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Ethiopia calls on world to unite against terrorism

• *Denounces terrorist attack in Moscow*

BY YESUF ENDRIS

ADDIS ABABA- Following the terrorist attack that has killed innocent Russian citizens in Moscow, Ethiopia has called on the international community and all countries around the world to fight terrorism together.

In an exclusive- interview with *The*

Ethiopian Herald, Ethiopia's Ambassador Extraordinary Plenipotentiary to the Russian Federation Cham Ugala Uriat said that these kinds of attacks are threats to security and peace of all nations around the world.

"The impact of the incident that has happened at Crocus City Hall is not only on the Russian Federation, but it will affect global peace in one way or the other [...] even though there

may be some hostilities and political differences among some countries around the world, I do sincerely believe that it would be inhuman to celebrate the loss of the precious lives of innocent people," Ambassador Cham said.

In this regard, the international community has responded enormously in condemning this heinous

See Ethiopia calls on world.. page 3

Association seeks diplomatic backing to tourist influx

BY ASHENAFI ANIMUT

ADDIS ABABA – Firming up the involvement of the Ethiopian diplomatic mission has paramount importance to sustain the international tourist inflow, the Ethiopian Tour Operators Association said.

Association's Chairman Daniel Tesfaye told the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) that the country's diplomatic activities need to be strengthened to sustain and promote the gained momentum about international tourist influx. "Understandably, the tourist influx has greatly impacted various factors and it is crucial to keep the momentum."

According to him, the

See Association seeks .. page 3

Military officers laud training's outcomes in mission

BY MESERET BEHAILU

ADDIS ABABA – High-ranking officers who received short-term training courses at the Defense War College said that the training helped them to effectively fulfill their mission and defend Ethiopia's national interest.

It is to be recalled that the Defense War College graduated 38 General Officers and Senior Officers in short-term training courses last week.

Defense Health Department Supply of Drugs and Medical Equipment Head Brigadier General Yeshimbet Ayalew told *The Ethiopian Herald* that the training is instrumental in understanding and analyzing the national, regional, and international security issues.

"Protecting Ethiopia's sovereignty and enforcing law and order are our main duties

See Military officers .. page 3

Ethiopia , Malta to deepen, foster ties

BY STAFF REPORTER

ADDIS ABABA - Foreign Affairs Minister Teye Atskeselassie has discussed with his Maltese Counterpart, Ian Borg, to strengthen bilateral relations between the two countries.

FM Teye had a fruitful meeting with Ian Borg, Minister of Foreign, European Affairs and Trade of the Republic of Malta, according to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The Minister's visit aimed at strengthening diplomatic ties and fostering cooperation between the two nations.

Accordingly, discussions focused on strengthening bilateral relations and exchange of views on issues of common concern, it was indicated.

Amb. Teye congratulates the Government of Malta for its Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) chairmanship.

He also appreciated the government of Malta for playing a positive role in



multilateral forums including the UN Security Council by taking a reasonable and balanced position on pressing global peace and security issues.

During the visit, Minister Borg engaged in high-level meetings with key Ethiopian

government officials including Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD), to explore opportunities for further collaboration and partnership.

This discussion would allow deepening the

See Ethiopia , Malta .. page 3

Manufacturing industry: A gear shifter for structural change

Page 6

Managing transboundary aquifers for peace

Page 7

GERD: A symbol of national unity, resilience

Page 8

News



Japan to provide software training for 10, 000 Ethiopians

BY MISGANAW ASNAKE

ADDIS ABABA - Japan has planned to provide software training program for about 10, 000 Ethiopian students, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) said.

JICA has graduated 50 students last Sunday in the first phase software training program in collaboration with the Ministry of Innovation and Technology, Safaricom Ethiopia and Sumitomo Corporation to foster innovation and address youth employment problem in Ethiopia.

Approached by *The Ethiopian Herald* JICA Ethiopia Chief Representative, Kensuke Oshima stated that the Agency has planned to provide software training for about 10, 000 students in Ethiopia in the second phase of the program.

He stressed that Japan is ready to share technology-related knowledge to Ethiopia and committed to support the country to achieve its digital transformation and economic development goals.

“This program will create a more skilled workforce and a more competitive economy, and make a real difference in the students’ life in general”.

In the past six months, 50 talented trainees which have backgrounds in computer science and STEM disciplines have completed intensive software training program that guided by the expertise of Gebeya, they have acquired technical skills and developed the essential soft skills needed for success in the digital world, according to the Representative.

This program is instrumental in shaping the future of Ethiopia’s digital landscape, and the graduates who have emerged as skilled software professionals will contribute for economic development of Ethiopia, he said.

“Ethiopian government is on the journey to achieve vision of Digital Ethiopia 2025. This policy aims to harness the power of technology, innovation, and digital literacy to drive economic growth, enhance public services, and empower citizens. Thus, training witnesses a significant step toward realizing and shape the digital landscape of Ethiopia the vision through the Digital Talent Development Program,” he said.

Beyond this, he stated that JICA is also supporting Ethiopia in the areas of agriculture, small and medium enterprises.

He added the graduated students whether they choose to work in software development, data science, cyber security, or entrepreneurship they are part of a global community of change makers.

President Calls for Helping People with down syndrome

• *Bureau adds 14 special needs education support centers*

BY ESSEYE MENGISTE

ADDIS ABABA-Educating and helping citizens with Down syndrome is crucial for fostering a brighter future for Ethiopia, President Sahlework Zewde said, calling for stakeholders’ active involvement.

The President made the above remark while attending the marking of the International Day of Down Syndrome by the Debora Foundation recently.

Speaking at the occasion, Sahlework stated that educating and helping citizens with Down syndrome is a way to build Ethiopia’s a rosy future. “If we support citizens with Down syndrome, their mental development and give them the opportunity, they can be the asset for Ethiopia’s better tomorrow.”

She added, “We should do our level best to help children with Down syndrome and make efforts as much as we can to keep their mental development.”

The UN’s recent report indicated that the estimated incidence of Down syndrome is between one in 1,000 to one in 1,100 live births worldwide. Each year, approximately 3,000 to 5,000 children are born with this chromosome disorder.

In the related development, the Addis Ababa Education Bureau has established 14 support centers to improve special needs education and make the service more



President Sahlework Zewde

accessible in the capital.

Bureau’s Special Needs Inclusive Education and Regular Education Director Daniel Asrat told the Ethiopia Press Agency (EPA) that consolidated efforts are underway to make special needs education accessible in the capital. Earlier there were 72 support centers in the city and now 14 centers have been built and put into service.

Schools will receive resources and training to support special needs students aiming for inclusive and formal education.

According to him, by spending 1.8 billion Birr, the resources that are needed by all special needs students are being met. Accordingly, it is managed to provide braille paper for the blind, hearing head for the hearing impaired students, and



Daniel Asrat

wheelchairs and crutches have been provided to mobility impaired students.

The director further mentioned that one of the obstacles to making special needs education accessible in a proper way is a lack of accountability. “To solve this challenge, it is crucial to make special needs education inclusive, independent and to be managed by experts.”

Noting the provision of resources to private schools that have been offering special needs education, Daniel indicated that consolidated efforts are carried out to help students achieve good results in their studies. “Also, during exams, we have given extra time to students with special needs depending on the nature of their disability.”



Dire Dawa accelerating 2.6 bln Birr worth water project

BY TSEGAYE TILAHUN

ADDIS ABABA –The construction of the 2.6 billion Birr worth water supply expansion project will be completed within a year, said Dire Dawa City Administration.

Administration Water and Sewerage Authority Executive Manager Mehamed Musse told the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) that the construction of the 2.6 billion Birr worth potable water expansion project has reached 50 percent completion.

He indicated that the project which is designed to enhance city’s clean water coverage is expected to be finalized within a year.

The City Administration has funded the project as it is striving to improve water supply by expanding water and sanitation infrastructures, he stressed.

Accordingly, he said, the drilling of 12 water wells ranged from 230 to 530 meters will be completed within a year and the procurement of pipe facilities that convey water about 57 kilometers has been done successfully.

Mehamed mentioned that the construction of electromechanical and civil works is underway since last year.

According to the Manager, Dire Dawa was not only challenged by the shortage of water supply, it is also facing quality problems due

to the presence of calcium carbonate in the area.

The completion of the project would increase capacity to address the growing demand for clean water, he noted.

For his part, Project Office Head Abdulaziz Mohammed said that the completion of the project is expected to increase city’s clean water supply by 25% thereby reaching the total potable water coverage 75% from the current 50%.

The construction of the project would enable to meet the growing demand for potable water in the surroundings of the free trade area, industrial parks and dry ports, expressed.

News

GirlTechs project graduates women in STEM

BY STAFF REPORTER

ADDIS ABABA— The GirlTechs project, a groundbreaking initiative aimed at empowering female high school learners in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) education, reached a momentous milestone with the graduation ceremony of its inaugural cohort.

Spearheaded by President Sahlework Zewde, and supported by Coca-Cola Beverages Africa - Ethiopia (CCBA - Ethiopia) together with Honeywell in Ethiopia, the GirlTechs project has made a significant contribution to the education of the 1,000 participants in Addis Ababa and Sebeta, as to the Press Release issued for *The Ethiopian Herald*.

The project, implemented by iCog Anyone Can Code, has been instrumental in bridging the gender gap in STEM fields, equipping young women with the knowledge and skills needed to thrive in the digital age.

Over the course of two months, it was stated that participants underwent intensive training in computer programming and coding, facilitated by expert instructors and Information and Communications Technology (ICT) teachers.

Thus, the graduation ceremony celebrates the remarkable achievements of the project's participants, highlighting their dedication, perseverance, and newfound proficiency in



computer literacy and coding. Through the establishment of coding clubs to carry the work forward, the GirlTechs project ensures the sustainability of its impact.

The GirlTechs project exemplifies the transformative power of collaboration and shared commitment to gender equality and youth empowerment. CCBA - Ethiopia and Honeywell in Ethiopia, together with iCog-ACC, have demonstrated their unwavering dedication to fostering inclusive education and creating opportunities for young women to thrive in the

digital era.

As to the PR, the GirlTechs vision was driven by Honeywell and President Sahlework Zewdu, who in 2019 initiated a commitment to empowering young girls in technology. Over three impactful years and three remarkable cohorts, GirlTechs has flourished. The first cohort, launched at the Hope for the Fatherless Group Home and Life Training Center, provided brand new laptops and a computer lab, along with 100 hours of coding training for young learners in grades 3 to 8.

Moreover, the second cohort expanded to public

high schools in Addis Ababa, benefiting 500 female learners by nurturing their computer skills in coding, robotics, and game creation.

The third cohort was also said to be aimed to strengthen and amplify GirlTechs' impact by not only benefiting learners but also empowering multiple teachers and establishing dozens of coding clubs, reaching 1000 high school girls.

The GirlTechs project continues to unlock new opportunities for young girls, paving the way for a brighter and more equitable future for Ethiopia's future workforce, it said.

Ethiopia , Malta to deepen...

understanding and friendship between the people of Ethiopia and Malta. The two countries are working together to enhance

their cooperation in various fields. They have also signed Memorandum of Understandings on aviation, tourism, and diplomatic training.

It is to be recalled that Ethio-Malta Investment and Trade Promotion Forum was held on 12 March 2024 in Addis Ababa where

30 Maltese companies and 150 companies from Ethiopia took part in the joint business forum.

Ethiopia calls...

act against the citizens of the Russian Federation, according to the Ambassador.

The heinous terrorist attack that has killed [over 137] and wounded so many innocent Russian citizens was occurred at Crocus City Hall complex near Moscow. The Security Services of the Russian Federation are taking all necessary efforts possible and detained 11 suspects including four terrorists who have participated in the shooting directly at the incident, he indicated.

All nations around the globe should work collectively in order to enhance cooperation among them [...] terrorism knows no borders between the countries, he underlined.

In light of the incident, the government of Ethiopia (and Ethiopian Embassy in Moscow) has already expressed their respective sympathies and condolences to the bereaved families and to the Government and People of the Russian Federation. The two sisterly countries are working closely to strengthen

their cooperation on many issues including security matters, he highlighted.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs also issued a press statement on Saturday. "Terrorism is a grave danger to mankind and requires the concerted effort of countries around the world to prevent such loss of life. Ethiopia stands in solidarity with the Government and People of the Russian Federation in this difficult time and it can count on Ethiopia's full support in the fight against terrorism," the release stated.

Association seeks diplomatic...

government's huge infrastructure development projects of the past few years are creating a conducive environment for international visitors.

As a primary agenda, diplomats and embassies situated in various countries are also highly expected to contribute to the tourism industry and promote the trends of tourist inflow in the country. "Like ambassadors, we are currently undertaking multifaceted activities to bring about a significant shift in the sector."

Daniel also suggested that the tourism ministry is the highest responsible agent that is expected to advocate and change foreigner's state of mind concerning peace and security issues.

Association's former Chairperson NahomAdmasu on his part stated that the

absence of" travel insurance is one of the main reasons for the decrements of foreign visitors.

Previous travel restrictions and generalizing of instabilities that once occurred in some parts of the country as a state collapse has been imposing their negative effect to this end, he elaborated.

Due to the lack of propelled and well-streamlined tourist management schemes, Ethiopian diplomats should exert much emphasis on lifting the restrictions for the better development of the tourism industry, Nahom emphasized. "So far, the number of European tourists who came to the country was high, but these days their participation has reduced."



"The association stands firm and committed enough to discharging its responsibilities more than ever to support visitors who are keen to visit Ethiopia's tourist attractions." He called on the collaboration of different stakeholders including the Ministry of Tourism, Ethiopian embassies and Airlines with tour operators to enable the country to get sufficient benefit from the sector.

Military officers...

as soldiers," she said, adding that such kind of training would play a significant role in creating an able, committed and disciplined army that can effectively fulfill its mission.

"The training adds significant knowledge for me and my colleagues and helps us to understand and protectively respond to the geopolitical issues. Such type of training has also multilayered importance for officers in revitalizing our commitment, enhancing our political awareness and helping us to keep ourselves within the rapidly-changing military knowledge and science."

BG Yeshimbet further stated that the training helps the officers to know the national, regional, and international orders of politics, economy, and diplomacy that have strategic importance for the defense of the country.

Sharing the above rationale, Colonel Abera Deriba, from the Defense Health Department said, "I attained the three-month training and acquainted a significant lesson in the process. The training is crucial to me and my colleagues in filling our skill and knowledge gap, and paving the way for us to share our knowledge and experience."

Noting the significance of continuous capacity-building training for soldiers, Col. Abera emphasized that such kind of knowledge-based preparation helps the latter to attain the desired results in the field. "Also, the training gives impetus to the officer's attempts to fulfill duties at the required level."

Opinion

Enhancing international collaboration for ensuring sea access, promoting regional integration

BY ADDISALEM MULAT

As the memorandum of understanding (MoU) signed between Ethiopia and Somaliland plays a huge role in bringing the Horn of African region together and change the lives of all and sundry, each and every nation should join hands for its implementation shorn of batting an eye. In addition, the wider international community should encourage the deal in view of the fact that it serves both sides to bring regional economic integration.

Ethiopia which is populated with more than 120 million people has been devoid of access to a seaport. Notwithstanding the fact that the country possesses immeasurable untapped natural resources, it lacks access to a seaport, which is the backbone of development and growth. Reasoning from this fact, attaining the desired goal is turning out to be easier said than done for the country.

In a similar vein, as the envisioned target of Ethiopia is eradicating poverty from every nook and cranny of the country, changing the lives of the general public and taking the country to the next level of growth, every nation under the umbrella of the Horn of Africa should join hands for putting the pact into practice at the earliest possible moment.

As there are no motives behind the MoU signed between the two parties, the Horn of African nations should distance themselves from naysayers that have been working around the clock to mystify the international community as a whole with their usual cooked up stories that do not reflect the prevailing reality on the ground.

To everyone's surprise, some worrywarts have been distorting facts by saying the pact will pose a threat to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of other nations. They have continued spreading fake news over and over again.

As commitment and collaboration of each and every nation in the region plays a paramount role, authorities concerned must move heaven and earth for its implementation and change the lives of the general public in the Horn region as soon as possible.

As the MoU signed between Ethiopia and Somaliland is progressing in the right direction, everybody in the region and beyond should combine efforts for the realization of the pact at the earliest possible moment.

Speaking to the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA), Wollo University History Instructor and researcher Alemayehu Erkyihun (PhD) said in recent times, access to the sea would have a broader importance for Ethiopia and would help ensure enduring stability. Having seaports should be seen beyond the economic horizon and it is instrumental to prevail stable political landscape, sustainable socio-economic development and nurturing good neighborliness.

"As Ethiopia has been challenged by high



cost of living and soaring unemployment, access to seaports would be instrumental to ease such daunting challenges. Also, the sovereign use port facilitates for the country's import-export trade and creates a significant number of jobs for the youth."

Considering the geopolitics of the Horn of Africa whereby global powers are an intensified race to military bases and the subsequent militarization of the region, Ethiopia's aspiration to a direct access to the Red Sea is a timely and viable move.

Ethiopian government has made commendable job in informing coastal neighbors about how youth unemployment and rapid population growth intensify the country's demand for seaports. Not only access to the sea has economic and political implications, but also it is highly intertwined with Ethiopia's historical identity as the Red Sea and its ports were centers of the country's civilization.

Unquestionably, Ethiopia had been one of the ancient independent civilizations in the world and it was an influential actor in East Africa with strong connection with the then global powers through the Red Sea. A number of countries from Europe, Asia, and South America had firm ties with Ethiopia and this clearly indicated that the latter was solely controlling the Red Sea region.

Now the fashion to execute political ambition through a military means is changed and the attempt to realize Ethiopia's port aspiration through force is absolutely wrong. Hence, the government is expected to forge a meticulous diplomatic approach and table a win-win alternative to convince coastal to embrace Ethiopia's appeal.

Following the deal, Ethiopians and Somalilanders have been expressing their infinite happiness. In a recent interview with The Ethiopian Herald, Mohamed Hussien Jama Rambo, member of Somaliland house of parliament with regard to the issue said Somaliland is not just dedicated but unwavering in its commitment to implement the sea access deal it entered with Ethiopia recently.

Though a lot have been said on the subject of the pact signed between the two parties, Somaliland has expressed its commitment to implement the sea access deal.

Speaking of the reaction of Somaliland public, he said that Somaliland people are happy with the agreement. They welcomed it and expressed joy. Somalilanders are ready for business and are committed to engaging with their neighbors closely to ensure integration. That is enshrined in the constitution.

"We are accustomed to pressures from entities that do not appreciate our development. Yet, we resist these pressures, demonstrating our resilience. We honor agreements. Somaliland will not bow down to any pressure," he stressed.

Commenting on the statements of some entities like the Arab League, he said that the agreement between Somaliland and Ethiopia does not concern the Arab League, and they should not waste their time on such issues. Previously, Somalia objected Somaliland's deals with DP World and the U.S., but the objection did not work. It did not impact how these deals were implemented, he added.

In the present circumstances, people from all walks of life have been expressing their support in a number of respects and in a variety of ways and in a number of respects.

In a press statement issued recently, Ethiopian Citizens for Social Justice (ECSJ) stated that Ethiopia's landlocked status of the past thirty years and plus has brought enormous social, political and economic challenges. The provisional government's ill-fated decision that was inattentive to Ethiopia's long-term strategic matters has profoundly impacted its economy and security.

In the statement, ECSJ also expressed its advocacy for robust economic and political cooperation with neighboring states. It is crucial to align this cooperation with international laws and respect for national sovereignty. "It recognizes the necessity of equitable access to maritime gateways. For landlocked countries like Ethiopia, this is not only an economic imperative but also a

matter of national security and survival."

Article 125 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea provides landlocked States the right of access to and from the sea and to exercise rights relating to the freedom of the high seas and the common heritage of mankind. Section two of the convention stipulates.

Consistent with this international convention, the Ethiopian government has sought, by diplomatic and peaceful means, to advance the country's access to the sea. "A notable development in this regard is the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Somaliland," the statement elaborated.

Ethiopia, along with several other nations, has established a diplomatic presence in Somaliland for a long time but has stopped short of formal recognition of the latter's sovereignty, the statement remarked.

The pact has been winning the hearts and minds of the general public on the grounds that it plays a huge role in taking the region to the next level of accomplishment. If nations in the Horn of Africa work in close collaboration, they will for sure make poverty unfolding in the region history at the earliest possible time.

Apart from getting rid of poverty in the region, the MoU will help eradicate terrorists' cells from every corner of the region no matter what the challenges may be. Taking the aforesaid reality on the ground, pertinent bodies should work in close association for the realization of the agreement in the foreseeable future.

The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between Ethiopia and Somaliland will pave the way for Ethiopia to access the sea and diversify the economic opportunities of the two sides, Juba University, Peace and Security Studies Institute Professor TerMajok told local media lately.

He urged other African countries to start cooperation with each other this way and do business to facilitate trade, development, and regional integration and create new economic opportunities.

"You will not have regional integration if we don't start interacting with each other," Majok underscored, pointing out that recognizing the growing population and economy, Ethiopia has been trying to diversify its access to the sea to enhance its import-export trade.

For Ethiopia, it is a great move. Ethiopia will realize its economic growth because you will have access to the sea and from the port after the destination, the goods that come to this country will boost the ongoing economic challenge that we are having and it will actually build the relationship in terms of businesses, in terms of connectivity between people and it will also enhance the already existing corporations.

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

Editorial

Gearing up for regional economic integration

The African continent has now understood the significance of integration, peculiarly of economic one, to do away with dearth via amalgamating trading facilities and required commodities, among others. So as to further fuel such an audacious trek towards economic sovereignty, Ethiopia is set to commence trading of commodities under the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). It is, like other African countries, currently employing preliminary activities to commence commodities trial exchange of goods with selected counterpart nations.

Besides, the country, through its ministry of Trade and Regional Integration of course, has projected to nullify 90% import taxes of agricultural and industrial products within ten years. It is also reported that some 7% of goods are approved to be nullified in the long term and other 3% strategic items exempted from the list that is believed to give policy space for the given nation framed as per the common framework agreement. Taking advantage of such a lucrative means, Ethiopia has approved 90% of commodity tariffs for 6,000 goods to AfCFTA.

When this trade agreement framework is put in place in full swing, it'll become world's leading free trade zone that realizes the African Union's Agenda 2063 goal of becoming economically vibrant and influential continent.

It has been repeatedly stated that Ethiopia has made the necessary preparations to put in place the trial trading phase and implement the framework agreement through streamlined strategies thereby benefiting itself and the continent out of the intertwined continental trading.

It could also be quite legitimate to mention that the African Union member states have recently endorsed Ethiopia's tariff line poised to exchange goods within the AfCFTA. Furthermore, Ethiopia's effort to joining the World Trade Organization (WTO) is inching closer to reality as the potential benefits of WTO membership help the country expand global trade opportunities. This is a golden opportunity to further beef up trade equilibrium, too.

Since the country is to make trade processes accessible and competitive via establishing fair trade practices, its MoTRI is working hard aiming at providing exceptional services and support to local investors. It has also focused on enhancing both human and technological capacities within the sector thereby creating an effective system that ensures benefits for producers, consumers, and the business community in general.

True, Ethiopia has developed firm commitment towards fostering a favorable business environment, promoting economic growth, and positioning itself as a key player in the international trade arena.

So long as the AfCFTA is a development voucher that will boost intra-Africa trade and help reduce poverty across the continent when fully implemented, all nations of the continent have to move in unison and well cement their ties.

The continent should get ready to reap optimal benefit out of it as African economic integrated agendum can be made real through promoting trade across the continent and promptly fostering collaboration so as to keep proportion in global trade symmetry.

In a nutshell, Ethiopia has taken the right track to drive sustainable development wheel well, confidently attract foreign investment so as to contribute a lot to the overall prosperity and competitiveness of its economy.

Thus it has to embark on the streamlined trade system and licensing, trade integration and export promotion, and quality, infrastructure development and corroboration. The AfCFTA process in the continent also needs to be properly and thoroughly implemented with the right infrastructure and logistics to swiftly move products thereby running efficient trade. Ethiopia is quite ready to play its part along this line.



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Opinion

Solidarity against the ever worsening global threat of terrorism

BY STAFF REPORTER

The botched terror attack in a concert house in Moscow, Russia has left the world shocked. It is the latest deadly hit by terrorists who have been around the world for decades. Various sources indicate that about At least 137 people were killed in the Friday assault, when gunmen armed with automatic weapons opened fire at Crocus City Hall. While some of the assailants have been put under control and are facing justice, the efforts to investigate the brutal crime is further on the pipeline.

Similar attacks were very common some years back in various countries. The forms and the magnitude may vary but many countries in various corners of the world, including Ethiopia, have tasted the attack. "Ethiopia extends its heartfelt condolences to the families of those killed in the terrorist attack and to the Government of the Russian Federation" Ministry of Foreign Affairs expressed.

The Ministry further noted that terrorism is a grave danger to mankind and requires the concerted effort of countries around the world to prevent such loss of lives.

Many countries of the world, including Ethiopia have shown their strong solidarity with Russian people and families of the victims as they have denounced the barbaric attack in the strongest terms.

While many other endeavors already underway are worthwhile the solidarity against these evil that besets human society in the 21st century is mandatory. Such terrorist acts may show a growing and declining trend in different times; but they may not be alleviated as easily as some countries may perceive it. Such terrorist forces lurk in some places and times and wait until they can change tactics and switch the potential victims. Otherwise they always continue to haunt human society without any discrimination of race, religions ... etc. Therefore, as one of the worst victims of terrorism in the world Ethiopia should also continue its leading role in the fight against this brutality.

According to Security Council report, the terrorist threat is a significant one in the Horn of Africa. While Al-Shabaab has been a long-standing problem there, the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) extended its presence into Somalia in 2015. As the Secretary-General noted in his 31 May report on "the threat posed by ISIL to international peace and security and the range of United Nations efforts in support of Member States in countering the threat," member states have underscored that

the threat of ISIL affiliates in east Africa extends beyond Somalia "into the neighboring states where they seek to recruit, establish bases, and conduct attacks" (S/2017/467).

One of the wrost threats to the country and to the region at large comes from the long ingrained terrorist group called Al-Shabaab. Al-Shabaab was founded in 2004 and though long considered a terrorist organization by many countries, including Australia, Canada, Norway, Sweden and the UK, was finally formally designated as a terrorist organization by the U.S. Government on February 29th, 2008. (academicus.edu)

Al Shabaab is characterized as a very decentralized organization regarding the establishment of its agenda and goals. Its ranking members are from a number of disparate clans and the organization is susceptible to clan politics, internal divisions and shifting alliances. The majority of its fighters are interested mostly in the nationalistic battle against the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) in Mogadishu and currently are not supportive of global Jihad, although high ranking leadership is believed to have trained in Afghanistan and orchestrated the bombings in Kampala, Uganda, on July 11th, 2010.

The matter should not be considered as a sole or frequent problem of either Africa in general or the horn of Africa in particular. The problem is a threat to the entire world as it gradually launches its attacks against every one step by step. This has been demonstrated all through out the times it emerged as a security threat.

Speaking through a representative to the security council in 2022, UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres said "In today's hyper-connected world the spread of terrorism in Africa is "not a concern for African Member States alone".

"The challenge belongs to us all. Countering international terrorism requires effective multilateral responses", he noted.

From the climate emergency to armed conflict and poverty and inequality to lawless cyberspace, and the uneven recovery from COVID-19, she also pointed out that terrorism is converging with other threats.

For a holistic, comprehensive approach, the deputy UN chief cited the New Agenda for Peace – part of the Our Common Agenda report.

Amidst increasing polarization, she maintained that it proposes ways to address risks and revitalize our collective peace and security system.

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

Business & Economy

Manufacturing industry: A gear shifter for structural change

BY ABEBE WOLDEGIORGIS

50 years ago, as learnt from economists, the Asian tiger countries such as Taiwan, South Korea, Singapore and Malaysia, which have currently been attaining economic advancement, were relying on entirely an agrarian economy. However, after decades of strong commitment for the expansion of manufacturing bedecked with appealing structural change, they have been in a position to immensely reduce the number of labor force engaged in farming and raise the same in industries and service sectors.

Putting high emphasis in technology and updated innovation based on the context of their nation; they were able to achieve glittering success. Educating the people with technological knowledge, the enhancement of innovation and creativity helped them for achieving development and the countries are still registering uninterrupted economic growth. Currently, these countries have established export driven economy and have become the manufacturing hub of the world.

Though Ethiopia has traveled distant in chronology, yet it appeared to be one of the emerging countries in the world and its mainstay of the economy is agriculture. The country has also been highly vulnerable to extreme weather conditions and in time of drought and heavy rainfall, crop production is critically affected in which resulted in the reduction of yield.

Nonetheless, there are initiatives and figment of bright hope due to the concerted effort of the government and relevant actors to get rid of such shortcomings. The government, since long ago, has taken various measures and among others, enhancing the utilization of inputs, providing extension service and introducing cluster farming can be mentioned in these regard and so far encouraging results have been registered. The crop yield per hectare is increased and wastage of crop in post-harvest time is also reduced.

However, to attain sustainable development along with improving agriculture sector, expanding the manufacturing sector has been taken as a way out.

Other countries' experiences indicate that the expansion of manufacturing brings multifaceted benefit to the society and to the nation at large. It creates job opportunity to hundreds of thousands. Creating linkage vertical integration, auction market and value chain in the agriculture sector boost export trade. Substitute import and play pivotal role for the advancement of innovation and creativity.

For accommodating manufacturing, the government spent billions of Dollars and constructed industry parks. Attracted by the new development, foreign and local businessmen invest their money, share experience and knowledge and began operation. Agro-processing industries, leather and leather producing manufacturing and textile industries are hosted in the industry parks. The sector created jobs for thousands.

The number of parks has grown to 55 % from last year's 10 %, according to Industrial Parks



Development Corporation. The government of Ethiopia established 13 industrial parks specialized in various manufacturing sectors including textile, agro-processing and pharmaceutical with the vision to make the country a leading manufacturing hub by enhancing import substitution and export trade.

Industrial Parks Development Corporation CEO, Aklilu Tadesse, said the manufacturing industry is one of the sectors that have been given prior attention in the homegrown economic reform agenda of the country. The economic reform program is also linked to higher educational institutions with the industries that students can get practical trainings. As it is understood, as compared to the agriculture sector in the county's context, the manufacturing sector utilizes relatively well trained and skilled people. Therefore, technological colleges supply trained human power to the sector. Evidences have shown that many college graduates have been employed in the sector.

Currently, the number of technical colleges both from the public and private sectors are increasing and their student enrolment rate is also growing. Students trained by professions such as electricity, welding, mechanics operation, drafting and designing are absorbed by the emerging manufacturing. In fact, there is still discrepancy between the number of the industries labor demand and the supply from academic institutions. The supply of labor is surpassed the demand but still the industries are creating job opportunities to thousands of graduates.

According to Aklilu, over the past four years, a number of measures have been taken to revive the industry citing the efforts carried out in enhancing the engagement of domestic producers in parks, substituting imported goods, and fostering new business relationships.

In addition, policies have been amended with the aim to bring about enabling situation for developers to produce for export and domestic markets with the involvement of domestic investors in industrial parks.

However, the power interruption throughout

the countries has hampered the industries not to produce in their full capacity. Hence, completing the ongoing energy development projects on time and resolving the problem is vital.

The manufacturing shades located in Bole Lemi, Adama, Dire Dawa and Semera industrial parks are fully occupied by investors. Most of the industrial parks are located adjacent to boulevards and the Ethio-Djibouti rail way line which put them in advantageous position in terms of easily exporting their products and transporting imported goods utilized as inputs with low transactional costs.

According to Aklilu, efforts are being exerted to expand market destinations in America, Europe, Africa and Asia and noted that encouraging and supporting the local investors, increasing exports and expanding market access are the next priority areas.

True, the manufacturing sector is taken as viable sector for boosting the nation's export volume through value addition. Ethiopia's main export items have been remained to be agricultural products in their raw form. However, no one can deny the progresses in value addition since recently and thereby there is an opportunity to penetrate the oversea market.

Therefore, through linking agriculture with agro-industries, producing value added products and exporting and earning better price should be taken as a priority agenda.

As it is well understood, Ethiopia is endowed with abundant natural resources. The country is the second populous country in Africa next to Nigeria with more than 120 million people. The population can serve both as labor force and as consumer which create market opportunity to the producing industries.

The nation has also possessed excess arable lands and abundant surface and underground water, and by combining these resources, cultivating and producing crops, fruits and vegetables can be supplied to agro industries and utilized as inputs. Besides, products can be supplied both to the domestic and foreign markets which again enhance the nation's foreign currency earning.

The nation also has various agro ecologies and vast lands conducive for sugar plantations which can create job opportunities for hundreds of thousands both in plantation farms and sugar factories. Such venture can attract both local and foreign investors and so far the government strides in such venture.

According to the Ministry of Industry, the nation is still not meeting the domestic sugar demand and to fill the gap the country spends billions of Dollars annually for the importation of sugar. Therefore, substituting imports must be prioritized through enhancing production. Sugar production can play pivotal role in supplying its product both to the local and the foreign markets.

Ethiopia has also the largest cattle population in Africa but as the cattle rearing practice is more of traditional; its contribution to the nation's economy is less than the expected. Hence, to improve productivity of the sector, Ministry of Agriculture and Ethiopian Agricultural Research Institute have tried their level best and currently, conducting a profound research and reproduced hybrid better cattle species which have high milk and meat yields capacity and supplied to farmers.

When the sector is modernized and well exploited, not only boosts meat and milk production but also plays pivotal role by supplying inputs to leather and leather products industries and beef factories. In the urban areas, the demand for milk and meat is growing from time to time and if the sector supplies sufficient products to the urban centers it can tap the growing markets.

As mentioned above, the government showed its resoluteness to attain economic development and reach to the middle income by the year 2030. Cognizant of the value of expanding manufacturing for attaining structural change and improve the living standard of the population, various measures have been taken which the construction of industrial parks is one of the instances.

Investors have obtained shades accommodated by banking and other facilities such as electric power supply and updated internet services and such endeavor will be continued in the future.

In the Sphere of Diplomacy



Transparent, fair policies and agreements tailored to the equitable sharing of groundwater can mitigate potential conflicts. Credit: Charles Mpaka/IPS

Managing transboundary aquifers for peace

Like surface waters, groundwater resources frequently cross international boundaries, potentially igniting disputes among nations that rely on this essential resource. Disagreements over shared groundwater can arise from various issues, such as inequitable resource distribution, competing water needs and economic dependencies, governance challenges, and the varying effects of climate change on water availability.

Effectively managed transboundary aquifers have the potential to nurture goodwill and collective action among nations, whereas mismanagement could lead to conflicts and negatively affect the sustainable utilization of these water reserves.

Effectively managed transboundary aquifers have the potential to nurture goodwill and collective action among nations, whereas mismanagement could lead to conflicts and negatively affect the sustainable utilization of these water reserves.

Therefore, it is crucial to have robust governance strategies in place for fair and sustainable resource distribution. Open and transparent communication among nations, coupled with cooperative initiatives such as mutual monitoring and knowledge exchange, is essential to alleviate tensions and ensure the responsible use of groundwater.

By embracing such collaborative measures, states can move towards a more peaceful and cooperative management of shared groundwater resources.

In the Southern African region, groundwater is a lifeline for most of the population. Estimates suggest that over 70% of roughly 350 million inhabitants depend on it as their primary water source.

UNESCO's data reveal a stark reliance on groundwater, with 60% of the rural populace

and 40% of their urban counterparts turning to subterranean supplies for daily water needs.

These figures not only illuminate the fundamental role of groundwater in sustaining livelihoods but also underscore the need for its judicious management, especially when it comes to shared resources across borders.

The high dependency on groundwater for such a large population mandates a collaborative and sustainable management approach to prevent disputes and ensure water security for both present and future generations in Southern Africa.

Indeed, fostering peace among nations sharing groundwater resources calls for proactive and integrated strategies. Key among these is the creation of robust governance mechanisms designed to manage these resources fairly and sustainably.

Transparent, fair policies and agreements tailored to the equitable sharing of groundwater can mitigate potential conflicts. Additionally, maintaining open and participatory communication channels between member states is instrumental in addressing issues and negotiating solutions that benefit all parties involved.

This dialogue should aim to build a consensus and trust, which is vital for cooperation and long-term peace. Implementing such measures can promote a collaborative environment where shared groundwater resources are a bond rather than a barrier between states.

The Southern African Development Community has taken proactive steps to address the challenges associated with the transboundary nature of groundwater resources.

The SADC Protocol on Shared Watercourses is a key instrument designed to foster cooperation and sustainable management of shared watercourses, including surface water and

groundwater. The protocol's objectives are to promote the equitable and reasonable utilization of water resources, the sustainable development of those resources, and coordinated water resources management, including the protection of the environment.

Furthermore, establishing the SADC Groundwater Management Institute by Member States as a Centre of Excellence for sustainable groundwater management signifies a strong regional commitment to addressing groundwater issues.

The institute aims to enhance the capacity of Member States in the sustainable development and management of groundwater resources, to reduce the vulnerability of SADC Member States to impacts of climate variability, and to improve groundwater governance in the region.

This is achieved through promoting information sharing, providing training and research opportunities, and supporting the implementation of groundwater management policies and strategies across the SADC region. These efforts reduce potential conflicts and enhance peace among Member States by ensuring that groundwater resources are managed effectively and equitably.

In the SADC region, there are approximately 30 Transboundary Aquifers. The Eastern Kalahari Basin Transboundary Aquifer stretches across Botswana and Zimbabwe and is a prime example of transboundary aquifer collaboration.

To effectively govern this essential shared resource, these countries have established cooperative frameworks and crafted pivotal agreements.

Pioneering these efforts is the 'Joint Aquifer Management Strategy', an initiative headed by the SADC Groundwater Management Institute. This strategic framework is dedicated to fostering sustainable practices in groundwater

management, ensuring equitable access, and underpinning cooperation between bordering nations.

It provides comprehensive guidelines for systematic groundwater monitoring, equitable resource allocation, and robust conflict resolution mechanisms, setting a precedent for transboundary water cooperation.

The SADC Groundwater Management Institute marked another significant achievement in advancing cooperation among nations sharing transboundary aquifers with the initiation of the Conjunctive Transboundary Water Resource Management Project in the Shire River Basin, a vital watercourse traversing Malawi and Mozambique.

This groundbreaking project yielded two pivotal documents: the Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis Report and the Joint Action Plan. These frameworks are instrumental in charting a course for both countries towards the sustainable stewardship of the Transboundary Aquifer.

Transboundary aquifers epitomize vital water reserves and are a peace and international cooperation conduit. Through joint stewardship and equitable utilization of these groundwater resources, nations chart a course towards stability and shared affluence.

As we observe World Water Day, we celebrate these subterranean reserves that stitch together the fabric of nations, underscoring their pivotal role in fostering harmony, resilience, and sustainable progression across boundaries.

In honoring our interconnected water heritage, let us renew our dedication to a future where water serves as a bridge to concord and flourishing for all individuals. United in our efforts, we can elevate transboundary aquifers to beacons of hope and symbols in our collective journey towards a secure, water-sustained world.

(SOURCE: INTER PRESS SERVICE)

Law & Politics

GERD: A symbol of national unity, resilience

BY FITSUM GETACHEW

It might have taken 13 years but in the end, the mission can be said accomplished. The Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam, GERD, is now not a fantasy but a concrete reality visible on the ground. The construction of the GERD has passed several stages full of uncertainties and challenges. But among the most contentious was the one that put pressure on the Ethiopian people and the government trying to criminalize them by trying to hurt the downstream countries. Egypt and Sudan along with some of their friends and allies have undertaken a huge propaganda campaign that tried to isolate Ethiopia accusing it of preventing the water of the Nile River from reaching them.

Ethiopia had to use all its diplomatic means, mobilize all its friends and allies and leave no stone unturned to show to the world that it meant no harm to downstream countries. It had to engage international experts on water flows and Transboundary Rivers how the construction of a hydro dam cannot hamper the flow of water and that its only intention is to liberate its people from darkness. It is well known that more than fifty percent of the Ethiopian population still lives in darkness while for instance; Egyptians who rely on the Nile waters enjoy almost total brightness in terms of electric power. Ethiopia had to show to the world that the construction of the dam was its legitimate right as long as it did not inflict significant damage to downstream countries. Ethiopia had to repeatedly show that it has no intention of preventing water from following its usual course once the dam is full and is capable of turning the thirteen turbines that are intended to generate the power that Ethiopia desperately needs to continue with its economic growth trajectory. Everybody has seen that the water has continued to flow regularly and unabated.

Ethiopia is a country of more than one hundred twenty million people and the economy has been struggling to catch up with the growing demands of an increasing population. The country's needs for electric power have been growing continuously and the only remedy is the construction of such a huge dam as the GERD to catch up with the needs.

Ethiopia did have this plan for a long time but due to financial constraints, it could not realize its ambitious project. When it tried to approach international financial institutions such as the IMF and the World Bank and even rich countries that are historical allies for credit, it was rejected owing to the huge influence of downstream countries which presented their complaints that giving support to Ethiopia to build a huge dam on the Nile would be a security threat for them. Due to such recommendations, Ethiopia could not secure the funds needed to embark on this huge project. For decades hence the

GERD is considered as a symbol of Ethiopian sovereignty, Ethiopian independence and its resilient resistance to foreign interference

project had to be stalled on the shelves just as a dream.

Today, however, Ethiopia has reached a stage in which it can raise the necessary finance to build the dam on its own without asking for any sort of loans or concessions from outside. The government began to mobilize funds for the construction and once the project was launched Ethiopians stood by the side of the government contributing not only financially but also morally.

The GERD became a flagship project and the entire population began to feel as if it were its child to be nurtured and grown. Funds began to be gathered using every means available and eventually, after thirteen years, the dam reached the stage of a concrete and visible reality.

The construction of this dam however was not easy at all. It had lots of ups and downs including the negative meddling of political forces at the national level. Funds are abused and the choice of certain agents which were supposed to carry out certain sectors of the construction failed due to incapacity. This resulted in negatively affecting the smooth carrying out of the construction. With the change of government six years ago, the new administration had to take drastic decisions regarding the activities of the so-called METEC group which was involved in many of the shortcomings. At the same time, there were issues with the Italian construction company in charge of the construction. The delay in certain parts of the construction negatively affected the activities of the Italian company and the loss of money had to be covered by the Ethiopian government. Intense negotiations had to be conducted with the Italian company and the construction continued after long bargaining.

What is more, the opposition against the project continued with Egypt persistently accusing Ethiopia of trying to harm it by seizing and derailing the water of the Nile. Egypt claimed its hegemony on the

river citing the colonial pacts of the last century in which Ethiopia, the origin of the river, took no part. Ethiopia presented its opposition to the colonial pacts and claimed that it has the right to use the water that originates in its bosom. Egypt tried to bring the case to the UN alleging that this dam could be a cause for conflict and hence the peace of the region could be in danger. However, despite the repeated Egyptian campaigns at the UN Security Council, and its continuous propaganda mounted everywhere in the world, it could not stop the project.

Even if controversies continued to rage Ethiopia did not stop building the dam and progress continued to be recorded by the year. Ethiopians continued to rally behind their government as never before, comparing it to the campaign of the battle of Adwa. Internal political or other differences did not prevent them from uniting on this project. The dam became the symbol of sovereignty, unity and dignity of Ethiopia. Every Ethiopian contributed something to the dam in an attempt to put their lasting fingerprints on the project. There was a feeling of ownership and that has helped the dam take off and continue in its construction. A huge sacrifice was paid to realize this project and now Ethiopia has shown to the world that it can achieve whatever it wants to, if united. The GERD is considered not only as a source of pride of Ethiopia but also for all of Africa. It has shown to the world that developing countries can achieve whatever they want even if they are not 'supported' by international financial groups and rich countries.

The GERD is considered as a symbol of Ethiopian sovereignty, Ethiopian independence and its resilient resistance to foreign interference. Many of the international mainstream media had shown their partisanship with downstream countries never bothering to highlight the rationale of Ethiopia. But that too mattered little because it did not stop the train of construction.

As Ethiopia prepares to mark the 13th anniversary of the launching of the GERD, it cannot forget the ups and downs of the process of realizing this huge project. Today, Ethiopians can be proud of this achievement. Ethiopia can now export power, and clean energy at cheap prices to neighboring countries and this is one more marble in the efforts of the continent to achieve regional integration with economic cooperation.

The chief engineer of the GERD has said that the dam will very shortly begin to move five more turbines and generate more power. In the meantime, there are arrangements underway to export power to not only neighboring countries but also to countries as far as South Africa and Tanzania. Ethiopia is making huge leaps forward with the completion of this dam. And it cannot be considered only a simple

dam. It has a huge national meaning because it has shown that Ethiopians can achieve anything if they work in unison. They have shown that internal unity is a key in defeating any outside interference which tries to derail the nation from its sustained economic growth trajectory.

All those who were blindly siding with Egypt without considering a word of what Ethiopia was saying must now have realized that they got it all wrong. Ethiopia has only used its rights to develop its natural resources to change the livelihoods of its millions of citizens who live in darkness, just as any sovereign state is required to do. This is not only legitimate under international conventions, laws and protocols but also a mandatory obligation that governments must take care of their citizens.

Economic growth is the first manner of trying to address the problems of the lives of millions. Ethiopia's expanding industries desperately need power and this dam addresses exactly this need. Today Ethiopia can continue with its development growth trajectory with confidence. The GERD is a game changer and Ethiopia can be now cited as a country that can also stand on its own when necessary. We can say the completion of the GERD project is the beginning of a new era, a new epoch for Ethiopians and in a broader sense for the entire African continent that can be cited as an example of resilience and rejection of persistent challenges.

Ethiopia continues to underline that this project has nothing to do with trying to harm the life of downstream countries and water experts have testified that the project has no similar intent and any political manipulations to isolate Ethiopia and even try to shame it has not succeeded. Rather the GERD must be taken as a symbol of cooperation among riparian states, not a source of contention and enmity. It is a contribution to more economic integration among Africans and many states could benefit from cheap and clean energy thanks to the GERD.

Millions of Ethiopians who have been living in the dark despite the existence of such a huge resource as the Nile will now breathe some relief. Other similar projects can be achieved in any African country following the example of the GERD. Who said that Africa is condemned to always live in poverty and stretch its hands in search of favors and charity if it can mobilize its internal resources and use them with intelligence and wisdom? The GERD is just one example of such potential, an answer to certain long overdue questions. Africa may be a rich continent by the admission of every expert but it has not had the leaders it deserves which could be game changers leaving aside internal squabbles and rivalries, setting aside their egos. Africans must know that they should rise to the challenges awaiting them and free their people of backwardness.

Society

Discovering the enchanting haven for wildlife, natural beauty

BY HIZKEL HAILU

Nestled in the heart of Ethiopia, the East Hararge Zone has emerged as an alluring tourist destination, captivating the imaginations of both domestic and international travelers. With its breathtaking landscapes, rich cultural heritage, and abundant wildlife, this region beckons nature enthusiasts, adventure seekers, and those seeking an immersive experience in nature.

Among its many treasures, the *Babile* Elephants and *Kundudo* wild horses have become must-see attractions, offering visitors a unique opportunity to witness these majestic creatures in their natural habitats. As the zone administration actively promotes tourism, the local economy flourishes, and East Hararge emerges as an eco-tourism center, ready to charm visitors from around the world.

The Ethiopian Herald reached out Ayalew Takele, the Deputy Chief Administrator of East Hararge Zone, for his insights. According to him, the Zone is unveiling tourist attractions and inviting visitors to explore *Babile* Elephants forest and *Kundudo* wild horse mountain and enjoy the natural splendor. Besides, the zone is rapidly gaining recognition as a captivating tourist destination, he noted.

Elephants are well known for their close family ties and moving in group, in matriarch, led by the oldest female. In Ethiopia, especially, in the *Babile* Elephant Sanctuary (BES); few kilometers drive from Harar, it is common to see a parade of elephants moving from one side to the other.

Mentioning that the *Babile* Elephants forest is one of the crown jewels of the East Hararge Zone, he expressed that place as a sanctuary that plays host to more than 300 elephants. Stepping into this natural haven, visitors are transported into a world where elephants roam freely, showcasing their grace and power.

The forest offers a unique wildlife experience, allowing guests to observe these magnificent creatures up close, while maintaining a respectful distance that ensures the animals' well-being. The beauty of *Babile* lies not only in its elephant population but also in the harmonious ecosystem that flourishes within its boundaries. Visitors can witness the interplay between elephants and other wildlife, creating an unforgettable experience that fosters a deep appreciation for nature's wonders.

Situated 560km east of Addis Ababa and 25km south of the city of Harar, the sanctuary, which is an exceptional sanctuary where elephant populations are easier located, was first established in 1970 on an area of 6982 sq. km. According to him, the sanctuary is one of the highest rated areas and an important harbor for wildlife. Besides, the awesome valleys and the breathtaking landscape are also the other attraction of the site.

For those seeking a truly extraordinary encounter, Ayalew highlighted that *Kundudo* Wild Horse Mountain waits. Tucked away in *Gursum* District, this mountain is home to approximately 33 wild horses, a species endemic to Eastern Africa. These horses, with their untamed spirit and striking beauty, captivate the hearts of all who behold them.



Kundudo Mountain

“As you traverse the rugged terrain of *Kundudo*, you will be greeted by the sight of these elegant creatures galloping freely across the landscape. The mountain itself stands as a testament to the region's natural splendor, offering panoramic views that leave visitors in awe. Witnessing the *Kundudo* wild horses in their natural habitat is a privilege that few have experienced, making it an unforgettable adventure for nature enthusiasts and photographers alike”.

Noting that the mount *Kundudo* is the highest point in the eastern Ethiopian highlands, he stated that the place is famed for being home to the only remaining wild horse population in East Africa. As to him, *Kundudo* is not only fantastic for hiking and camping, but it is also a terrific place to see some of the stunning wildlife in the East Hararge Zone.

Beyond the *Babile* Elephants and *Kundudo* Wild Horse Mountain, Ayalew highlighted that the East Hararge Zone is boasting a tapestry of attractions that showcase the region's

natural beauty, cultural heritage, and historical significance. Within its borders, visitors can explore ancient ruins, visit traditional villages, and immerse themselves in vibrant local markets.

The zone administration's commitment to developing infrastructure has resulted in improved roads and facilities, seamlessly integrating these tourist sites with the surrounding cities, he added. Apart from this, the Zone boasts breath-taking landscapes and natural beauty, attracting nature enthusiasts and adventure seekers. The zone administration actively promotes tourism, aiming to contribute to the growth of the tourism industry and stimulate the local economy.

Different activities have been undertaken in order to further develop these tourist destinations as an eco-tourism project. Accordingly, the zone administration has built roads and other infrastructures in order to integrate the tourist attraction sites with the city.

Mentioning that the Zone is rapidly gaining recognition as a captivating tourist destination, the deputy chief administrator indicated the local administration is actively promoting tourism, aiming to contribute to the growth of the tourism industry and stimulate the local economy.

Ayalew further mentioned that, said the zone is rapidly gaining recognition as a captivating tourist destination. These places boast breathtaking landscapes and natural beauty, attracting nature enthusiasts and adventure seekers. The zone administration actively promotes tourism, aiming to contribute to the growth of the tourism industry and stimulate the local economy, he noted.

Emphasizing zone's role as a model for peace and tolerance, Ayalew underscored that both local and foreign visitors are welcomed with open arms to visit the area without any threats. While expressing his office's commitment in order to work in collaboration with both local and foreign investors, Ayalew mentioned that investment land apart with stable peace and strong security of the zone is amongst best investment opportunities for investors.

According to him, the East Hararge Zone has opened its doors to those seeking an unforgettable experience in the heart of Ethiopia, as it is gaining recognition as a captivating tourist destination. With the *Babile* Elephants Forest, *Kundudo* Wild Horse Mountain and other tourist destination as its crown jewels, the zone offers a unique blend of wildlife encounters, breathtaking landscapes, and cultural immersion.

The zone administration's dedication to promoting tourism ensures that visitors can explore these treasures while contributing to the growth of the local economy. As East Hararge emerges as an eco-tourism center, it invites travelers from around the world to embark on a journey of discovery, where nature's splendor and cultural richness intertwine to create an experience.

Planet Earth

While electric vehicles become environmentally friendly means of transportation, their battery supply still facing challenges

BY STAFF REPORTER

Direct lithium extraction has been touted as a more environmentally friendly way to mine the resource needed for EV batteries. But the technology is largely untested and could impact already limited water supplies in the Southwest.

When Kelly Dunham heard that water was gushing out from a test well earlier this month for a proposed lithium mine in the middle of this rural city of 900 residents, she went to see it for herself.

Water was surging from the drilling rig and flooding the test site as berms trapped it and directed the water toward lagoons once used by an abandoned missile launch complex nearby. Trucks sucked up the water with pumps and hauled it away to disposal wells as fast as they could.

The drill had hit pockets of carbon dioxide gas and more water than expected, according to state regulators and Anson Resources, the company behind the direct lithium extraction (DLE) project in which brine is pumped from deep aquifers to the surface, where lithium and other minerals are extracted from the water before it is sent back underground.

This process for acquiring lithium without as many environmental impacts as hard rock mining is gaining momentum, but uncertainty looms over how it will be done at scale in the U.S.

An incident like the blowout that occurred on March 8 is what locals like Dunham, a lifelong Green River resident, and environmentalists had been fearing. Green River gets its name from the waterway that runs through town, which is the biggest tributary of the Colorado River.

The company behind the project has said it would have no impact on local water supplies and the brine water from which they were seeking to extract lithium—the soft, silvery metal that is critical to the batteries for electric vehicles and solar and wind farm energy storage projects—would be returned to underground aquifers and not contaminate surface supplies. But here in early March, before any final permits for the project had been issued, was water rushing out of a drill site only a short distance from a wash that feeds into the river.

State agencies and Anson Resources said the water itself was not saline enough to have any potential impacts on humans and had not reached local washes or the river. But residents like Dunham worry about what happens when they begin to drill deeper.

The blowout had occurred at 1,500 feet underground; if permitted, the company plans to drill down up to 10,000 feet, and the water it pumps up will go from having 1,800 parts per million of chloride assay

to over 300,000 ppm, levels highly toxic for human consumption—fresh water has just 1,000 ppm. If that water were to reach the Green River, it could put Utah in violation of the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Act, which regulates the levels of salts allowed in the river that supplies water for over 40 million people and irrigates millions of acres of farmland in the U.S. and Mexico.

The March 2024 blowout may not have caused any lasting harm, locals and environmentalists said, but what about the next one?

It's just one of the many questions concerned residents here have. Are the brine aquifers connected to the Green River? How will extracting the brine impact more shallow groundwater and surface water? What chemicals are used in the mining process? Could the process affect local ecosystems?

"I don't think the community really knows what's going on," Dunham said. "Everybody really does just want jobs. Unfortunately, most people are just surviving. And when you're in survival mode, you really aren't as concerned about the environment."

By drilling wells to pump up brine rather than digging huge holes into the ground to extract rock, the industry cites direct lithium extraction as a way to acquire the element critical to the energy transition without the environmental impacts of mining.

"Our process is efficient, we use less water than other manufacturing and lithium mining operations, we produce less carbon dioxide than hard rock mining," said Bruce Richardson, executive chairman and chief executive officer of Anson Resources, in a statement.

The process they use to remove minerals from brine would also produce less carbon dioxide than evaporation ponds, which draw lithium from brine by letting the water evaporate, he stated. "We are utilizing existing structures and land usage areas smartly to reduce our footprint, and we are using a closed loop process so there is no risk of accidental spills," he said. "Because the lithium we are extracting will go into electric vehicles, and the whole point of them is to have a lower impact on the environment, we're operating from that same point of view."

But proving that it will be better for the environment—in Green River and where other DLE projects are proposed from California to Arkansas—is easier said than done. The technology has yet to be used at an operational scale in the U.S. and uncertainty exists over how the projects may impact fresh water supplies, a big issue in Utah and the Southwest, a region facing declining aquifers and decreasing flows on major rivers like the Colorado.

"We are not opposed to lithium," said

The process they use to remove minerals from brine would also produce less carbon dioxide than evaporation ponds, which draw lithium from brine by letting the water evaporate, he stated

technology has been used to extract other minerals, though it is just being proposed as a less environmentally destructive alternative to mining for lithium.

Generally, DLE requires a well to extract brine water from which a chemical process extracts the lithium and other potentially desirable minerals via an ion exchange. But each operation is different, with variations in the chemicals required and how much freshwater is needed to extract the lithium, experts said.

"The notion that you see on websites for companies is 'Here comes the brine water and the magic chemical tweezers pull only this out and everything else goes back in the earth,'" said Corby Anderson, director of the Kroll Institute For Extractive Metallurgy at the Colorado School of Mines. "This is not true. That's not how it works."

Depending on the process, a DLE operation could see a net positive or net negative in its freshwater consumption, Anderson said, as some facilities may require more filtration of the minerals, pH adjustments, reverse osmosis and even evaporation processes.

That can lead to big fluctuations in how much fresh water various DLE operations consume, even if they use less brine water compared to other methods.

"DLE in theory would use or waste significantly a lot less water in total," said Daniel Saftner, a hydrogeologist at the Desert Research Institute who co-authored a report on how lithium mining could impact water supplies in Nevada. "However, it's possible that DLE could use more freshwater."

For its Green River project, Anson Resources has partnered with Sunresin, a Chinese-based ion exchange technology company.

According to Anson, natural pressure will send the brine water filled with lithium to a tank on the surface filled with an absorbent material that "looks like instant coffee," which will extract the lithium over six hours. Then the spent brine water is sent back into the ground, making the process a "nonconsumptive use." Fresh water from the Green River is used to flush the tank and that lithium-filled water is pumped to a closed system that removes the metal ions. An evaporator then recycles the Green River water for use in the next batch.

Anson has acquired 2,500 acre-feet of Green River water from various entities for the process. The company claims it plans to recycle at least 90 percent of the water used during the operation and that only 10 percent of its water rights will be used a year. It is also seeking a permit allowing it to use 13,000 acre feet of the brine water under a nonconsumptive use application for the Green River project.

Source: Inside climate news

Kyle Roerink, the executive director for the Great Basin Water Network, an organization focused on water issues in Nevada and Utah that is monitoring DLE proposals across Utah, including on the Great Salt Lake and in Green River. "We are opposed to unsustainable and dangerous appropriations of water under the false assumptions that this new technology is absolutely harmless."

How It Works

Thousands of feet below eastern Utah, layers of rock have trapped seawater containing traces of lithium for more than 300 million years.

The process of extracting the mineral using DLE has existed for decades, and similar