland by drawing lessons from the victory of Karamara.

In fact, Ethiopians have confirmed to the world the far-fetched power of harmony in incapacitating happenstances. In the face of facing daunting hindrances and having inadequate possessions, the people of Ethiopia demonstrated the world they can triumph over any diversity when they act in concert.

If truth be told, the trump attained over their foes would not have been possible devoid of their combined strength and harmony. This reality on the ground shows the fact that when a nation is alienated, it turns out to be defenseless against failure but when it is untied it can accomplish immensity.

Taking the aforementioned fact into account all and sundry should pull out all the stops to give prominence to unity and vigorously engages in the development and affluence of their nation. In this way, they can take the country to the next level of development in the shortest possible time. For the sake of truth, the astounding progress and growth being witnessed in the left, right and center of the country are an indication of the power of harmony.

By working hand in glove, Ethiopians can take their motherland to the next level of accomplishment at the earliest possible time. What is more, by bringing these circumstances on the ground into fruition, Ethiopians should focus on giving priority to unity which is the foundation of development and growth.

Ethiopia has commemorated the 46th anniversary of the victory of Karamara last Tuesday that it had achieved over the invading Somalia forces on the 5th of March 1978.

Regarding the Day, Brigadier General Wassihun Nigatu who had firsthand experience at the battle, said that Ethiopians must learn from the victory of Karamara and other historic victories over foreign enemies about the vitality of unity and safeguarding sovereignty. He told the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) that the victory of Karamara was a pivotal triumph for Ethiopians that they achieved by sacrificing their lives.

The Karamara battle was held to evacuate the invading Somalia's forces and to ensure the sovereignty of Ethiopia, Wassihun said while recalling his participation in the war two times.

The current generation must learn patriotism and unity from the victory of Karamara, he noted and urged citizens to stand together to secure the sovereignty of the country all the time.

Elaborating on Ethiopia's invaluable role in realizing peace and security in the region, Brigadier General Wassihun mentioned that the Ethiopian national army is playing a major role in the fight against Al-Shabaab.

In the present climate, as Ethiopia is getting back on the right track engaging itself in a wide spectrum of development activities in the length and breath of the country, every Tom, Dick, and Harry should go to the ends of the earth to take the country to whole new level of accomplishment putting the adage "United we stand, divided we fall" into effect.

Taking into consideration the fact that unity is the pillar and backbone of the general growth and development of the entire nation, everyone should partake in a wide spectrum of development undertakings of the country in the spirit of unity and harmony and taking the county to the next level of accomplishment.

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

Editorial

To make African flags dominate African skies

It is an unforgettable incident that for about a year since the end of 2019, the outbreak of the Corona Virus Disease (COVID-19) has disturbed the whole world causing a crisis economically and socially.

The virus was so rapidly spreading that the whole world agreed on restricting movement, and travel to contain it. This posed an obstacle to jobs and the transportation of people and goods. This especially affected developing countries like those of Africa in at least two ways. The restriction of air transportation by global air transporters affected the movement to and from their countries. Second, when the world was receiving vaccinations that were quickly developed in various places, there were no means of transporting them to their respective countries.

Here comes the historical favour of Ethiopian Airlines as a pan-African air transport service provider. With its large number of routes and destinations in Africa and the world Ethiopian Airlines has been transporting medical supplies and medical staff to the continent and elsewhere there is a need to assist in the efforts of arresting the unprecedented level of public health threat that occurred against humanity.

It has shown a similar resolute stance during the outbreak of the other deadly pandemic Ebola, in parts of West and Central Africa. Also worth mentioning is its long-established role in bringing Africa together since the times of anti-colonial struggle and the subsequent establishment of the Continental Organization of African Unity (OAU). The airline took all these measures while making all the necessary safety procedures and showed bravery in the face of all the challenges that Africans faced in various times to prove that its corporate responsibility goes beyond financial gains.

Though the airlines are owned by the government of Ethiopia, it is a commercial company that works for profit, just like many of its counterparts in the world. Still, Ethiopian Airlines has shown extraordinary commitment to national and continental causes going beyond making a profit. This reminds the value of having such a strong and competent continental company that serves with due responsibility to the needs of the people.

The ever-growing stature of the airline is good news for the country as well as the continent. The latest development in the airline is that it has sealed an agreement to acquire 8 new aircraft of the new model called Boeing 777-9x. These models of aircraft are state of their first batch and are expected to start flying in 2025.

In addition to the 8 aircraft already ordered, the airline is going to acquire 12 more of them by 2030. This progress is a good deal in terms of boosting its capacity to connect Africa more with each other as well as the rest of the world.

The efforts of the airline are not limited to increasing its fleet but also expanding its airport capacity to entertain the rapidly growing number of passengers. Accordingly, upgrading works have been carried out in the already existing Bole International Airport while the plan to build a mega Airport City in a highly preferred place is in the pipeline.

The other important endeavour by Ethiopian Airlines is its partnership with airlines owned by various African countries where it holds a share of some 49%. This will help the veteran flag carrier to share its experience with other continental carriers and empower them as competent airliners that dominate the airspace of the continent.

This makes the growth of the airline an important agenda of not only Ethiopia but the entire continent. Therefore, countries across the continent should also reciprocate by paving the way for collaboration with the pioneer pan-African airline, to achieve shared continental success.

Especially countries should give due attention to the realization of one of the African Union's Flagship Projects under Agenda 2063, i.e the Single African Air Transport Market (SAATM) to ensure aviation plays a major role in connecting Africa, promoting its social, economic and political integration and boosting intra-Africa trade and tourism.

Opinion

High time to focus on AI

BY GIRMACHEW GASHAW

Artificial intelligence (AI) has now appeared as a new tool for neocolonialists. As we all know, the world powers have colonized third-world countries, devising various systems. One of which is Western colonialism, a political-economic phenomenon whereby various European nations explored, conquered, settled, and exploited large areas of the world.

Colonialism is the establishment and maintenance of one group of people as superior to other peoples and areas, often for imperialist control and exploitation, and through a range of practices and relations of colonization, installing colonization and possibly colonies. The colonial economy was established during the time of colonization. It happened when powerful countries, known as colonizers, went to other lands and took control of them. They exploited the resources and labour of these lands for their benefit.

Even though the colonial period has elapsed, the world powers have still been influencing third-world countries indirectly through international institutions such as the IMF, the World Bank, etc. Unless third-world countries are willing to change their policies as per the wishes and interests of these institutions, they will never and ever gain any development assistance from these institutions. Though these systems have still been working, some countries are not willing to twist their hands for the sake of gaining loans and grants.

Now, AI has appeared as another colonialism tool for economically developed countries. Indeed, artificial intelligence, or AI, is a technology that enables computers and machines to simulate human intelligence and problem-solving capabilities. In my opinion, as the population of developed countries is filled with old people, they are innovating AI to address the decreasing number of productive workers. On the other hand, AI exposed the greedy nature of developed countries. Instead of innovating AI, they may use the unemployed youth of third-world countries. If that is so, the economic development of the world would be balanced, and the death and suffering of illegal migrants may decrease.

The coming of artificial intelligence enables people to exchange views, beliefs, and ideas even if they are located in matchless areas. Thus, the world is now becoming a small village due to the technologies innovated in the

21st century. Accordingly, the world's countries are now forced to engage in the competition of bringing new forms of technology that make life easier. Whether they accept it or not, third-world countries have no better option than receiving and using the newly innovated technologies.

At this age, the world is now stuck into technologies to satisfy the needs and aspirations of people by crafting machines working day and night, replacing the capacity of human beings. In short, these machines are reducing the number of individuals hired by a given company. Thus, companies even in third-world countries are now forced to receive these machines. If they are not doing that, they will not be able to compete with others and survive as a company.

On the other hand, the unemployed and young population of third world countries is increasing alarmingly, and hence, if countries are applying AI, they will not continue as countries that have sustainable peace.

Using technologies like AI, people in one corner of the world or those who monitor the AI know what you think and desire by simply assessing what you are browsing on your computer or mobile phone. In this regard, AI has weakened the power of an individual's creativity. Apart from that, there are several disadvantages that AI has brought to less developed countries like Ethiopia.

Hence, considering the growing impact of artificial intelligence (AI) at the global level, policy adoption on the subject is becoming almost obligatory in Ethiopia. Developed nations have employed AI in military and diplomatic apparatuses, which aggravate inequality in countries. AI has posed insecurity, cyber-attacks, misinformation, and disinformation. All threats that are being posed by new technology should be governed by a strong and new legal framework.

In light of AI's growing impact on the foreign relations of countries, the Ethiopian government is assessing policy instruments to capitalize on the system. Ethiopia, as a developing country, is facing threats posed by AI.

The Institute of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia has now been researching how Ethiopia could fight challenges and have fair benefits from the division of AI legacies. As development varies from place to place, some countries will inevitably dominate others. The policy that would be adopted also needs to consider all the causes that AI will pose.

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



The Ethiopian Herald

Established in 1943

Published daily except Mondays
By The Ethiopian Press Agency

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Tel. 011-126-42-22
Fax. 251-011-156-98-62
email- epa@press.et

Advertisement and Dist. Department

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The Ethiopian Herald

Business & Economy

Opportunities, challenges in instituting capital market in Ethiopia

BY SOLOMON DIBABA

Promoting capital market in Ethiopia is a rather recent economic and financial activity. The contributor of this article intends to throw some light on the meaning of capital market, the legal framework, opportunities and challenges the sector would bring forth for Ethiopia.

A capital market is a financial market where individuals, institutions, and governments can buy and sell financial securities, including stocks, bonds, derivatives, and other long-term investments. The primary function of a capital market is to facilitate the flow of funds between investors who have capital to invest and entities (such as corporations or governments) that require capital to finance their operations, projects, or investments.

Major components of capital market include primary market in which new securities are issued and sold directly by the issuing entity to investors. This process is known as an Initial Public Offering (IPO) in the case of stocks or bonds. The funds raised from the sale of securities in the primary market provide capital to the issuing entity for investment purposes.

Secondary market is where previously issued securities are bought and sold among investors without involvement from the issuing entity. Stock exchanges and over-the-counter (OTC) markets are examples of secondary markets where investors can trade stocks, bonds, and other financial instruments based on supply and demand dynamics.

Capital markets provide liquidity to investors by offering a platform to buy and sell securities easily and efficiently. Liquidity allows investors to convert their investments into cash quickly without significantly affecting the market price of the securities.

Capital markets offer investors the opportunity to diversify their investment portfolios and manage risk by investing in a variety of asset classes, sectors, and geographic regions. Diversification helps spread risk and reduce the impact of adverse market movements on investment returns.

Capital markets play a crucial role in determining the fair market value of securities through the process of price discovery. The interaction of buyers and sellers in the market determines the prevailing market prices of securities, reflecting factors such as supply and demand, investor sentiment, economic conditions, and corporate performance.

Capital markets facilitate the mobilization of savings and investment capital from investors to fund productive activities, projects, and ventures that contribute to economic growth, job creation, and innovation. By providing access to capital, capital markets support entrepreneurship, business expansion, and infrastructure development.

Capital markets are subject to regulatory oversight by government authorities, financial regulators, and securities

exchanges to ensure transparency, fairness, and investor protection. Regulatory frameworks establish rules and standards governing the issuance, trading, disclosure, and conduct of participants in the capital markets.

The formation of capital market in Ethiopia dates back to the 1950s whereby the first share company in Ethiopia was established by the Ethiopian Abattoirs in 1956. Similarly, the Bottling Company of Ethiopia started to sell shares in 1957 followed by Indo Ethiopian Textile Share Company in 1958, HVA Ethiopia Sugar Factory Share Company in 1959 and the Tendaho Plantation Share Company in 1961. In 1963 Addis Ababa Bank was established.

Earlier in 1960 former State Bank of Ethiopia was established. This was the first step in institutional approach to share markets. It established a share exchange department to regulate shares in those days. The promulgation of the Commercial Code of the Imperial Ethiopian Government also provided for the legal requirements for instituting and handling of shares. Share companies expanded further after 1965 allowing more financial grounds for the formation of share based market transactions.

The Proclamation that provided for the Establishment of Ethiopian Capital Market Authority Proclamation no.1248| 2021 define capital market as “ a market where securities such as shares or equities, bonds, derivatives or other related securities are bought and sold.

The main purpose for the establishment of the Authority is to the national economy of the country, to establish a legal framework for regulation of capital market and to legislate uniform requirements and to monitor the transactions with securities. Provide fair, efficient and transparent financial trade transactions.

This year the Authority issued a Licensing and Supervision Directives to streamline the development of capital market in Ethiopia. According to the Directives, those legible or obtaining operational license from the Authority include securities brokers, Securitas dealers, securities digital sub brokers, investment banks, securities investment advisers, securities Sharia advisers, securities Robo advisers, collective investment schemes operators, crowd funding intermediaries, security market makers, securities custodians, securities portfolio managers, credit rating agencies, securities appraisal firms and appointed representatives. The Directives also prescribes licensing requirements and documents to be presented to the Agency.

The writer of this contribution believes that over the last 30 years, the establishment of a number of private banks and insurance companies as well as growing FDI will provide a more meaningful condition for the expansion of share companies and the nascent capital market in the country.

Ethiopia's growing agriculture output and modernization of the sector along with diversification of export commodities and their increment in quality and quantity could give a better financial backing for

the capital market that could kick off in the country between this and next year. Moreover, the expansion of industrial and agro industrial parks in the country would provide the necessary financial backing for capital market.

Along with these positive tendencies, the formation of capital market in Ethiopia will certainly face several challenges that are directly related to the nature of the economy of the country.

Ethnic based conflicts, economic destabilization that could affect investors' confidence, multiple changes in financial and monetary policies by the National Bank and the effects of inflation could frustrate the genuine initiatives of capital market.

The acute foreign exchange shortage, largely the result of weak export performance and high demand for foreign currency, remains the leading challenge for U.S. suppliers and for which there is no quick fix. When foreign currency is available, banks prioritize certain sectors over others. Businesses can usually expect delays in acquiring foreign currency extending up to a year. Significant payment delays for delivery of imported goods and services, or cancellation of government tenders for lack of funds are another side effect. Further, forex controls make it difficult for investors to repatriate profits.

Other challenges include bureaucratic barriers to investment, inconsistent interpretation of the investment regulations, logistical bottlenecks, corruption, expensive land transportation, and delays affecting importing products and shipping exports. Land rights issues and an unpredictable tax regime may add another layer of complexity for foreign investors and operators. Private sector expansion is hampered by a lack of a capital market.

The Ethiopian economy has grown at a rapid pace over past decade until 2019, but in addition to foreign exchange scarcities, the economy remains vulnerable to internal conflicts, periodic droughts and commodity price volatility that impacts the demand and price of Ethiopia's primary export commodities. The price of coffee, one-third of Ethiopia's exports, has a pronounced impact on Ethiopia's export earnings.

The fact that Ethiopia has now joined BRICS will help the nation to have access to hitherto impossible foreign capital markets. The nation needs to exploit this opportunity over time.

The question now is what should Ethiopia accomplish to accelerate the pace of formation of capital market in the country? The writer wishes to forward some suggestions.

In the first place, the Commercial Code of Ethiopia needs to be revised so that the legal provisions could facilitate smooth and legitimate capital market for nation in the country.

On the other hand, extensive and detailed capacity building and training programs need to be conducted for potential participants in the capital market. Similarly, the struggle against contraband trade, money laundering and printing of counterfeit local and foreign

currencies must be intensified in a more organized manner with the participation of all concerned stakeholders.

The digitalization of fiscal and financial services is of critical importance to allow foreign investors to conduct one stop business ventures and to conduct more frequent monitoring on the activities of licensed organizations.

Capital market could be vulnerable to highly skilled corruption activities at all levels and this requires close monitoring and implementation of the rule of law in the financial sector.

At the end of the day, what advantages can Ethiopia expect from a well developed capital market?

A capital market provides businesses, government entities, and other institutions with access to long-term financing by issuing stocks, bonds, and other securities to investors. By raising capital through the capital market, Ethiopian companies can fund expansion projects, infrastructure development, and strategic investments to spur economic growth.

Developing a capital market allows Ethiopian entities to diversify their sources of financing beyond traditional bank loans and government grants. Access to equity and debt financing through the capital market enables businesses to manage their capital structure, reduce reliance on bank borrowing, and mitigate financial risks.

A vibrant capital market can catalyze economic growth by channeling savings into productive investments, fostering entrepreneurship, and promoting innovation and job creation. By mobilizing domestic and foreign investment capital, Ethiopia can stimulate economic activity, enhance productivity, and capitalize on emerging opportunities in key sectors of the economy.

Listing on a stock exchange and accessing capital market financing often requires companies to adhere to stringent corporate governance standards and transparency requirements. By promoting good corporate governance practices, the capital market can improve accountability, investor confidence, and management effectiveness within Ethiopian companies, leading to sustainable business growth and value creation.

A well-regulated capital market attracts domestic and international investors seeking investment opportunities and portfolio diversification. By offering a range of investment instruments such as stocks, bonds, mutual funds, and Exchange-Traded Funds (ETFs), Ethiopia can attract capital inflows, deepen liquidity, and expand investor participation in its financial markets.

Capital raised through the capital market can be directed toward financing critical infrastructure projects, including transportation networks, energy facilities, telecommunications systems, and urban development initiatives. Infrastructure investment enhances Ethiopia's competitiveness, connectivity, and resilience, laying the foundation for sustainable economic development.

Art & Culture

The fair sex in the lens of poets

Whenever a man speaks or acts he must take into consideration he has to see things from four perspectives—a woman forms a mother, daughter, sister and wife. So women are the oxygen men breathe.

In connection with March 8 let us have a look at four poems that shed light on the aforementioned tasks.

Tell her so

(ANONYMOUS)

*Amid the cares of married strife
— In spite of toil and business life
If you value your dear wife —
— — Tell her so!*

*When days are dark and deeply blue
— She has her troubles, same as you
Show her that your love is true
— — Tell her so!*

*Don't act as if she's past her prime
— As tho' to please her were a crime
If ever you loved her, now's the time —
— — Tell her so!*

*She'll return for each caress
— A hundred fold of tenderness,
Hearts like hers were made to bless;
— — Tell her so!*

*You are hers and hers alone;
— Well you know she's all your own;
Don't wait to carve it on a stone —
— — Tell her so!*

*Never let her heart grow cold
— Richer beauties will unfold
She is worth her weight in gold
— — Tell her so!*

*Amid the cares of married strife
— In spite of toil and business life
If you value your dear wife —
— — Tell her so!*

*When days are dark and deeply blue
— She has her troubles, same as you*



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*Never let her heart grow cold
— Richer beauties will unfold
She is worth her weight in gold
— — Tell her so!*

A MOTHER'S LOVE

BY HELEN STINER RICE

*A Mother's love is something
that no one can explain,
It is made of deep devotion
and of sacrifice and pain,
It is endless and unselfish
and enduring come what may
For nothing can destroy it
or take that love away . . .
It is patient and forgiving
when all others are forsaking,
And it never fails or falters
even though the heart is breaking . . .
It believes beyond believing
when the world around condemns,
And it glows with all the beauty
of the rarest, brightest gems . . .*



*It is far beyond defining,
it defies all explanation,
And it still remains a secret
like the mysteries of creation . . .
A many splendored miracle
man cannot understand
And another wondrous evidence
of God's tender guiding hand.*

My Girl

BY TONI KANE

*She's the air that I breathe.
She's the beat in my heart.
She's the tear in my eyes
when we're apart.
She's the pride that I feel,
with all she achieves.
I'm the one who gives hope,
in what she believes.
She's a part of my body,
but now she's all grown.
As she waves me goodbye,
to find a life of her own.*



*My beautiful girl,
you've grown up so fine.
So proud am I
to know that you're mine.*

My Sister my friend

BY LEANN STIGEMAN

*To me, you are an angel in disguise.
Full of intuition, you are intelligent and wise.
Always giving and helping through good times and bad.
You are the best friend I've ever had.
If I had one wish, it would surely be
To give you as much as you've given to me.
Though I've put our relationship through some cloudy days,
You've been my sunshine in so many ways.
Through trials and tests, right by me, you stood,
And you gave me your hand whenever you could.
Thank you so much, my sister, my friend.
My gratitude for you has no end.*



Indepth

Celebrating Adwa, Africa's pride

BY FITSUM GETACHEW

In Ethiopia few people do not know or have never heard of the name Adwa. For some it may represent only a locality in the north of the country, but for most it represents the victory that was recorded in that locality against alien invaders and hence the celebration of the preservation of the sovereignty of Ethiopia. However, even among those who think to know about it, they do not fully understand or appreciate the significance of the victory and above all what sort of preparation and efforts were needed to make it a success.

They do not know what sort of sacrifices had to be paid to guarantee the realization of such a historical deed. What is more, they do not know the historical background, the events that led to the battle and made it inevitable even for a country that had so many other issues to take care of rather than engage in warfare. Hence it would be necessary to know why at all the battle took place in the first place. It would also be very interesting to carry out the same survey among Africans outside Ethiopia to see how much awareness or knowledge they have about the battle of Adwa and Ethiopia's triumph.

In a recent survey carried out among citizens at random by an electronic media program to gauge their level of understanding of the victory of Adwa and what sort of understanding was implanted in the minds of Ethiopians particularly youths, the response gathered was mixed. Some were a bit confused on which battle was which and that was of course a result of indifference or not committing to know about one's history may be considering it irrelevant for today's life. Others were clearly aware of the battle including the core causes of the conflict but still they had significant gaps on certain events linked to the campaign of Adwa. They all knew that Adwa was a significant chapter in our history but may be did not matter a lot for them as they viewed it as a distant event. Clearly therefore this gap must have been addressed by our educational curriculum with particular focus on such glorious events that make us appreciate the sacrifices of our forefathers who handed us a free country which however we take for granted as it were a gift of God.

We tend to forget that freedom is never a gift and has to be earned with massive sacrifice and that is what has happened at Adwa. The older generation hence needs to pass the legacy of Adwa and other similar events to the young generation of youths who must learn their forefathers' history and they in turn continue to preserve the chain of knowledge to their descendents. Every citizen needs to be well updated with key information about the history of the battle of Adwa, particularly with regards to certain key facts relative to the

The

news of the victory of Adwa was a huge surprise to the world and an embarrassment for European colonialists who felt the danger of such disturbing news that would diminish their status among the colonies

battle and the motive behind it.

The history of Ethiopia may be full of wars, battles and confrontations among national factions largely motivated by struggle to acquire or seize power and administer the country and its resources, but also other hostilities against outside forces who had tried to penetrate the territory of Ethiopia and seek to seize it or dominate it especially with neighbouring forces who wanted among other things to control the source of the mighty Nile. Ethiopians have a long tradition of resisting to alien forces and the patriots had to stand together mobilized by their leaders. They had to fight back invasions to safeguard the country's sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity.

History books tell us that Ethiopians never desisted to face their invaders and try to foil their aggressive threats and activities. It has been recorded in multiple books by historians that specialized on Ethiopian history; the bravery of Ethiopian patriots has enabled the country to maintain their freedom and territorial integrity. It is often stated that this long tradition of freedom and independence has become one of the 'identity cards' of Ethiopians.

This makes Ethiopia a unique reality in Africa and in a way an emblem of dignity and pride for all peoples of African descent. That is why after the celebration of the victory of Adwa at the newly constructed Adwa Victory Memorial many foreign diplomats of Africa were heard stating that they were proud of this history about which they did not have a clear picture like now. They were heard expressing their delight for being part of such a colourful celebration that ought to be repeated in every African country. They felt participants of this huge historical milestone and stated that was in the end why Ethiopia is considered as an emblem

of black independence and freedom.

Unfortunately, Ethiopians of the current generation do not seem to be as well informed or instructed about the various implications of Adwa as they really need to. Adwa cannot be dismissed just as another battle that resulted in Ethiopian victory. It is not just a normal battle with a normal enemy and a normal outcome. It had every bit of a once in a lifetime happening because it had outreaching immense implications for the entire world, particularly for the black populations across the globe.

The news of the victory of Adwa on March 2, 1896 was not just another piece of battle field news. It was special because the parties involved were from two continents, two races that represented two separate worlds, Africa and Europe. Moreover, looking at the forces involved it had a huge international significance. The entire world watched and followed the dynamics of the confrontation between Italy and Ethiopia. However, they never expected that Italy, a European power could be challenged to such an extent and even succumb to a then little known force, little known quantity.

Therefore, the news of the victory of Adwa was a huge surprise to the world and an embarrassment for European colonialists who felt the danger of such disturbing news that would diminish their status among the colonies. Evidently, they were anxious that such news could potentially instigate the colonized countries to rise up in rebellion for liberation. In fact that was what was eventually to happen even if it took some years before the realization of the dream of the oppressed peoples of Africa.

In the aftermath of the battle, the story of Adwa was well disseminated throughout the world and admirations flooded to the

court of the Ethiopian Emperor Menelik II who was considered by historians as the chief architect of the victory. Consequently, Ethiopia was recognized as a sovereign and free state and many countries lined up to seek diplomatic relations with it. Hence the influence of Adwa was not limited to the two warring parties but had extensive implications well beyond.

It was considered as the beginning of a new chapter in the history of relations between Europe and Africa, between the colonialists and the colonized, between the oppressors and the oppressed, between the unjust and just causes. Adwa created an unprecedented dynamics between the 'white' world and the 'black' world. That is the point that many youths of the current generation might miss and need to know and understand better the significance of the battle of Adwa. That is what every African needs to know and appreciate and not the leaders or the educated class only. Adwa is too big to be shared only by a few fortunate ones. Glory to all those who fell for the cause of freedom and dignity! They deserve to be remembered come every celebration of Adwa Day.

Adwa Day is more than an Ethiopian event because it should be shared by all Africans and in fact the AU has decided to observe the day along with Ethiopians. This was not done to please Ethiopia but to put the victory of Adwa and the Panafrican movement that was to be kindled as years passed on in the right perspective and give it due meaning. Africa needs more Adwa in the current generation and that spirit of Adwa must influence every activity the continent undertakes to liberate itself from dependence on foreign aid or support, and hence be indirectly neo-colonized. Africa must stand up on its own as Ethiopia as well needs to stand up on its own feet. Otherwise the sacrifices of Adwa shall have been vain.

Law & Politics

Reckoning with water paradox

BY DESTA GEBREHWIOT

The Rime of the Ancient Mariner, a poem by Samuel Taylor Coleridge ‘Water, water everywhere, nor any drop to drink’ is the byword to explain Ethiopia’s current water status. Albeit surrounded by small and big water bodies, the country is wallowing in contradiction when it comes to its water potential and utilization.

In what could be said a glide path to headways, from the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam to the recently signed sea access deal with Somaliland, Ethiopia is pulling all the stops to reverse the paradox surrounding its water resources and utilization. The water-abundant nation has still a considerable number of people clamoring for potable water to quench their thirst. Also, a sizable segment of the nation is still off the grid living in darkness. Even worse, situated just in touching distance from the strategic Red Sea, the country has no reliable ports or sea outlets to conduct its burgeoning commercial activities. With the nation’s population and economy growing at an alarming rate, it is going back to the drawing board to redress the contradiction.

Albeit little headways, the resource-rich country has had no strategies that align with the national demand and regional hydro-political dynamism. Water indeed is a precious yet untapped resource in the country. The same is true in terms of its utilization of big water bodies like the Red Sea. Setting 60 KM away from the sea, the country remains a bystander forfeiting the benefits it has to gain from the strategic location. This has even posed security and economic threats to the country. The contradiction has begun receiving attention at the top becoming a public matter as well. The dynamism in the nation and beyond is forcing the nation to reckon with the ugly reality and redefine its water utilization.

In an attempt to strike a delicate balance, the nation has been working on expanding its water usage for the past few years. Ethiopia, with its rapidly increasing population and growing need for basic amenities, has been exploring and making use of its natural resources.

Despite the contradiction, Ethiopia’s water diplomacy has been among the best. The country has been at the forefront of efforts to guarantee just and equitable use of the world’s longest river, providing a practical example. Ethiopia began building the Abbay dam in 2011, which will help the region greatly. The nation extended an invitation to downstream nations to engage in dialogue to resolve any disputed issues. There have been advancements over the years that qualify as breakthroughs. Two astute examples are the signing of the Memorandum of Understandings and the Declarations of Principles. Though the Abbay dam is a national and sovereign project solely funded and constructed by Ethiopians, the country has been doing its level best not only to bring the downstream



countries on board but also to find a common ground where the three countries would be able to benefit from the colossal dam.

The primary goal of unlocking its water resources is to meet the urgent need for energy required by its developing industry. The nation is heavily investing in energy initiatives as a result of the sustained economic expansion that is driving up energy consumption. Furthermore, the nation’s foreign policy places a strong emphasis on the idea of doing no harm.

Appropriate policies and strategies are required to convert the resources into benefits. There should be a successful implementation process in place in addition to the tools. It is accurate to say that the nation’s water diplomacy and policy are built on a win-win strategy and positively encourage regional collaboration.

Recently, the country has been exploring ways to carve out a path that would enable it to ensure socioeconomic security and political interest in the Red Sea which is only 60 KM away from the country. Finding reliable and alternative ports or sea outlets has also become the major priority of the country entering a deal with Somaliland recently. Again, the country’s quest for sea access harms no other parties; it rather

cements regional integration and fosters collective growth.

Over the years, the country has been exploring ways to carve out a path that would enable it to ensure socioeconomic security and political interest in the Red Sea which is only 60 KM away from the country. Finding reliable and alternative ports or sea outlets has also become the major priority of the country entering a deal with Somaliland recently. Again, the country’s quest for sea access harms no other parties; it rather cements regional integration and fosters collective growth. Yesterday, the country launched its first water strategy on the Abbay Rivers and the Red Sea. The six-chapter document mainly highlights Ethiopia’s journey to get sovereign access to the sea. It would be an important input for scholars who wish to conduct research and studies on historical and political issues. The strategy will guide the country’s stance on water bodies. The new policy document reflects the country’s stand on the Abbay River and the Red Sea. The country should in place the required policies and strategies to realize its mega ambitions in the Abbay Rivers and the Red Sea. In this regard, the launching of the strategy is a mammoth step that requires additional work.

Lately, the country launched a book entitled Grand Strategy of Two Waters. Speaking in the unveiling of the strategies, MoWE Minister Habtamu Itefa (PhD-Eng.) launched the historical and unique book titled The Grand Strategy of Two Waters, which reflects Ethiopia’s position on the Abay River and the Red Sea. The book was prepared by the Institute of Foreign Affairs in collaboration with Walta Media and Communication Corporation and Abrhot Library.

Habtamu also stated that Ethiopia should utilize its synergy and stakeholders’ integration and establish various strategies to realize proper utilization of water and ensure sustainable development. “Fostering regional integration with the Horn of Africa countries has a paramount importance in this regard.”

“If the current generation expected to repeat the victory of Adwa in poverty, several strategies are expected to encourage unity, sovereignty, national interest, and prosperity. In this regard, the MoWE is partnering with various universities to address several constraints related to water bodies through research and a scientific-based approach.”

The minister advised the media to use proper expression about the country’s water potential and be cautious when using the usual ‘Ethiopia is the water tower of Africa’ phrase when the reality is far from this. “We are called a water tower because we are in a high place, not because we have enough water.”

“We are not called water tower because we have water. Ethiopia’s historical enemies take this word and make it a water tower. They have attempted to attack by saying that Ethiopia has rain and rivers. But this is far from reality.”

The IFA’s Executive Director Jafar Bedru on his part said that the book would be supplementing the holistic development of Ethiopia in particular and the East African region in general due to its focus on cooperative development, give-and-take approaches, regional integration, and sustainable peace. The director added, “The book focuses in detail on the Abbay-Nile basin and the Red Sea as strategic arenas for Ethiopia’s national security to help the country’s effort to return the Red Sea access and get the ownership of sea outlet. Besides, Abay and the Red Sea are determinant issues on geopolitics, social, and strategic approaches of Ethiopia.”

The six-chapter document mainly highlights Ethiopia’s journey to get sovereign access to the sea. It would be an important input for scholars who wish to conduct research and studies on historical and political issues. The strategy will guide the country’s stance on water bodies. The new policy document reflects the country’s stand on the Abbay River and the Red Sea. The country should in place the required policies and strategies to realize its mega ambitions in the Abbay Rivers and the Red Sea. In this regard, the launching of the strategy is a mammoth step that requires additional work.

Women in Focus

‘Emama Shekela, Mother of Clay’: *Birukti*

BY BETELHEM BEDLU

Birukti Tewolde, also goes by the nickname of ‘Emama Shekela’, was born and raised around Kazanchis, an area located in Addis Ababa. Birukti spends most of her weekends playing and exploring with children in her neighborhood. She loves allowing children exploring nature so as to give them space from screen and television time.

Not only the children made spending their weekends at her house a habit but they also named the house ‘Ye Emama mud house’. She loved the name and used it for the clay house training center she founded with a little improvising ‘Emama Shekela’.

Birukti left her country and flew to The Netherlands, Europe 16 years ago. However, life was not a bed of roses or a bed of thorns for her. She was able to take a course on painting and clay work. But again, she came to understand that painting was not her call in life, rather she fell in love with clay work.

The people around her told her to continue the painting career recognizing that she was gifted with a talent for painting. Just for the pleasure of her guardians, she decided to take the class once a week even though deep down she knew she fell in love with clay work rather than painting.

When she realized that clay work does not require huge capital and could be worked anywhere, she decided to return to her home country. After seven years of leading an immigrant life, she returned to her beloved country to carry out the activity of her passion and what she loves most.

Birukti took short term training on clay work again and received a certificate from Federal Small and Medium Bureau Training Center. She then started providing training for children, fistula patients and students in various areas.

Similarly, she started a shared association with her friends that produces less fuel consuming stoves made of clay named ‘Laqech’ and ‘Merecha’. They were able to hire many women in the association.

Unlike most clay artists/workers that work through experience that are limited to single products, she tried producing different types of clay works such as vase, pot, stove, among others.

Most artists in Ethiopia are undervalued and given different names. However, the experience in other countries such as the country she stayed in is very different from Ethiopia. She said: “I personally do not have a bad experience, though several people have questioned the reason why I joined in clay work. But I never took it personally and let it affect me in any way.”

Sharing her experience, she said that



she believes that it is a profitable business that could be developed to export level. If more training and education could be given to individuals, the work could generate more benefits to the people as well as

societal attitudes towards clay works are still very backward. When she tried to approach many destitute people to offer training, many felt offended though they led a miserable life. Even those women who were assigned from districts to take part in the training do not feel happy. The main reason, as to her, is the wrong perception that the society held towards the clay work for so long.

Despite all this, Birukti never gets tired of talking about clay work. The fact that it is natural, and free from any chemicals, and has no negative impact on human beings, is the reason that she has fallen in love with the work.

Moreover, she believes that it is a profitable business that could be developed to export level. If more training and education could be given to individuals, the work could generate more benefits to the people as well as the country.

Most of the clay work is carried out in a traditional way. Despite the vast number of professionals that perform in the sector, absence of institutions that promote the profession and teach the work shows how little attention is given to the sector. Though there are promising things that are being observed with regard to offering training, a lot remains to be done to help the sector outperform.

Traditionally, clay used to be produced by burning animal waste and woods and using electric, gas or other burning materials. In order to minimize the challenge, she uses fine charcoal. She stressed that individuals or institutions could take her experience.

Currently, she is making children play with mud, and perform traditional artifacts using cotton and other materials. She is also striving not only to establish a clay work institution but also to enhance the accessibility of clay works to all.

Birukti never gets her age into her way of work. She is a hardworking woman and believes that youth involvement in weaving and clay works are very limited. “They prefer migrating to Arab countries rather than engaging in clay works in their nation. This is how we lose track of our culture and we need to keep and transfer the tradition to the next generation”, she underscored.

Kechene area, Addis Ababa has a deep-rooted clay work culture that needs to be appreciated and promoted. The people who are producing clay items from mud are her biggest supporters in her work, as to her. With the vision of expanding the work to various areas in the country, she is putting her utmost effort.

Birukti, a mother of two, said her children are her first supporters. So far, she has received different awards and recognition from different institutions such as the Environment Protection Authority, former Culture and Tourism Ministry, Water and Energy Authority and other institutions.

Mentioning that there are several graduating students of engineering, architecture and other fields that joined her center and stating that there are a number of untapped areas in the country like clay works, she advised youths not to sit idle waiting for job employment

“Everyone does not necessarily have to be a pilot, doctor or a teacher. We need to explore different areas and conduct studies to have holistic development in the country. As a country, we need to review the experience of China and Japan that modernize the clay sector and benefit from it. Ethiopia has the potential to develop the sector given its rich nature. To this end, Due attention should be given”, she stressed.

Society

Impacts of algorithms in social media platforms

BY MAHLET GASHAW

Some Social media experts say that currently social media algorithms are shaping human life next to nature and nurture. The influence of social media on our daily lives is becoming much more than expected. The first thing we do when we wake up in the morning is to pick up our phone and scroll on social media platforms. Most of us have no idea how this social media algorithm works; but the information coming from the phone reaches us and; we are not much aware about the impact.

The front page of social media feeds- news, photos and videos - have a huge impact on our world. The information we receive on social media is processed by algorithms designed for this purpose. The amount of information that is posted per minute is beyond human capacity, so the algorithm automatically processes what content is coming to our social media front page.

Social media sites are devices increasingly present in our everyday lives; and platforms that encode certain social relationships plus gather personalized data from their users' interactions. And social media sells the audience commodity in a more efficient way. The target is individuals and their desire not demographic groups, as mass media does.

News delivery through social media platforms differs from traditional news distribution in important ways. The use of algorithms enables online platforms to serve tailored content to users. They can also be used to exclude information and opinions that they may have an interest in not circulating for example if such information does not please advertisers or is not engaging for users. Algorithms can also be used to give some content preeminence over others either by deciding at what time they should appear on a feed or in what order.

Information about users allows social media platforms to identify audiences which may be interested in this or that type of content. Figuring out users' interest allows platforms to serve them content that can keep them engaged at all times. While it is often the case that users' newsfeeds in a platform like Facebook contain very little substantive news intermingled with a lot of other personalized information: comment, gossip, personal observations, commercial messages and so on, there is data that shows that users seem to respond to the availability of actual news through social media favorably and at least in part use their social media platforms to seek and consume the news.

However, this means that they may only be committed to distributing news content as long as there is revenue to be



obtained from it and this may also mean that they are not necessarily committed to distributing quality news content; to the extent that the content can lead them to make a profit.

According to studies, across social media sites, there is an increasing number of users that use social media platforms as sources for news. For instance, 67 percent of US adults reported getting at least some of their news on social media. 32 and 29 percent of YouTube and Snapchat users respectively get news from those sites, and a majority of Twitter (74 percent) and Facebook users (68 percent) do so on those other ones.

As to the report launched by the US Census Bureau in 2016, The United States has a total population of around 323 million people, and overall, since 66 percent of Americans use Facebook, this means that 45 percent of the whole country's population considers this particular social network as a source of news, and about 26 percent of them use more than one social network for this same purpose.

When users see content available to them at any given point in time, what the company calls the News Feed, they are not seeing content merely presented in chronological order. The content they see is determined by a series of automated processes, the algorithms that decide what the user will see at any given moment. This is decided, at least in part through the collection and analysis of data that aims to determine what the preferences and interests of any given user are. The order in which users see content depends on various factors including how often they visit Facebook, how often they interact with their friends and other companies present on the platform and how often and to what degree they interact with content that has appeared on their feed in the past.

The study further noted that the algorithms make decisions based on

profiles created by matching registration and location details, with viewing and sharing data as well as metadata such as content keywords. Those algorithms determine, for example, what posts from friends a user will see and also what news content from media companies will appear at what moment and when they will appear in the feed; based on the profile the social network has created on any given user. Their algorithms curate everyday online content through information prioritization, classification, associating and filtering usually without users being aware of their existence and use.

Likewise, Facebook News Feed is programmed to be viral, clicky, upbeat or quarrelsome. That is how its algorithm works and how it determines what more than a billion people see every day. Facebook wants to choose the best content out of several thousand potential stories that could appear in your News Feed each day and put those in the first few dozen slots that you will actually browse through. Facebook algorithms decide what may be of interest for a particular user, at what point in time they should see this or that content, in which order the content should appear.

Ultimately, the objective of Facebook's algorithms is selecting the most relevant and engaging stories and showing them in the News Feed in order to keep users engaged with their platform the longest amount of time possible. This means Facebook decides what is given the most prominence on its News Feed, what content gets relegated and given less visibility or what content is taken down from the platform. Algorithms exert various types of control over content as they have a key role in selecting what information is considered more relevant to us, a crucial characteristic of our participation in public life.

When Facebook decided to leave all news content distribution decisions in

the hands of algorithms, the results were not quite what the company expected, automated decisions even helped spread disinformation, not to curtail it, added the study mentioning that Google itself has had the same experience. The algorithms used by YouTube to suggest videos to users tend to recommend disinformation or disturbing and violent content. By error or by design, they seem to privilege certain pieces of information over others, often with undesirable consequences. "In fact automated processes are just as fallible as the humans that create them," the study further elaborated citing studies conducted by different scholars in earlier times.

Furthermore, Algorithms can be manipulated whether by the social platforms themselves or by third parties and we cannot expect that they will always make correct decisions regarding news content, a task that on its own is difficult for seasoned human journalists themselves. There is also the very important issue of transparency.

According to a research conducted by Figueiredo, Carlos, and César Bolaño some years back under the title "Social Media and Algorithms: Configurations of the Life world Colonization by New Media, algorithms command interactivity between humans and software and software and computers mediate human interactions in social media. For social media algorithms data extracted from the tracking of user interactions with other users' profiles and companies' profiles would be the input while the ads and contents recommended for this user would be the output.

As to the researchers, that output is the result of statistical calculations made from large volumes of data compiled with help from high processing power computers. The presence of algorithms in everyday life takes on a pervasive form. They act on financial markets on Netflix movie recommendations on Google search results and on social media sites

Algorithms were designed to solve problems but they are inert and work only with data. Algorithms need a sheer amount of data resulting from tracking user interactions to deliver personalized content and advertising. That huge amount of data is compiled in real time by social media algorithms thanks to computers with high processing power. A large mass of data whose compilation is only possible with the help of powerful computers is conventionally called Big Data.

Social media algorithms actually predict something for each person and it is not a force of expression, or metaphor but it is a power of right prediction and distribution of content or ads for the right person with a margin of error much smaller than that observed in traditional Cultural Industry.



Published Weekly in Collaboration with Haramaya University

HU offers capacity-building training on summer wheat irrigation

BY EPHREM ANDARGACHEW

Haramaya University (HU) has offered capacity-building training to farmers who used irrigation to grow summer wheat in the East Hararge Zone, Malka Ballo Woreda. In addition to training, the trainee had a field visit to a 100-hectare summer wheat farm that was developed through the cluster.

HU Research Communication Head Kamal Kassim said that farmers, extension workers, and stakeholders who attended the program should carry out agricultural activities using scientific approaches to be productive. "HU designed and delivered this capacity-building workshop to raise farmers' awareness. It is extremely useful since it covers land preparation, pre and post-wheat cultivation methods, contemporary and effective irrigation systems, and preparation and application of natural fertilizers."

He also mentioned that 71 farmers and stakeholders from the Malka Ballo Woreda community received capacity-building training focusing on women's equality.

HU lecturer and crop researcher Fuad Abdusalam said that the training will give farmers the ability to produce the best



Malka Ballo Woreda trainees

seeds through land preparation, post-harvest collecting, and disease prevention. This, in turn, allows farmers to produce the greatest wheat seeds, which may be disseminated not only in their particular areas but throughout the country.

HU Department of Natural Resources Management Assistant Professor Tasisa Temesgen in his part noted that given the contemporary irrigation methods, the farmers have to be aware of the best times of day to water their crops since they shouldn't spend all of their available water to water vegetables or crops.

"Because unplanned or misused water wastes

water, also causes the expected and intended wheat product to be lost. As a result, training is essential for achieving a shared understanding and the prospect of reaping greater advantages from irrigation by speaking with agricultural specialists and extension workers," he stated.

He also added that if farmers work extensively on the production and application of natural fertilizers using the knowledge and skills they gained during training, they would obtain greater results from the crops they harvest.

Malka Ballo Woreda Agriculture Office Head Ibrahim Yusuf said that HU's comprehensive capacity-building training for farmers,

agricultural professionals, and other stakeholders helps farmers create the capacity they need to be productive in their agricultural activities.

"Given the significance of the training, the office will work tirelessly to disseminate the information and experiences obtained during the training to the rest of the farmers in the Woreda," he specified.

The Head remembered that HU had given the Woreda 100 quintals of the best wheat seeds a few months ago. It also frequently provides capacity-building training to farmers to enable them to produce the best wheat seeds. "This, as a result, helps the farmers to develop and use the best seed suited to the Woreda's climate and environment. Consequently, HU deserves to be thanked," he reiterated.

Undoubtedly, HU has provided a range of trainings aimed at enhancing farmers' knowledge and comprehension of agricultural technology which raises their output and efficiency. Before being offered to the farmers of Malka Ballo Woreda, this training was given to the Meyu Muluke Woreda farmers and other stakeholders who produce the best seeds for the irrigation-based development of summer wheat. As a result, they produce the highest best seeds and market them.

Accelerated action for African LLDCs and LDCs needed to achieve sustainable development

Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe, 1 March 2024 (ECA) – Multiple crises, including the COVID-19 pandemic and the current geopolitical and global macroeconomic situation have resulted in poor economic progress and exacerbated the structural challenges of African Landlocked Least Developed Countries (LLDCs), putting them off track in meeting the Vienna Programme of Action for LLDCs (VPoA). This, according to experts meeting ahead of the March 4-5 ministerial segment of the Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, "requires accelerated action for them to achieve sustainable development."

While African LLDCs had made some notable progress in registering milder GDP contraction, "they were off the mark in reaching the goals set out in the VPoA," said ECA Director of Regional Integration and Trade Division, Stephen Karingi in his presentation on the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014–2024.

Africa's LLDCs contend with many development challenges due to their lack of direct territorial access to the sea, remoteness and distance from world markets. They face higher trade costs than their transit neighbours, limited infrastructure, undiversified economies and export markets.

LLDCs fared poorly in health delivery, real GDP growth and infrastructural development.

"Africa's infrastructure deficit is a major obstacle to the development of LLDCs," said Mr. Karingi, adding that, "Africa faces a financial gap of between \$68-108 billion."

The VPoA is a major international development compact agreed in 2014 to promote the development of Landlocked Developing Countries over a decade ending in 2024. There are 16 landlocked developing countries in Africa. Thirteen are still categorized as least developed countries and no landlocked developing country in Africa has graduated from least developed country status in the past decade.

On the trade front, African LLDCs had low trade in services between 2014 and 2022. They accounted for only 0.2 percent of global services exports and 0.4 of global service imports while the trade balance between African LLDCs remained negative within the same period.

It was recommended that the ECA should support LLDCs in implementing international and regional agreements such as the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and the World Trade Facilitation Agreement. Furthermore, the ECA is requested to development institutions to catalyze investment for transport infrastructure, renewable energy, ICTs and regional integration, while advancing structural economic transformation focused

on value addition.

Member countries raised concerns on the loss of flexibility that the LDC status provides when they graduate and the high transport costs and poor air connectivity across Africa.

"It is not possible to minimize the cost of transport using aviation. The AfCFTA puts transport as one of the service sectors that need to be included in the liberalization of services and at the same time the single African market is already there for us to be able to implement the services protocol," Mr. Karingi explained calling for member states to be bold and implement the AfCFTA including the single African air market.

Mr. Karingi said that a new programme for LLDCs is crucial, and it must draw insights from lessons learned from the VPoA and leverage synergies with the Doha Programme of Action for the LDCs to enhance its effectiveness.

The Doha Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries, which covers the decade 2022–2031, was adopted in 2022 and focuses on helping LDCs ensure a sustained and inclusive recovery from and greater resilience to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Doha Programme of action set out six key areas for development by LDCs. These include Investing in people in least developed countries, leveraging the power of science, technology, and innovation and supporting structural transformation as a driver of

prosperity. In addition, LDCs had to make progress on enhancing international trade of least developed countries and regional integration; addressing climate change, environmental degradation, recovering from COVID-19 pandemic and building resilience against future shocks as well as mobilizing international solidarity, reinvigorated global partnerships and innovative tools and instruments.

In a report on the progress made in Africa in the implementation of the priority areas of the Doha Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries, ECA Director of the Macroeconomics and Governance Division, Adam Elhiraika said most LDCs in Africa had performed poorly in the six key areas outlined in the Doha Programme of Action.

Of the 45 LDCs in the world, 33 are in Africa and only from 3 African countries have graduated from the LDC status since 1971 which are Cape Verde, Botswana and Equatorial Guinea

"Two additional LDCs could be eligible for graduation while three others will meet the graduation thresholds for the first time, however, the pandemic has set back the performance of at least two other LDCs that were making progress," said Mr. Elhiraika, adding, "We underscore the importance of the DPoA for safeguarding sustainable development."

Source: UNECA