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Belay Tulu



Samuel Doe

Canadian diplomat lauds Ethiopia's stance to Africa's cause

BY YESUF ENDRIS

ADDIS ABABA- Ethiopia's principled stance in advocating African Solutions for African Problems vision is a commendable move which Canada is firmly supporting, according to the country's diplomat.

Speaking to the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA), Canada's Embassy Political and Public Affairs Counselor Patrice Laquerre said that Ethiopia's ambition for Africa's economic and political integration is an admirable proposal that the whole continent should take as a footprint.

Demographic pressures, poverty, conflicts, and coup d'états are still challenging the continent. The notion of an African Solutions for African Problems is an important tool to resolve such pressing hurdles and to develop infrastructures

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Ethiopia, partners striving to mitigate communities, institutional risks

- Launch insurance , risk financing facility

BY ASHENAFI ANIMUT

ADDIS ABABA – Bundling financial insurance schemes with institutions would help build resilient livelihoods and sustainable economic development, the National Bank of Ethiopia (NBE) said.

Ethiopia's Insurance and Risk Financing

Facility was officially launched yesterday in the presence of high-ranking government representatives, private institutions and other ecosystem actors.

Speaking at the event, NBE Insurance Supervision Director, Belay Tulu said that the government stands firm to revise and regulate insurance policies and strategies to create and

build resilience to households and enable the country to tackle natural and manmade calamities.

He further remarked that the establishment of Insurance and Risk Financing Facility (IRFF) in Ethiopia is a significant milestone

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Ethiopia exports 4,500 tons flower in pick season

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Ethiopia to deploy internet protocol version six

BY MISGANAW ASNAKE

ADDIS ABABA- Preparation has been finalized to test and implement internet protocol version six and deploy the service in government offices, the Ministry of Innovation and Technology (MinT) disclosed.

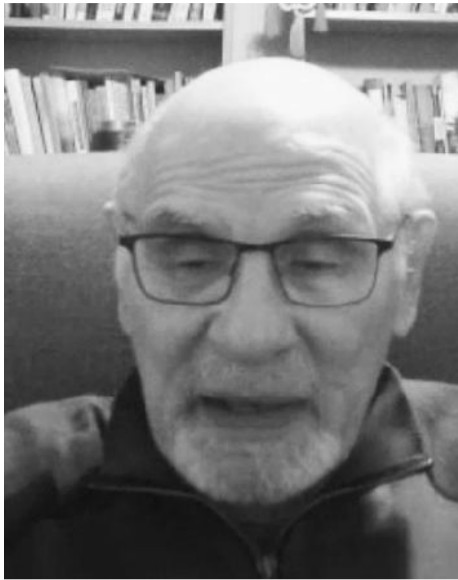
The MinT National Network Project Coordinator Daniel Adinew told the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) that the country has so far used internet protocol version four which is found to be old and weak. Ethiopia has also incurred huge costs to use the internet and network protocol.

To address such problems, the MinT is executing the necessary preparation to test internet protocol version six, which is a modern and strong type and the ministry is

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INTERNET PROTOCOL VERSION 6

News



Lawrence Freeman

Renew Adwa's spirit for strong future: American Analyst

ADDIS ABABA - Ethiopians should renew the spirit of Adwa to build a strong nation for the current and future generations, the political-economic analyst Lawrence Freeman said.

Recently Ethiopians marked the 128th anniversary of the Victory of Adwa which is considered a symbol of African resistance against colonialism.

In an exclusive interview with ENA, the analyst said the victory shocked the very foundations of European imperialism and almost brought them into a downfall.

"This became something that all Africans and African-Americans in the United States basically rallied around. And this became the basis of parts of the movement for the liberation of African nations in the 1960s and 1970s. And it's still today remembered as an absolutely unique event of effective resistance by an African nation and African people."

The victory was a result of a unified country where Ethiopians had to put aside their differences and conduct a battle to defeat the Italian imperialists on 1st March 1896, he added.

According to him, various sections of Ethiopian society united to defeat an enemy and guarantee their freedom; and the "event has helped shape the Ethiopian mindset in the 20th and 21st centuries."

"What we saw at Adwa was people (Ethiopians) had to give up their grievances with each other, and they had to unite to defeat an external enemy."

Therefore "what I'm suggesting today is that we do the same thing in the spirit of Adwa to build a strong future for Ethiopia, the best way to guarantee a strong future for their grandchildren," he said.

He also praised Ethiopia for inaugurating the newly built Adwa Victory Memorial this month in order to commemorate the nation's heroes and heroines.

Nation striving to reduce 20% hearing loss by 2030

BY MESERET BEHAILU

ADDIS ABABA – St. Paul's Millennium Medical College (SPMMC) disclosed yesterday that efforts are being exerted to reduce hearing loss by 20 percent in 2030.

The College celebrated the World Hearing Day under the theme "Changing Mindsets: Let's make Ear and Hearing Care a Reality for all."

In his opening remark, SPMMC Provost, Sisay Sirgu (MD) said that the college together with intended bodies is striving to reduce hearing loss by 20 percent in 2030 so as to improve the health and productivity of citizens across the country.

As to him, celebrating the World Hearing Day creates an important platform to increase public awareness on effective ear and hearing as well as hearing loss prevention mechanisms.

Sisay further stated that his college has been carrying out various activities such as providing capacity building training, maximizing the livelihood of the community, conducting researches and investigation, and improving the knowledge and skills to realize the 20 percent hearing loss reduction within six years.

Similarly, he stated, the college attempted to provide hearing tools to assist citizens who are affected by hearing loss.

Christian Blind Mission (CBM's) Program Manager, Adugna Hirpa on his part said that



the CBM is working in some 24 countries by allocating 337.2 million Euros to tackle hearing problems.

Adugna noted that hearing problems are more challenging in the developing countries due to poverty, compared with that of the developed nations.

To end this, CBM is closely working with various partners in providing training, education, medical care, rehabilitation, advocacy, and humanitarian access, he added.

Presenting a paper titled "Prevalence and Causes of hearing loss in Ethiopia 2023,"

SPMMC Otolaryngologist (ENT), Alene Meshesha said, "Of the 9,966 individual samples who drawn 40 % Urban and 60% rural areas except Tigray state, some 15 % of all age group are exposed to hearing loss. Likewise, children aged from 0 to four years shared 7.3% and who are above five years shared 19.2%."

Moreover, the hearing status of children aged under five or 7.3 % are highly susceptible of hearing loss whilst prevalence of the rate of hearing loss children aged five plus and adults shared 19.2%.



Leather companies urge gov't to resolve input, forex shortages

BY ESSEYE MENGISTE

ADDIS ABABA- Leather companies have urged the government to fix shortages of inputs and foreign currency for improved productivity.

Jiji Leather, Salesperson Helen Tesfaye told the Ethiopia Press Agency (EPA) that the leather industry is facing a number of difficulties mainly shortage of inputs and foreign currency.

Therefore, she noted, the government should make it easier to get the inputs in the country to improve the production of leather outputs

that help the country to get better income.

Helen's company, Jiji Leather, produces leather products including women bags and back bags for both domestic and foreign markets.

"We have successfully developed leather goods that are in demand locally and internationally," she said.

Another leather company, BayushMulugeta Leather Producer, is expanding the production of women and men bags, belts, wallets, coats and others for domestic and foreign market.

Buying Helen's idea on shortage of input and foreign currency, company Owner, BayushMulugeta stressed that these hindrances need to be resolved shortly by the government through producing the inputs at home.

She pointed out that the industry has a great deal of potential to advance Ethiopia's overall development, increase job opportunities, help women's economic empowerment, and increase export earnings.

She also called on the private sector to work collaboratively to expand the market for Ethiopian leather products.

News

INSA, association team up for int'l cyber-security, digital transformation conference

BY BETELHEM BEDLU

ADDIS ABABA- The Information Network Security Administration (INSA) and Cyber-Security Professionals Association have teamed up to hold the second international cyber-security and digital transformation conference from March 5 to 7, 2024.

In a joint press conference held here yesterday, Association President Birhanu Beyene (PhD) said the major objective of the conference is providing a platform for key stakeholders for policy dialogue and design project plan.

According to him, the conference would enable research based discussion with academicians. "The event includes panel discussion on digital transformation and cyber security that is expected to bring together high-level professionals in the sector."

Presentations would take place on digital transformation and financial technologies while special emphasis is given to cyber-security laws and regulations. Similarly, over 12 research papers would be presented on sideline events which are expected to attract policy dialogue among academicians, business owners and professionals.

"The conference envisions putting the way forward on national and continental cyber-security issues regarding research and policy development by key stakeholders."

Reminding that the Ministry of Information



and Technology (MinT) had organized a national steering committee that draws together 45 experts from finance, business, and academia that work on cyber-security and digital transformation, he noted that the current conference would be instrumental in strengthening the committee in various areas.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) would be signed to work with pertinent stakeholders to initiate research and publication, and enhance cyber-security awareness culture through training and consultation, the association president remarked.

Information Assurance Sector Representative Hannibal Lemma for his part indicated that minimizing dependency on knowledge, technology and skilled labor would be vital to

ensure cyber-security sovereignty.

To this end, he stressed much more effort should be exerted in enhancing research and publication. "Thus, the conference that draws experts, academicians, business owners and essential stakeholders together is vital."

On the one hand, Hannibal mentioned that the cyber-security ecosystem, which is expected to become a major source of economic progress, is one of the major areas where the conference becomes more significant to Ethiopia.

Apart from enabling the exchange of ideas, the conference would also create awareness on cyber-security, digital transformation and other related issues among participants, he remarked.

Ethiopia exports 4,500 tons flower in pick season

BY BETELHEM BEDLU

ADDIS ABABA-Ethiopia exported 4,500 tons of flowers targeted for Valentine's Day from January 22 to February 14, 2024, Ethiopian Horticulture Producer Exporters Association (EHPEA) disclosed.

EHPEA's Promotion and Information Service Head Yemisrach Berhanu told The Ethiopian Herald that the flower export targeted key locations in Europe including Liege, Brussels, Amsterdam, and Germany, as well as markets in the UK, U.S., Middle East and the Far East.

The stated amount of flowers was transported by 50 freighters.

It is to be recalled that in 13 days of operation (from February 1 to 13, 2023); Ethiopia exported over 2,165 tons of flowers and secured over 3.28 million USD.

Mentioning Valentine Day's significant boost in the production of flowers, Association Executive Director TewodrosZewde highlighted that around 60 companies contributed to last year's export earnings.

Ethiopia, known as a rose country in the horticulture industry, is amongst the top four flower producers and exporters globally.

Ethiopia, partners striving...

towards building resilience, protecting livelihoods, and the nation's economic development.

Citing the minimal stage of insurance, particularly the agricultural sector, he said that it is highly critical to build partnerships with various development partners and insurance companies and other actors.

As to him, Ethiopia's insurance penetration is the lowest among the East African countries. Similarly, the coverage in sub-Saharan Africa is less than 3% and in Ethiopia 0.5% respectively.

In addition to addressing the glitch in the demand and supply sides, this program would also promote the agricultural sector in providing affordable products such as livestock and crops, he noted.

He said: "Lack of insurance regulation and trained actuarial experts in the country has long been impacting the insurance sector."

He called for consolidated efforts of partners to expedite the full-fledged implementation of risk solutions.

UNDP-Ethiopia Resident Representative Samuel Doe on his part said that the insurance financing is a testament for unwavering

commitment to innovation, collaboration, and solidarity in addressing the complex challenges posed by various disasters such as droughts, floods, epidemics and conflicts.

As part of the United Nations Development Programmer's broader insurance and risk financing program operating in 30 countries, the representative emphasized that the facility represents a pioneering initiative to provide innovative protection solutions for vulnerable communities and businesses across Ethiopia.

"The launch of the Ethiopia Insurance and Risk Financing Facility is not just a symbolic gesture; it is a call to action for all of us to come together, to collaborate and to innovate in the face of adversity," he pinpointed.

Through a combination of innovative insurance products, risk assessment tools, and capacity-building initiatives, he remarked that the facility empowers communities, businesses, and government institutions to better anticipate, absorb, and recover from shocks and crises.

IRFF was officially launched yesterday in the presence of high-ranking government representatives, private institutions and other ecosystem actors.

Ethiopia to deploy...

also designing the strategy to deploy the service in government offices. "If Ethiopia applied internet protocol version six, it could significantly reduce the 60 million USD it has spent to use the internet annually."

The coordinator further noted that the MinT, after several years of study, has deployed a great project under the name National Network Exchange in five locations to distribute internet to all directions and make the service accessible to the society.

This project would also help to reduce cyber security, adjust time, resolve DNS and supplement different activities including online teaching and the exam process. Similarly, it would also enable the public to use e-service and e- government projects.

Many data centers have been built in Ethiopia but they are not functioning properly and the country does not have different services including root DNS server, time protocol, authoritative server and internet protocol version six, Daniel elaborated.

Ethiopia does not have the aforementioned services due to slow internet and it has paid 60 million USD for bandwidth annually. "Here we work to minimize the money we spend on the internet."

"Our next move will be to protect cyber security, benefit the society in high bandwidth network connectivity, bring 80 percent traffic movement to domestic service and secure our data and reduce the high amount of foreign currency Ethiopia is spending for the internet."

He added, "We have to pay a large amount of foreign currency not to be intercepted while browsing in foreign internet domains and the MinT has got the spot in IT Park and will establish a national network exchange over there."

There is an internet connectivity problem nationwide and the government allocates a substantial amount of forex to address such a challenge and it has registered promising results in this regard, the coordinator remarked.

Canadian diplomat...

on health regard the role of Ethiopia in initiating the solution is great."

The diplomat also said that his country is supporting the continent with its best power for the successful implementation of African Solutions to African Problems vision. "Canada and Ethiopia have long-standing diplomatic relations, which was officially established in 1965 and both countries need to elevate their ties for a mutually

beneficial partnership."

According to Laquerre, following the global diplomacy's entering into a new phase, Ethiopia's diplomatic engagement is gaining momentum. "The Ethiopian Diplomacy Exhibition, which was open for 48 days since January 11, is also worthy of admiration for giving the opportunity to visitors to witness the country's long and fruitful diplomatic journey."

Ethiopia exports 4,500 tons...

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Opinion

A testimony of a North–South–South partnership in higher education: The case of NTNU-BDU-UJ NORHED I Project

BY Dr. SOLOMON ABEDOM
TESFAMICAEL and PROFESSOR
JØRUND AASETRE

Two PhD finalists from Bahir Dar University (BDU) in Ethiopia and another from University of Juba (UJ) in South Sudan have shared a heartwarming message about their activities in connection to their involvement in the Norwegian Program for Capacity Development in Higher Education and Research for Development (NORHED) project.

“The National Ministry of Education has invited me to share my experience with the application of student-centered teaching at the state ministry. This training will have about 138 participants, including the Director Generals from the Ministry of Education, principals from other respective schools, and teachers...” Oduho George Ben, the South Sudanese PhD Candidate said.

Dereje Taye, the doctoral candidate at BDU, on his part disclosed how much the contribution of NORHED projects is recognized by the Ministry of Education (MoE).

Specifically, he mentioned that out of all the new Mathematics and Science syllabus and textbooks prepared nationwide in line with the new curriculum, the one prepared by BDU, with the participation or leadership role of several members of the NORHED team, is found to have better quality.

These two testimonies motivated us to reflect on the North-South-South cooperation in which we have participated in the past seven years.

Background

NORHED was launched by the Norwegian agency for development cooperation (NORAD) in 2012. “NORAD supports North-South-South university partnerships for projects on capacity development in higher education and research, through the NORHED programs.” NORHED I had two phases of call: 2013-2019 and 2016-2021. The second round, NORHED II, is running 2021-2026. Professor Jørund request was to send application for the 2016-2021 NORHED I phase. Then, Dr. Solomon, Dr. Charlotte Nakakaawa-Jjunju and Professor Jørund agreed and started the collaboration right away. This testimony refers to this particular project cooperation.

Setting up of Partner institutions

Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU) is Norway’s largest university with its headquarters in Trondheim. Internationalization is one of the focus areas in NTNU’s strategy: Knowledge for a Better World. It is a university that has developed a rich culture of collaboration across the globe. As part of this rich culture in the university, we dared to respond to the NORHED I call by setting up a partnership with institutions in South.

After some considerations, we agreed to reach out to BDU in Bahir Dar. The rationale behind this decision was that the Pedagogy faculty, Pedagogi, now called the College of Education and Behavioral Sciences, is one of the leading institutions that have made immense contributions regarding education in the country. Additionally, it was home university where Dr. Solomon studied his bachelor’s degree in



Left: project launching date, December 2016 (Source BDU-NORHED). Right: STEM educators with then BDU president

mathematics (major), physics (minor), and pedagogy.

A strong team was set up at BDU, led by Dr. Dawit Asrat and his colleagues. We did find out that also those at BDU had ideas on development projects fitting very well with our ideas. That means the North-South partnership became in place for the application. We needed one southern institution to make the collaboration a North-South-South university partnership, which the NORHED call encourages.

The team decided to include the College of Education in the University of Juba (UJ) in South Sudan, since BDU already has a history of collaboration with UJ. Involving UJ in this partnership setup was one of the most difficult decisions for the team, but it was also one of the rewarding one. The teams at these three institutions went ahead in forming the NTNU-BDU-UJ partnership and sent the application, after working on a project with title “Advancing quality in education in the Primary and lower secondary schools of Ethiopia and South Sudan,” with a focus in STEM education. In the final organization the project was set up with BDU as main recipient and Dr. Dawit Asrat as project leader.

Contributions of the NTNU-BDU-UJ partnership in NORHED I

In July 2016, in the middle of summer vacation, we heard the good news that our project application was among the four projects that NORHED decided to fund. It was a great joy to hear that, but at the same time, the huge responsibility of implementing the project activities became a reality; exciting but scary!

In December 2016, the BDU-NTNU-UJ NORHED I project was launched at the head office of BDU. Dr. Baylie Damtie, the then President of BDU, a former scholarship student at one of the institutions in Norway, welcomed this NORAD-funded project with excitement, which was the first of its kind with projects funded by NORAD for BDU.

The project had several activities; including master’s studies in STEM education, PhD studies in STEM education, postdocs, a summer in-service program for mathematics and science teachers, and hosting workshops and international conferences. A two-year new master’s program in mathematics and science education was designed, and over 62 master’s students graduated over four years (2017-2020).

Fourteen of these graduates were from South Sudan and were enrolled at BDU in Bahir Dar.

The master’s program was situated at BDU, and more than 15 staff members from NTNU traveled to BDU to provide master’s courses. This helped to share knowledge and experience from the northern institution, NTNU, with the southern institution, BDU, boosting capacity at the southern institutions and providing international mobility for NTNU employees.

Ten PhD students (eight from BDU and two from UJ) were enrolled at NTNU. These students traveled to the north for 14 months to study courses and deepen their knowledge in their respective research fields. For the rest of their research time, they were situated at their own institutions in the South. Their study progress was affected due to the COVID-19 pandemic that is why their studies were extended until the end of this year. So far, seven PhD students are in their final phase.

In addition, two postdocs from BDU had their research visit to NTNU. Two international conferences were held at BDU (in 2019 and 2022), where the Ph.D. students, postdocs, staff from NTNU, and many other researchers from different universities in Ethiopia participated. Several international-level journal articles and conference proceedings are published. In addition, a few hundred teachers were engaged in the summer in-service program. Given the amount of fund, these are all remarkable results. Even though there were many hurdles and limitations in the process, the project can be categorized as a successful one, so far.

Impacts of NORHED I project at the national level

During research and supervision travel in 2021, Dr. Solomon had the opportunity to talk to the then Minister of the Ministry of Education, Dr. Ing Getahun Mekuriya, in his office in Addis Ababa. In the meeting, Dr. Ing Getahun mentioned that BDU was given the responsibility to develop the curriculum and syllabus for school subjects (grades 1 to 10) following the new educational roadmap in cooperation with the other four Centers of Excellence in Education (CEE) so that all regions can further develop textbooks.

He further recommended that we see the new curriculum and syllabus so that even those Ethiopians in the diaspora can contribute to it, if possible. Dr Solomon was eager

to see these national documents, and he looked at the mathematics curriculum and syllabus. It was easy to see the impacts of the NORHED master’s contents and the PhD studies’ contribution across the pages since the NORHED-BDU team members actively participated in the process. When one works hard and sows seeds diligently, and when other appropriate conditions are met, such significant national impacts happen once in a lifetime.

What the two PhD candidates from Ethiopia and South Sudan mentioned is a glimpse of the fruition of the hard work in collaboration with institutions funded by NORAD through the NORHED I project. There are many individuals who have participated in different capacities at the three partnering institutions: coordinating, managing, supervising, teaching, facilitating, administering, hosting, and so on. Such results should be attributed to all those who have contributed in some ways.

Furthermore, it is a piece of simple evidence that NTNU through its internationalization efforts is fulfilling its vision of “Knowledge for a better world.” In this NTNU-BDU-UJ partnership, NTNU even plays strengthening role of the South-South partnership in a meaningful way as BDU was strengthened to continue its own partnership with UJ in South Sudan. It is exciting to be part of such a prestigious institution.

There are several NORHED projects in Ethiopia and other developing nations in the south, in collaboration with institutions in Norway. If what was mentioned is only from one project, one can only imagine the impact of all these other projects across nations and institutions. This shows the potentials of projects between Norway and partners as Ethiopia as long as it is based on a “true partnership” with due respect to both partners’ capacities.

Dr. Solomon Abedom Tesfamicael is an associate professor at the Department of Teacher Education, Faculty of Social and Educational Science Faculty, NTNU, and Professor Jørund Aasetre is of the Department of Teacher Education and Department of Geography at NTNU.

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

Editorial

IPs indispensable for comprehensive dev't

Industrial parks (IPs) in Ethiopia have shown progress and even companies are increasingly fond of engaging in the former. Of course, embarking on human capital combined with full-fledged investors, be they are local or foreign, has been enhanced the national economy and its technological capacity. Unequivocally, the progress gained in the development of technological capabilities will spill over to agriculture, manufacturing, mining, apparel, service and other related sectors thereby booming governance and institutional growth. Such a bold move will ultimately lead to economic development and help the country emancipate from poverty and underdevelopment.

Industrial parks development in Ethiopia has been thriving and the majority of local companies have been running activities in various industrial parks. The number of companies and investors has revealed a significant increase in investment and production activities at industrial parks and play crucial role in nurturing import substitution and export diversification.

It is also well recognized that Ethiopia set up many industrial parks specialized in various sectors. As these parks have been established with the vision to make the country a leading manufacturing hub, the government has attached due emphasis to industrial parks development and their prompt expansion. Yes, the growing prominence of industrial parks in manufacturing and textile for example has been contributing a lot to replacing imported goods and services so as to meet the demands for local production.

No doubt, the country has been registering remarkable achievements via encouraging activities in improving import substitution and export expansion. It has also recorded concrete achievements in agro-processing, textile and garment sector, products manufactured in industrial parks meeting global quality standards and are exported to major markets.

Industrial parks also foster mutually beneficial partnerships between them and the surrounding communities. Principally, industrial parks are playing a pivotal role in economic development by substituting imports, diversifying exports, and creating employment opportunities.

As investment and production continue to grow, these industrial parks are poised to further strengthen the country's economic competitiveness by strengthening import substitution and export trade. Import substitution of what should have been exported is now bearing fruits. The country is also working to fully substitute imports of myriads of goods and services. True, since economic growth in Ethiopia is progressing at an impressive rate, the government needs to rein the hurdles from which industrial parks are suffering such as bureaucratic red tape and financial constraints, if any, thereby increasing government revenue and export, diversifying the industrial products, attracting Foreign Director Investment, and attracting foreign exchange, too.

It is also important to know the way how to improve efficiency of regulatory bodies, how to ensure sufficient funding for infrastructure development, how to promote linkages between industrial parks, the local labor market and local companies. Besides, how to support technical education and training for industries targeted by industrial park development strategy through aligning curricula of universities and Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) has to be well embarked on.

Industrial parks can maximize resource integration for limited production factors within a certain spatial scope by attracting labor and capital-intensive domestic and foreign investment in manufacturing and service industries, for instance. Here, not only do industrial parks increase job opportunities but they also foster the effort geared towards bolstering homegrown economy and import substitution.

With regard to linkages with local economy and regional development, the various industrial parks can be a good indication. Industrialization conventionally includes manufacturing, mining, construction, and utilities such as water, electricity, and other related requirements.

In sum, the country needs a development strategy that gives weight to the comprehensive development of industrial parks. The industrial parks development has now been blossoming to fuel economic development though a lot remains to be done to help all industrial parks go operational in full swing and enables the nation record notable progress.

Opinion

Implementing AfCFTA paves the way for African prosperity and unit

BY ADDISALEM MULAT

There is general agreement that if the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) agreement is put into practice, the continent of Africa without doubt would breathe new life into trade, create new employment opportunities and reinforce free movement of people, fight against poverty and stimulate socio economic integration in the shortest possible time.

Though the member states have been working around the clock to effectuate the agreement, the desired goal has not achieved yet according to expectation.

It is widely known that the agreement is seen as crucial for invigorating trade, creating employment opportunities, expediting the movement of people, alleviating poverty, and encouraging deeper socio-economic integration in the length and breadth of the continent of Africa.

While African bloc of nations has been combining efforts to attain the objective, there is still considerable room for improvement to achieve the level of amalgamation and collaboration which are crucial for achieving success. In actual fact, by breaking down trade barriers, coordinating guidelines, and fostering collaboration among member states, the agreement has the acumen for revolutionizing the economic background of the continent and ameliorating the lives of large number of people.

As the agreement plays a huge role in assisting the role of investments through the creation of a large market, strengthening productivity, encouraging industrial growth, augmenting competitiveness and other related aspects, the continental bloc should clear a path for the implementation.

If African nations put emphasis on sizable market potential of Africa through AfCFTA by getting a fix on technical predicaments utilizing action oriented measures the continent of Africa for sure would ameliorate the setting up regional value chains.

Ethiopia has set to exchange goods under the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) following endorsement of country's tariff line, Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced.

In a presser held recently, Foreign Affairs State Minister, Ambassador Misganu Arega expressed that leaders of the African Union member states have endorsed Ethiopia's tariff line for goods to be traded under the AfCFTA. "We have now the opportunity to join the nine countries which are implementing the AfCFTA," he said. Tariff concessions have been made on commodities on aggregate, he noted.

Among others, the AfCFTA was mainly established by the AU to achieve creating a single market for goods and services facilitated by movement of persons in order to deepen the economic integration of African continent compliance with the Pan-African Vision of "An integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa."

With all countries, including Kenya, South Africa, and Nigeria, Ethiopia has agreed to lift 90 percent of tariff from AfCFTA goods while the rest seven and three percent of commodities are under sensitive and exclusive products list respectively.

In actual fact, until today, African nations

have been collaborating in a wide range of economic, social and political matters as well as other development activities that can take the continent of Africa to the next level of accomplishment. If the continent continues putting AfCFTA agreement into effect, the regional integration in Africa would be stronger than ever before.

The objectives of the AfCFTA are to Create a single market for goods, services, facilitated by movement of persons in order to deepen the economic integration of the African continent and in accordance with the Pan African Vision of "An integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa" enshrined in Agenda 2063, Create a liberalised market for goods and services through successive rounds of negotiations, Resolve the challenges of multiple and overlapping memberships and expedite the regional and continental integration processes, Promote industrial development through diversification and regional value chain development, agricultural development and food security, Promote and attain sustainable and inclusive socio-economic development, gender equality and structural transformation of the State Parties and other related aspects, according to information obtained from AU sources.

Along the same line, if the agreement is efficiently get off the ground, it will lift millions of Africans out of poverty, improve the income of the continent of Africa, bridge the manufacturing gap, and other things of a similar kind. On top of that AfCFTA plays a very significant role in bringing the total populations of Africa and Regional Economic Communities, renovating the continent to emerging superpower, oiling the wheels of job creation, economic development, investment, and other related aspects.

If African nations give prominence to the huge market potential of Africa through AfCFTA by getting to the bottom of technical predicaments making use of taking practical measures, the continent of Africa for sure would enhance the establishment of regional value chains.

As the intentions of the AfCFTA are to generate a single market for goods and services, accelerate the movement of people, promote industrial development and sustainable and inclusive socio-economic growth, leaders of African nations should roll up their sleeves to resolve the issue almost immediately.

It is recalled that the African Trade Ministerial Council recently accepted Ethiopia's offer to trade 5,700 goods (90% of products) within the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), the Ministry of Trade and Regional Integration (MoTRI) disclosed.

In line with the AfCFTA plan, Ethiopia would provide the 5,700 items in the non-tariff scheme after seven years, MoTRI Minister Gebremeskel Chala told media. The remaining 10% of goods excluded from the list for the time being and negotiation would be held in the future for their inclusion.

The implementation of the AfCFTA is an agreement to make zero tariffs on goods that come from the African continent through process. Accordingly, Ethiopia has conducted a study on goods that would be non-tariff in seven, ten or twelve years, and which items would be excluded from the list.

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

Office of the CEO

Tel. 011-126-42-22

Fax. 251-011-156-98-62

email- epa@press.et

Advertisement and Dist.

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The Ethiopian Herald

Business & Economy

Doable nexus between energy and economic growth

BY MENGESHA AMARE

In due course of promoting the economic growth, undeniably, energy has been playing an incomparable role as encouraging economic growth helps run activities as easily and promptly as possible. Hence it is possible to deduce that economic progress and energy consumption do have a direct bearing and firm tie.

Taking this fact in mind, *The Ethiopian Herald* held talks to Asnake Adugna, an agricultural economist graduated from Addis Ababa University and working for a private firm as an economic consultant.

He said, "Energy is source of economic growth and agricultural development and they are very closely correlated and intertwined. If causality runs from energy consumption to GDP, it implies that an economy is energy dependent and hence energy is a stimulus to growth implying that a shortage of energy may negatively affect economic growth or may cause poor economic performance, leading to a fall in income and employment."

"The nexus between energy consumption and economic growth in Ethiopia is highly pronounced, indeed. Technological change might enable sustainability even with an elasticity of substitution of less than one," he said.

He further said that in view of the rapid evolution of urbanization and industrialization, economic growth is increasingly dependent on the energy consumption, the development of the two is difficult to coordinate, and the internal contradictions are becoming increasingly serious, which hinders the sustainable development of economic growth.

As to him, the relationship between energy consumption and economic growth has really determined the future trend of Ethiopia's sustainable development and in terms of urbanization rate and industrial structure. Clearly, Ethiopia has obvious advantages in future economic development and has a late developing advantage as energy promotes the economic growth.

Therefore, he said to overcome the inherent contradiction between economic growth and energy consumption and realize the coordinated development of the two is the only way for the nation to solve the future economic development plan and establish a sustainable economic development path.

No doubt, economic development is dependent on energy. That is why it is recurrently said especially these days that the economic development is inseparable from energy. Besides, the degree and scale of energy opening and utilization are based on certain economic development conditions. Economic development can in turn promote the large-scale development and utilization of energy. Economic growth and energy consumption would provide strategic experience, he added.

He also said that energy consumption in general and consumption of renewable



energy in particular may be a potential driver of economic growth. Renewable energy drives economic growth for some market conditions in Ethiopia.

"Economic benefits from increasing productivity refer to the synergies between the supply of renewable electricity and the subsequent adaption of industry production methods. The positive relationship between energy and economic growth is clear since income and energy consumption are tightly correlated on every aspect of the country. Genuinely speaking, nowhere in the world is there a wealthy country that consumes only a little energy, nor a poor country that consumes a lot," he opined.

He further stated that renewable energy can be a moderating factor to balance the effects of trade activities and financial development on the economy and the environment via encouraging renewable energy usage, increasing trade activities and supporting further financial development within the country.

"Right now, Ethiopia is a fastest growing economy that influences energy systems at the regional, continental and/or international level. Yes, energy is a key source of economic growth because many production and consumption activities involve energy as a basic input. Energy is one of the most important inputs for economic development. However, energy consumption to economic growth implies that in energy-dependent economy energy conservation policies may harm economic growth. In view of the rapid evolution of urbanization and industrialization, economic growth is increasingly dependent on the energy consumption, the development of the two is difficult to coordinate, and the internal contradictions are becoming increasingly serious, which hinders the sustainable development of economic growth."

According to Asnake, urbanization rate and industrial structure are bases for economic development and agricultural progress. As an important material basis for the development of human society, energy is also the main driving force of economic growth.

As to him, analyzing the relationship between energy and economic development from the perspective of economics, there are mainly two aspects; first, the economic

development is dependent on energy. Besides, the economic development based on sacrificing the natural ecological environment, the goal and consensus of sustainable development should be established to ensure the sustainable development.

According to Asnake, there is a positive correlation between the financial development and economic growth. It is found that the energy consumption has a strong positive impact on the greenhouse gas emissions, too. The improvement of technical level can effectively improve the energy consumption rate, that is, the improvement of technical level can strengthen the utilization rate of energy. In addition, the optimization of industrial structure can accelerate the emergence of energy consumption turning point. At the same time, the urbanization rate can also promote the emergence of the energy consumption turning point.

The nation improves the utilization rate of energy consumption by formulating corresponding policies and statistical innovation, that is, coordinating the relationship between energy production and distribution and economic growth. It can be said that Ethiopia has a comprehensive strategic plan and vision at the level of energy policy. Furthermore, the country has formulated energy policy principles, namely, the principle of a long-term comprehensive strategy, the principle of coordinated development between clean and efficient development and environmental and ecological construction, and the principle of an effective combination of per capita living standard construction and energy and environmental policies.

As to Asnake, by analyzing the relationship between the economic growth and energy consumption in the country, it is seen that the energy consumption is the main driving force to promote economic growth. However, while energy promotes the economic growth, it also brings pollution problems to the world environment, and it gradually becomes the main problem hindering the sustainable development of the economy.

He said so as to explore the coordinated development of the energy consumption, economic growth is the only way to solve

the future economic development plan and establish a sustainable economic development path.

Asnake further stated that economic development is closely related to energy demand. As an important material basis for the development of human society, energy is also the main driving force of economic growth. In view of the rapid evolution of urbanization and industrialization, the dependence of the social development on energy consumption continues to increase, leading to the contradiction between economic growth and energy consumption. In so doing, how to coordinate energy consumption and economic growth has become an important breakthrough in sustainable development. Such a lucrative means has established the economic turning point of energy consumption, explores the regularity of economic growth and energy consumption, and fosters the economic planning and economic development suitable for the road of sustainable development in the country. In addition, it is found that Ethiopia may have a turning point of energy consumption since the development of energy consumption and economic growth is of paramount importance in boosting economic progress.

As to him, Ethiopia has unveiled homegrown economic reform agenda which has aimed at achieving a lower-middle status and sustains its economic growth to achieve medium-middle and higher-middle status step by step. Optimal renewable energy mix for power generation and associated investment costs for the country to progressively achieve its mission. Ethiopia has enough renewable energy potential to achieve its economic target, indeed, though investment hurdles, financial sourcing setbacks and to some extent lack of coordination remain priority challenges. The nation's efforts geared towards expanding energy and supporting decision-making concerning socio-economic development and investment pathways has to be well underscored and problems have to be effectively dealt with.

In a nutshell, energy is an important element in accomplishing interrelated socio-economic development and is a backbone of a modern economy. Given growing demand due to socio-economic transformations, energy resources become relatively scarce. Such shortcomings have to be well abated via fostering the proliferation of energy sources. This in turn has an impact on the future availability of resources for long-term economic development.

The pursuit of optimal supply options can thus be viewed as the backbone of any country's long-term economic and social prosperity. Cognizant of the fact that Ethiopia is located on the Horn of Africa, its needs to boost development accompanied with adequate, reliable, affordable and environmentally friendly electricity supply options. Yes, achieving these required optimal generation capacity, indeed.

In the Sphere of Diplomacy

Moving into cooperation of equals: EU's big appetite to elevate ties with Africa

BY DANIEL ALEMAYEHU

Africa is one of the continents with a prosperous future. In the past years, the rest of the world has wanted to create a strong bond with the youthful continent to build a better future. Countries and blocs have been showing their utmost interest in forming a partnership with Africa on an equal basis as the latter push for an increased stake in global matters.

The European Union (EU) has been one of the many partners looking to cement relations with Africa on an equal basis while trying to play a positive role in the continent. Being the major financial supporter of development assistance of the African Union (AU), the EU is also ready to forge equal partnerships and elevated ties with Africa which has a vast and young generation.

During an exclusive stay with *The Ethiopian Herald*, Ambassador Javier Nino Perez, Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the African Union, talked about the partnership between the two blocs and the circumstances surrounding their cooperation.

The Ambassador stated that the relations between the two partners have been 'a partnership of equals'. "The partnership is a two-way street that the two partners listen, learn and respect to each other and build together."

The two blocs are working and cooperating. They are working at political, policy and technical levels. In these three levels, every single initiative the EU takes is carefully coordinated between the two parts.

EU is very careful to discuss any initiative with its African counterpart. "We have a 'Global Gateways' strategy. This is a package of 150 billion Euros that can be mobilized to promote investments in Africa," said the Ambassador adding that every investment is being discussed with the country or the region where the investment is taking place. It is important to understand here, as to Javier, is without the consent of the country or the region, the EU cannot invest in any given nation.

"We are following African lead and African initiatives. We are supporting the continental free trade area, the African electricity single market, African digital alliance. All the initiatives are encapsulated in the 2063 AU strategic plan. We add up ourselves with the priorities of Africans. Based on Global Gateway investment, we will carefully adapt to the strategies and priorities of Africa as established in the 2063 vision," the Ambassador noted.

The Ambassador recalled that the European bloc has strongly supported AU's accession to the G20. It was even engaged in the dialogue with non-European G20 members



supporting the African bid. Later, the continent was admitted to the club of 20. This is an example to follow to reform other multilateral institutions like the UNSC.

"We are extremely pleased that AU will sit together with its sister organizations. This reflects the logic of having Africa more meaningfully represented in the international forum," said the Ambassador.

Accordingly, for the UNSC, as to the Ambassador, to be reformed, it necessitates the consent of the five permanent members where four of which are not European nations. "What Africa needs to do is to engage in a dialogue with those five permanent states and with the rest of international communities to reform the security bloc," he said.

Besides, the Ambassador elaborated that some of the EU member states acknowledged the ways of the colonial path and their mistakes in the past. Most of the states have also subscribed to and supported the principles of the Durban Declaration that talks about slavery and the slave trade. Those member states have acknowledged the negative impact of slavery and the slave trade as a crime to humanity. "We are fully aware of the past, but our vision is to look at the future. Africans have come a long way in terms of social and economic development. What the EU wants is to help Africans continue to develop economically and socially, and improve its governance."

By the same token, the ambassador spoke about refugees. And he said many of the European countries consider migration as a positive development. "Europe is a continent that is ageing that necessitates young people, and Africa is the youngest continent."

The two blocs are working through a process that builds on integration, protection, settlement and development. "We work on not just migrants coming to Europe; we are trying to work on the root causes that lead many Africans to leave their countries. We want to create conditions that will enable the majority of Africans to stay in their countries. That is what we all want," the Ambassador elaborated.

"Mobility is a positive development. We are aware that there are a lot of misperceptions and misinformation about the impact of migration. Some statistics signal that there is no link between high levels of migrants with insecurity; rather figures show the positive impact of migrants coming to Europe."

Discussing the partnership, he said that the EU is the largest provider of humanitarian assistance in the world and Africa. "We have recently approved a 100 million Euros package to deal with the situation in Sudan. We are planning together with Africa to be much more ambitious in our strategic vision."

The two blocs, as to him, have been traditionally working on development cooperation and humanitarian assistance. But, we want to bring this to a higher and more sophisticated level through the Global Gateway project. This is basically on the major key areas that are considered priorities by Africa and working together on transport and infrastructure, digital infrastructure, energy, health, education, and the environment.

"In the digital transformation of Africa, we want to work on digitalizing the development of rural areas coupled with increasing the internet speed of data. We want to use digital ways to work on accessing public services,

health and education."

Related to health, the EU wants to increase the capacity of Africa to produce vaccines and medicine, health security, quality of health services, and decrease the inequality in access to services. We are launching significant investment to increase the capacity of vaccine production through a project 'MAV+' with four African countries: Ghana, Senegal, South Africa, and Rwanda to increase the vaccine production. It is more than one billion Euros investment. EU also wanted to help Africa on the environment and renewable energy, the Ambassador elucidated.

In addition, the EU is supporting initiatives by Africa to establish a single market on aviation and transport, and a single electricity market hoping to help 600 million Africans who do not have access to electricity, adding, "It is taking our work to a different level to a more strategic one under African ownership and leadership," noted the ambassador.

Europe is the largest development and humanitarian assistance, and it is also the largest investing and trading partner with Africa. African initiatives backed by the EU are very crucial to African development. "We are willing to empower Africa by taking care of its development and focus on long-term sustainable and high-quality engagement that could bring peace, security, and prosperity," voiced the Ambassador.

Finally, the Ambassador said, "I am very optimistic about the future of Africa. The continent has an articulated vision in 2063. We are confident that the EU and Africa working together can make a difference when it comes to prosperity and stability always under the leadership and ownership of Africa."

Law & Politics

Living up to the legacy of Adwa

BY EYUEL KIFLU

Last Saturday, Ethiopians across the country commemorated the 128th anniversary of the historic Battle of Adwa. The battle, which took place on March 1, 1896, saw Ethiopian forces led by Emperor Menelik II successfully defeating Italian colonial invaders, marking a significant victory for all black people.

The victory is considered a turning point in African history, as it demonstrated that an African nation could defeat a European colonial power. The victory at Adwa not only preserved Ethiopia's sovereignty but also inspired other African nations to resist colonization and fight for their independence. It is also the cause of the inception of the pan-African movement. After the Ethiopians beat the Italian army under the command of brigadiers Albertone, Dabormida, Ellena, and Arimondi, the Italians chanted "Viva Menelik, Viva Taitu!" around Rome as a form of protest against colonial control.

To honour the memory of those who fought and died at Adwa, ceremonies and events were held throughout Ethiopia. In Addis Ababa, a large military parade was held, with participants dressed in T-shirts printed with references to Adwa. Videos commemorating the historic battle were displayed on big screens. The event was attended by higher government officials, members of the Ethiopian National Defense Forces (ENDF), foreign diplomats, foreign military attachés, and numerous Ethiopians.

In other parts of the country, including Adwa itself, the victory was commemorated in the presence of President Sahle-Work Zewde, Tigray regional state officials, and the people. During her speech, the president emphasized that when the enemy invaded Ethiopia, the people, regardless of race, religion, or gender, rallied behind Emperor Menelik II and made history by standing together in these mountains and hills. The victory gave hope to the African continent and all oppressed people. She also expressed sadness over the northern Ethiopian conflict.

After three and a half years, she expressed her happiness at being able to celebrate the festival by being present in the historical city of Adwa in Tigray. "May God help us to overcome our current challenges; let religious and

ethnic divisions be enough," she said. She urged Ethiopians to identify the sources of their problems and work together to eliminate them.

She emphasized that in a civil war, there may be temporary winners, but there are no permanent winners. Therefore, to avoid this, the country should unite and save itself from foreign invaders. She called on Ethiopians to refrain from taking up arms against their brothers and sisters if the victory of Adwa was to be lasting. Sahle-Work stated that efforts should be made to peacefully resolve conflicts seen in other regions by working together and cooperating.

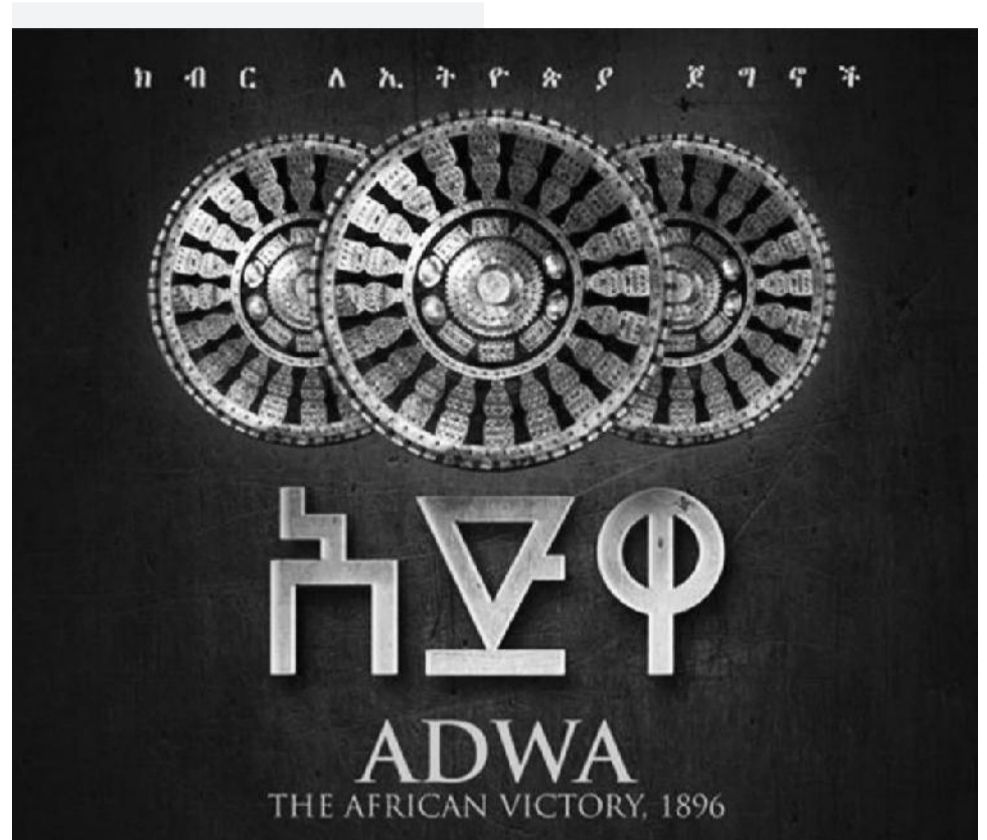
The commemoration of the Battle of Adwa serves as a reminder of Ethiopia's proud history and its role in the fight against colonialism. It highlights the importance of unity and solidarity among African nations in the struggle for freedom and self-determination.

American political-economic analyst Lawrence Freeman, in an interview with ENA, stated that the victory shook the very foundations of European imperialism and nearly brought them to a downfall. He emphasized that the event became a rallying point for Africans and African Americans in the United States and played a crucial role in the liberation movements of African nations in the 1960s and 1970s. He described the battle as a unique event of effective resistance by an African nation and its people.

Freeman further explained that the victory was the result of a unified Ethiopia where citizens set aside their differences and fought together to defeat the Italian imperialists on March 1, 1896. He noted that various sections of Ethiopian society united to defeat the enemy and secure their freedom. He highlighted that the event has shaped the Ethiopian mindset in the 20th and 21st centuries.

He urged the country to follow the spirit of Adwa and work together to build a strong future for Ethiopia, emphasizing that unity was crucial for guaranteeing a strong future for future generations. Freeman commended Ethiopia for inaugurating the newly built Adwa Victory Memorial, which commemorates the nation's heroes and heroines.

He emphasized that the legacy of Adwa still influences the Ethiopian mindset today, inspiring people with its stories of defeating imperialism.



The commemoration of the Battle of Adwa in Ethiopia is a significant event that honours the country's victory over Italian colonial invaders and showcases the spirit of unity and resilience

Freeman also acknowledged Ethiopia's potential for economic growth, stating that the country is already a leading nation in East Africa. He praised Ethiopia's commitment to regional integration through the export of electricity and said it will continue it from the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance

Dam (GERD) to neighbouring nations. He further highlighted Ethiopia's membership in BRICS as another form of leadership for Africa, which he believes will contribute to increased economic growth in the East African region.

As Ethiopians reflect on the legacy of Adwa, they are reminded of the sacrifices made by their ancestors to secure their independence. The spirit of resilience and determination displayed at Adwa continues to inspire generations of Ethiopians to stand up for their rights and defend their sovereignty.

Recently, Deputy Prime Minister Temesgen Tiruneh also emphasized that in the Battle of Adwa, Ethiopia not only defeated the enemy through the collective efforts of its brave citizens but also demonstrated its resistance to colonization for black people. He highlighted unity, love, and cooperation as the key factors that led to the victory. Temesgen explained that Adwa was an African victory achieved through the power of Ethiopians united by national unity. He stated that the Battle of Adwa serves as a reminder that Africans can overcome challenges and build a prosperous future.

Overall, the commemoration of the Battle of Adwa in Ethiopia is a significant event that honours the country's victory over Italian colonial invaders and showcases the spirit of unity and resilience. It serves as a reminder of the importance of African independence and unity in the face of colonialism and inspires generations to stand up for their rights and sovereignty.

It is also remembered that the triumph emphasizes the role of women and women's leadership, with Empress Taitu Betul acting as a role model for rising women in the nation. The victory also demonstrates how unity is powerful in opposing foreign meddling.

Society

Strengthening domestic education policies, national capacities to accelerate Africa's prosperity

BY EPHREM ANDARGACHEW

The African Union (AU) has several initiatives for women, youth, and children throughout Africa. These include the AU Gender Policy, which aims at promoting gender equality and empowering women across society. Likewise, the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child is the other move devised to safeguard and promote children's rights across the continent.

As part of this effort, AU runs programs and initiatives for African women, youth, and children in the areas of education, health, and social welfare. These activities are aimed at improving these peoples' access to quality education, healthcare services, and creating better economic opportunities.

In particular, the African Union's Agenda 2063 is a long-term development framework for Africa that contains specific goals and targets for women, youth, and children. Its goals lie to achieve inclusive and sustainable development for every African citizen, mainly the vulnerable section of the populations such as women, youth, and children. It also serves as Africa's master plan for developing the continent into a future global superpower. The Agenda is described as the continent's strategic framework aimed at achieving the sought goal of the region- inclusive and sustainable development. Not only that; but it is also a concrete manifestation of the Pan-African drive for unity, self-determination, freedom, progress, and collective prosperity, which is pursued under Pan-Africanism and toward the African Renaissance.

Most of all, the African Union specifically stated in its framework, Aspiration 6 of Agenda 2063: *An Africa, whose development is people-driven, relying on the potential of African people, especially its women and youth, and caring for children.* Essentially, every African citizen will actively participate in decision-making across all domains. Based on gender, political affiliation, religion, ethnic affiliation, geography, age, or any other criteria, no child, woman, or man will be left behind or excluded from Africa.

Therefore, the goal of this objective is to guarantee complete gender equality in all areas of life, promote gender parity and equality in all sectors of life—political, economic, and social—and do away with all types of violence and discrimination against women and girls and to strengthen the position of women in Africa. Additionally, it stipulates that the AU should empower and involve youths and children by giving them access to early childhood development via proper education, and so on.

Despite some progress in recent years and



Education is the cornerstone of long-term growth, as well as a critical contributor to peace and security, new job opportunities, and so on

preparation of valuable documents, there is still a significant gap in terms of ensuring access to education for women and youth on the continent. Here, the most important question is why African youth and women

are not benefitted from the abundant resources that the continent possesses? In most cases, the answer is simple and straightforward since access to education remains an unresolved question for all Africans. In addition to limitation in accessing quality education for all African children, the lack of proper education and research that can solve the major challenges of the continent is the reason that hinders the development of the continent.

As to information from the UN, Africa, particularly the Sub-Saharan region, ranks the lowest in terms of places where access to education is inadequate. For example, 60 percent of youth aged 15 to 17 across the continent are out of school. In addition, a large proportion of teens drop out of school. The development and deployment of adequate teachers, as well as access to practical courses supplemented by current technology, are also insufficient to transform the continent.

According to Assistant Director-General for Education at the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Stefania Giannini, since education is an essential element to accelerate Africa's development, providing the required support should be further strengthened to ensure access to and quality education in the continent. Ironically, a lot of young children in Africa continue to not attend school, and there are still concerns about the quality of education.

Therefore, to realize its set targets and assure continued development and prosperity across the continent, the education sector requires assistance. In this regard, AU should principally assume accountability for it and mobilize resources vigorously, and enlist the participation of other organizations.

According to AU Economic Development, Tourism, Trade, Industry, and Mining (ETTİM) Commissioner Albert Muchanga, a lack of sufficient education causes the skills mismatch in Africa's workforce, which accounts for more than 15.8 percent.

Inadequate education is a key barrier, and almost half of young people believe that their abilities do not match with the available job opportunities.

To curb these challenges, Africa must build continental qualification frameworks to support regional integration and skilled labor mobility by boosting its investments in education, research, and other areas. To be competitive in the twenty-first century, Africa must invest in education and skills training. Africa, in particular, is lagging behind in the fields of digitization and artificial intelligence. Many Africans lack access to decent education for a variety of reasons. Lifelong learning is not a luxury; it is essential. And education prepares the youths for jobs, including self-employment, which is really important, he said.

Dr. Ergoge Tesfaye of Ethiopia's Ministry of Women and Social Affairs stated that Africa requires a sustainable and inclusive education system that is up to date. Africa's young, in particular, should have access to a proper education. This will safeguard Africa's development by establishing and making available a 21st-century education system. Africans should cooperate, and strengthen partnerships and collaborations to provide educational opportunities for youth since both the quality and accessibility of education are critical to bringing about sustainable development, long-lasting peace to the continent as well as to make use of African resources, she explained.

Indeed, achieving the continent's goals requires well skilled human resources and an effective high-quality educational system that is receptive to new technology. Education is the cornerstone of long-term growth, as well as a critical contributor to peace and security, new job opportunities, and so on. African youth lack fundamental skills and are unemployed in their respective nations. As a result, the continent is underperforming in achieving its development goals; which calls for further effort.

Therefore, to assist African youth, the continent must enhance teachers' ability so that they can teach African history using African resources which solves the challenges of the education system of the continent. Furthermore, African governments must strengthen their domestic education policies and institutions, improve access to quality education for all Africans, and enhance coordination with international partners to maximize the impact of education investments. This is critical not only for the benefit of African women, youth, and children, but also for promoting their rights, improving access to important services, and empowering them to actively engage in the overall development processes of their respective nations.

Planet Earth

Ethiopia's innovative projects...

"Countries should now focus on addressing issues of sustainability and finance under the Paris Agreement to move forward and mitigate climate change effects," he said adding that countries should be supported with the tools and capacities needed to integrate climate resilience into their programs.

Paul Thangata, Head of Data and Analytics at AGRA said Africa is importing four major foods - maize, rice, soya, wheat - at a cost of \$4 billion. Discussions on climate change should include agriculture food systems. There is need for countries to set up processing point of production that will help in decision making on the smart agriculture systems.

George Laryea-Adjei, Global Director of Programmes, United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF) USA said the youth who are the majority on the continent should be involved in the climate change discussions of Africa.

"Climate change impacts, like floods, affect young people more. Climate change education should be incorporated in the school curriculum to educate young people on how cope with the crisis, be empowered with green skills and opportunity to solve

disasters as a results of climate change," said Mr. Laryea-Adjei.

"There is need to have programs to bridge the gap between the youth and the elderly to get them to be leaders in planting the trees and taking care of them, water conservation, taking care of plastics around, learning new skills by being attached to enterprises for a more resilient economy."

Ethiopia stands as one of the countries in the world striving to promote green development through diversifying greening projects, upholding clean and green energy as well as developing ecotourism, among others.

As can be recalled the country has exhibited its various projects executed over the past several years in response to mitigating climate change in Ethiopia. On this conference in which 150 countries were represented, Prime Minister Abiy stated that Ethiopia has so far planted 32.5 billion seedlings in the National Green Legacy Initiative in response to mitigating the effects of climate change globally and at the national level.

He mentioned the achievements Ethiopia has made in being self-sufficient in wheat and efforts underway to develop and expand

renewable energy resources across the country. During the Conference Ethiopia signed 600 million USD agreements with a company named UAE MEA to build a wind power plant which can generate 300 MW. Ethiopia also signed 8 million Euros with the Government of Italy for environmental development and climate change mitigation projects.

Ethiopia participated in COP28 as a leading member of the African Ministerial Conference on Environment (AMCEN) and Africa Group of Negotiators/AGN) and Least Developed countries Group (LDC). Ethiopia played a crucial role in coordinating African nations to consolidate their voice and negotiate in a unified manner as the current president of AMCEN.

On the side of the climate change conference, Ethiopia has presented its success stories through 35 forums highlighting the areas it has been praised for globally including the Green Legacy Initiative, sustainable agriculture and food self-sufficiency, renewable energy supply and water use, urban development, transportation, low-carbon incentive system and the ongoing participation of the private sector in climate

change and green development.

At the end of the Conference, various resolutions were made regarding The loss and damage fund designed to support climate-vulnerable developing countries was brought to life on the first day of the COP. Countries have pledged hundreds of millions of dollars so far for the fund; Commitments of worth \$3.5 billion to replenish the resources of the Green Climate Fund; New announcements totaling over \$150 million for the Least Developed Countries Fund (LDC) and Special Climate Change Fund (SCCF).

An increase of \$9 billion annually by the World Bank to finance climate-related projects (2024 and 2025);

Nearly 120 countries backed COP28 UAE Climate and Health Declaration to accelerate actions to protect people's health from growing climate impacts;

Over 130 countries have signed up to COP28 UAE Declaration on Agriculture, Food, and Climate to support food security while combatting climate change; and

Global Cooling Pledge has been endorsed by 66 countries to reduce cooling related emissions by 68% from today.

Africa needs effective policies and infrastructure to prosper from artificial intelligence, experts say

Africa needs supportive policies and robust infrastructure to tap the limitless opportunities of Artificial intelligence to leapfrog its development, experts have said.

Speaking at a panel discussion on 'Fostering prosperity through policies on artificial intelligence in Africa', on the sidelines of the on-going 56th Session of the Economic Commission for Africa Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (COM), experts agreed that Artificial Intelligence presented massive development opportunities for Africa if the right policies and infrastructure were in place.

Ousman Bah, Minister of Communications and Digital Economy in the Republic of Gambia, said it was important to have the right policies to regulate the use of AI and also avert its risks, but Africa should not wait to have the regulations in place to embrace the technology.

Artificial intelligence, a fast-evolving technology that taps the intelligence of machines or software is transforming all social spheres globally. Research shows that the technology has the potential to contribute up to \$15.7 trillion to the global economy by

2030, of which \$1.2 trillion could be generated in Africa, representing a 5.6 per cent increase in the continent's gross domestic product by 2030.

Fayaz King, Deputy Executive Director, Field Results and Innovation for the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), said necessary strategies were important to ensure that all approaches to AI from development, deployment to use are in the public interest.

"In the effervescent realm of AI the known, the unknown and the unknowable is best addressed through governance with humanity at its center, for what AI giveth, AI also taketh," Mr. King said, underscoring the need to bridge the digital divide by including marginalized communities in the AI initiatives.

Baratang Miya, Chief Executive of Girlhype Coders Academy, said governments should regulate and incentivise stakeholders across AI value chains with focus on Small Medium Scale Enterprises to foster innovation and equitable access to AI technologies.

Ms. Baratang said there should be a balance in policy development and humanity to ensure that the AI technology does take over. Government needs to establish

ethical frameworks on the development and deployment of AI through data privacy, security, transparency and accountability in AI systems. Africa needs to collect more data to have access to its own data and governments need to facilitate data democratization policies.

"We really need data that speaks to Africa itself and that case for open data means we are empowering citizens and at the same time encouraging innovation and efficiency and not using data that is inaccurate," said Miya, emphasizing that to host proper data for countries, good cloud infrastructure, including reliable electricity access are important.

Sandra Makumbirofa, Senior economist, ResearchICTAfrica, said AI has transformative potential to boost African economies through effective financial inclusion, employment creation and enhanced public service delivery. However, most of the market value of AI was realised in United States and China, she said, citing research by UNCTAD. It was therefore important for African countries to actively participate in global fora to ensure their interests were represented.

"Our database is inadequate for global policy

making," Ms. Makumbirofa noted. "The data that we have as African countries is not represented in the training of AI models. This means that the AI that we are using in Africa from foreign countries does not necessarily have the African context and therefore we are not able to use them efficiently as we can."

Contributing to the discussion, which was moderated by Dorothy Ooko, Head of Communications and Public Affairs for Africa at Google, the Executive Secretary, Claver Gatete, highlighted that most people were not aware of AI and a drawback of AI was its dependence on data which has to be accurate.

Mr. Gatete said the development of infrastructure such as internet connectivity was key to tapping the benefits of AI and that the technology must be shared among countries to avoid inventing the wheel.

"Out of the 1.6 billion people who are not connected, Africa really is one of the biggest places where we are not connected. If you are not connected you cannot even talk about AI. We need infrastructure, we need energy investment going hand in hand with the IT infrastructure," said Mr. Gatete.

Source: UNECA

Global energy-related CO2 emissions hit record high in 2023 – IEA

Global energy-related emissions of carbon dioxide (CO2) hit a record high last year, driven partly by increased fossil fuel use in countries where droughts hampered hydropower production, International Energy Agency (IEA) said on Friday.

Steep cuts in CO2 emissions, mainly from burning fossil fuels, will be needed in the coming years if targets to limit a global rise in temperatures and prevent runaway climate change are to be met, scientists have said.

"Far from falling rapidly – as is required to meet the global climate goals set out in the Paris

Agreement – CO2 emissions reached a new record high," the IEA said in a report.

Global emissions from energy rose by 410 million tonnes, or 1.1%, in 2023 to 37.4 billion tonnes, the IEA analysis showed.

A global expansion in clean technology such as wind, solar and electric vehicles helped to curb emissions growth, which was 1.3% in 2022. But a reopening of China's economy, increased fossil fuel use in countries with low hydropower output and a recovery in the aviation sector led to an overall rise, the IEA said in its report.

Moves to replace lost hydropower generation

due to extreme droughts accounted for around 40% of the emissions rise, or 170 million tonnes of CO2, it said.

"Without this effect, emissions from the global electricity sector would have fallen in 2023," the IEA said.

Energy-related emissions in the United States fell by 4.1% with the bulk of the reduction coming from the electricity sector, according to the report.

In the European Union emissions from energy fell by almost 9% last year driven by a surge in renewable power generation and a slump in

both coal and gas power generation.

In China, emissions from energy rose by 5.2%, with energy demand growing as the country recovered from COVID-19-related lockdowns, the report said.

China, however, also contributed around 60% of global additions of solar, wind power and electric vehicles in 2023, the IEA said.

Globally electric vehicles accounted for one-in-five new car sales in 2023, reaching 14 million and up 35% on the level of 2022.

Source: Reuters

Planet Earth

Ethiopia's innovative projects towards addressing climate change

BY STAFF REPORTER

During the latest conference of African Ministers of Finance in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe it was indicated that African countries should explore innovative green financing mechanisms to promote a green transition to mitigate the effects of climate change.

The side event on Sustainable green financing mechanisms for Africa was hosted by the Government of Zimbabwe and organized by the Ministry of Finance, Economic Development and Investment Promotion.

Veronica Jakarasi, Chief Director, Climate and Meteorological Services, Zimbabwe stressed the need to support environment friendly investments like climate smart agriculture to mitigate climate change.

“To attract green financing, Africa needs to have policy and regulatory frameworks with set targets in line with ambitious development,” said Ms. Jakarasi.

She said Zambia and Zimbabwe are already investing in adaptation and that countries should now set aside budgets



to mitigate and adapt against drought as a step towards leveraging international financing.

Green financing, she added is the new way of mobilizing resources for financing climate change resilience. Countries should establish innovative financing mechanisms such as green bonds through public private partnerships, to fund their climate change projects and programs.

On the role of banks in mobilizing resources for green financing, Nqobizitha

Dube, Climate Finance Manager; Infrastructure Development Bank of Zimbabwe said banking institutions should be involved in climate change discussions to enable them make informed decisions on funding green projects. Innovative clean mechanisms that reduce risks should be considered and evaluated for funding by banks to help address the effects of climate change.

Linus Mofor, senior environmental expert from the Economic Commission

for Africa (ECA), said African countries are increasingly experiencing water and heat stress at varying magnitudes, including droughts and seasonal shifts. The public international financial flows are nowhere near sufficient to address adaptation, loss and damage or to support the low-carbon development needs of developing countries.

“Green climate finance is key for sustainable development and thus inform programming by continental and regional organizations in their quest to capacitate and facilitate low-carbon and climate-resilient development in Africa,” said Mr. Mofor.

“Green transition requires financing for sustainable investment and access to real time climate-related data. We need to have national and regional programs aimed at galvanizing green finance for enhanced economic development; regional collaboration.”

He noted that most African countries have ratified the Paris Agreement with ambitious NDCs requiring up to \$3 trillion for implementation.

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