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Ethio-Swedish ties continuing to make progress

- Sweden finances construction of over 6,000 schools



Amb. Hans Henric

BY TSEGAYE TILAHUN

ADDIS ABABA- The Ethio-Sweden relations have further evolved in different arenas keeping the momentum of the age-old ties between the people and economies of the two countries, according to the Swedish Ambassador.

The Ethio-Swedish solidarity panel discussion was held yesterday at Addis Ababa University (AAU) in the presence of AAU University Interim President Samuel Kifle (PhD) and other high-level guests.

Speaking at the occasion, Ambassador Hans Henric Lundquist stated that his country, which remains without any geopolitical claims and no colonial past, is a preferred partner in the times of fierce geopolitical competition, exactly as what the world is today, a very polarized world.

According to him, the two countries' solidarity and partnership was remarkably deepened after 1924 when Ras Tafari visited Oslo, where he met with the Swedish King and the Archbishop. "As Ethiopia was anticipating war, it wanted to strengthen its defense capabilities and in 1934, Sweden sent officers to help to train the Ethiopian military. When Italy invaded Ethiopia in 1935, four of the officers left the Swedish armed forces and fought for Ethiopia in solidarity with their host country."

The Ambassador further mentioned that in 1945,

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Wondu Bekele

Photo: Hadash Aberha

MWECS to establish Healthy Africa to prevent cancer

- Celebrates 20th anniversary

BY MISGANAW ASNAKE

ADDIS ABABA –Mathewos Wondu Ye-Ethiopia Cancer Society (MWECS) announced plan to commence Healthy Africa project to intensify efforts on preventing cancer and other non-communicable diseases.

In a presser held yesterday to mark 20th anniversary, Society's Chief Executive Director Wondu Bekele stated that the project, which will be undertaken in collaboration with governmental and non-governmental organizations, aimed at preventing cancer

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Dev't partners raise 628.9 mln USD for humanitarian response

- Ethiopia's UN-backed humanitarian response plan about 3.24 bln USD

BY STAFF REPORTER

ADDIS ABABA- United Nations (UN) partners raised over 630 million USD for humanitarian assistance in Ethiopia during the international pledge conference held in Geneva last Tuesday, according to UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

Since the Humanitarian Response Plan of UN to Ethiopia for 2024 is about 3.24 billion USD, the total fund raised in response to humanitarian issues in Ethiopia accounts less than five percent of its plan.

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Ethiopia takes lead in energy ties with neighbors

- Electricity supply to Sudan continuing unabated

BY MESERET BEHAILU

ADDIS ABABA –Ethiopia is playing a leading role in creating energy ties with neighboring countries, the Ministry of Water and Energy (MoWE) said, adding that the electricity supply to Sudan is continuing unabated.

MoWE Minister Habtamu Itefa (PhD-Eng.), made the above remark on the sidelines of the World Future Energy Summit that is being held in Abu Dhabi from April 16 to 18, 2024.

According to the Minister, the energy linkage showcases Ethiopia's prime attention to fostering cooperation with the rest of Africa while the provision of electricity to Sudan



is continuing unabated though the latter has failed to settle the payment due to internal problems.

Habtamu (PhD) further highlighted

that Ethiopia, along with development partners, is playing an important role in strengthening and sustaining East Africa's

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Stakeholders spotlight on public entrepreneurship's economic virtues

BY ASHENAFI ANIMUT

ADDIS ABABA- Public entrepreneurship would play an immense role in bringing holistic development in Ethiopia, the head of various institutions said, stressing the need to advance the issue.

Speaking to the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA), the Entrepreneurship Development Institute CEO Hassan Hussein (PhD) stated that they have long been implementing the concept at institute level and has registered significant outcomes in this regard.

The CEO also noted that the government needs to open the door to further implement public entrepreneurship and push the promising results registered at the institute level to bring about an auspicious economic progress. "The government has to give prime attention to this issue as fighting maladministration repurposes a huge amount of resources."

Weighing on the abilities of civil servants in various institutions, Hassan emphasized the



need to devise the service entrepreneurship scheme to help them deliver efficient services, ease maladministration and address other institutional service related glitches.

"Currently, various institutions' workshops have failed to provide the desired services due to the absence of well-facilitated public entrepreneurship engagements and skilled startups."

On the other hand, the Ethiopian Civil

Service Commissioner Mekuria Haile (PhD) said that the public service reform embraces public entrepreneurship that is potentially believed to address the sector's pressing challenges.

Accordingly, the government has prepared viable policy frameworks in a bid to strengthen the public entrepreneurship implementation. Moreover, public entrepreneurship is a crucial initiative to use

time and technologies economically.

Citing the 800 billion Birr budget that is being set for this fiscal year, the commissioner stressed the need to boost entrepreneurship to achieve the intended goals of policymakers.

For the Ethio-Djibouti Railway Corporation CEO Abdi Zenebe (PhD), public entrepreneurship would be more effective when it is executed in common ventures. Having implemented entrepreneurship in a highly enthusiastic manner, the corporation has managed to increase its annual revenue from 1.78 billion Birr to five billion.

"If it is being facilitated and implemented in civil service, public entrepreneurship would be a potential turning point in bringing sustainable economic growth."

The government and institutions are highly responsible to further deploy enabling systems, create a viable ecosystem for innovators, startups and make structural shifts to better serve the public and the country at large, Abdi commended.



ESS, SSGI team up to provide latest information

BY ESSEYE MENGISTE

ADDIS ABABA- Ethiopian Statistical Service (ESS), and Space Science and Geo-spatial Institute (SSGI) have joined hands to provide critical, high-quality, up-to-date information that accelerate national development.

The two organizations have signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to work together on delivering quality and timely information that could be an important input for Ethiopia's holistic development.

Signing the agreement, ESS Director General Beker Shale (PhD), said that the agreement helps to provide high-quality, up-to-date information that can be a resource for national growth.

"For the country to grow in the holistic way, evidence based information is important. Because information helps to make rational decision and research," he said.

The Ethiopian Statistical Service provides high-quality, current information for policy, decision-makers, researchers, economic, social, and general macro-economic implementation and the sources of information are mainly surveying studies, measuring long-term and mid-term studies

and secondary data, he added.

According to the Director General, these data are growing and shifting, especially in the modern and technological age, and the sources of information are increasing through time.

However, he indicated that short surveys and administrative data are not enough to provide quality information in a timely manner, that's why the Service started to use latest and alternative technology.

The Space Science and Geo-spatial Institute is the country's institute that could create this capacity, he said, adding that the agriculture sector, which is backbone of country's economy, is ESS's main partner so that it can get data in different ways including satellite imagery.

Therefore, when the Ethiopian Statistical Service forms a partnership with the Space Science and Geo-spatial Institute, it is considering that the partnership is crucial to provide better information for a better Ethiopia, Beker said.

Space Science and Geospatial Institute Director General Abdisa Yilma on his part said that the agreement will help to work together to provide quality information that assist development endeavors.



Ethiopia, Japan agree to enhance cooperation in agriculture

ADDIS ABABA (ENA) - Agriculture Minister Girma Amente discussed with Japanese Ambassador to Ethiopia Hiro Shibata on ways to working in collaboration in the areas of agriculture.

The two sides mainly discussed cooperation in the development of rice, horticulture and coffee cultivation.

On the occasion, Minister Girma Amente explained the excellent results obtained in irrigated wheat cultivation mentioning the efforts being made to repeat this outstanding achievement in the cultivation of rice.

Girma revealed plan to cultivate irrigated rice on 3,000 hectares of land for the first time in Somali state.

Appreciating the Japanese

government's support in rice, horticulture and coffee development, he requested Japan to provide necessary support in efforts to expand irrigated rice development in Ethiopia.

Ambassador Hiro Shibata, on his part explained his government's support for smallholder farmers in rice, horticulture and coffee cultivation through capacity building and resource provision.

The ambassador has assured that the Japanese government will continue to strengthen its support.

The Japan is supporting smallholder farmers in Oromia, Amhara, Sidama, Southern Ethiopia and Central Ethiopia states, it was indicated.

The support of partners is crucial in the efforts to ensuring the food security of the citizens, Ministry of Agriculture said.

Commission resolves disputes over 4.8 billion Birr worth records

MUSA MUHAMMAD

ADDIS ABABA - The Federal Tax Appeals Commission announced that it has settled down disputes on more than four billion Birr worth records in the last nine months.

Presenting nine-month report, Commission's President, Mulugeta Ayalew said that the commission has resolved disputes on 452 records of which 267 are appeals from Customs and 185 are from Revenues.

The records appealed on Revenues worth over 3.92 billion Birr while the records of Customs valued 845.88 million Birr, he

noted.

According to the President, the Commission's dispute resolving capacity has reached 98.68% and the value the records worth has shown a 1.9 billion Birr increment compared to last year in the same period.

The commission has put directions to advance its services through resolving dispute on records within specified timetable, establishing advanced operation system and making the online services fully operational, and strengthening its internal supervision.



Mulugeta Ayalew

Dev't partners ...

According to UN latest report, well-coordinated response is already underway. The UN and humanitarian partners are backing the nationally led response to scale up life-saving assistance to 15.5 million people, and food aid to 10.4 million.

During the pledge conference, Foreign Affairs Minister Ambassador Taye Atskeselassie said that "The Ethiopian Government has launched integrated policy initiatives to transform the country from climate-induced crisis to food self-sufficiency based on a peace-development-humanitarian nexus."

"Addressing the impacts of climate change requires collective global responsibility....[] Ethiopia is determined to end the cycle of food insecurity. We appreciate the continued support of our development partners for their solidarity and cooperation in support of our national development endeavors and for their response to humanitarian needs," he added.

The UN Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, Joyce Msuya also urged all international community members across the globe to stand shoulder to shoulder with the people and Government of



Ethiopia as they face challenging times ahead.

Conflict and climate hazards have taken a merciless toll: families uprooted, children malnourished and out of school, and now, with the lean season at the door, the grim spectra of rising hunger, the assistant secretary-general said adding that : "We must help them turn the tide, invest in people's lives, futures, and wellbeing, and bolster

their inherent strength in the face of adversity."

The Government of Ethiopia recently endorsed a new National Policy and Strategy on Disaster Risk Management in recognition of the country's vulnerability to different climatic and conflict-driven shocks and committed 250 million USD for food support over coming months, according to the UN report.

MWECS to...

disease, controlling non-communicable diseases at early stage and providing better cancer medical treatment in the country.

The project will help to prevent non-communicable diseases in Ethiopia and reduce health care costs that patients spend for medical expenses traveling abroad, he said.

Up on completion, Healthy Africa project will have addiction rehabilitation, and research centers, hotel, recreation areas including sports ground, woods and lakes among others, he disclosed.

"The Society has submitted a letter to Addis Ababa City Administration to get land for the project to commence the construction of the center building soon," Wondu said.

The Society has been working with the Ministry of Health for the last twenty years on the development and implementation of the National Cancer Control, National Childhood and Adolescent cancer Control Plan - the first of its kind in Ethiopia, he expressed.

MWECS has also been undertaking a lung cancer project for three years being implemented in Oromia, Amhara, Afar and Addis Ababa and also constructed PEN-Plus clinics in Oromia and Amhara states.

The Society covers cost of transportation and provides medicines and diagnostic laboratory services, food accommodation, psychosocial support, education to cancer patients, he added.

Currently, it is implementing 8 projects with over 1,400 members, 500 volunteers and 30 staffs, Wondu stated.

Ethio-Swedish...

Sweden loaned five million kronor to Ethiopia, its first ever credit for development work. This was followed by a large-scale recruitment of Swedish experts, particularly medical staff and teachers, army and police officers, lawyers, geologists, agriculturalists, and technicians to help build an efficient state.

"Also, numerous Ethiopians enrolled in more than 6,000 primary schools that were built across the country with Swed-

ish assistance in the 60, 70, and 80s. Furthermore, the Ethio-Swedish long standing cooperation, which is further advancing over the years, is characterized by the mutual benefit of the people and economies of the two countries," he remarked.

Sweden is marking 70 years of development assistance to Ethiopia, which is its first official development cooperation in Africa.

Ethiopia takes...

Power Pool. Besides, power lines of roads and telecom networks are extended to neighboring countries.

"At the continental level, there are short, medium, and long-term plans and regional joint strategy is also considered. As we have immense hydropower and the capability to develop, we are working tirelessly to realize East Africa's green energy center."

He also indicated the public-private partnership in energy development activities is crucial to bring significant outcomes.

Based on the Ethiopian energy system master plan, it has managed to create energy linkage with three countries whilst various activities are being done to expand the ties.

Owing to the capital-intensive nature of energy lines' infrastructural development, the commitment of developmental partners is so crucial. Participating in such development activities is the means to provide a sizable number of jobs and create peace and stability in the target countries, the Minister remarked.

Opinion

Peaceful means is the only way out

BY MENGESHA AMARE

The situation in Ethiopia is now trying but manageable if everyone is committed to ensure peace and stability as the issue itself badly requires the combined effort of all. Besides, the issue of coming up with peace, peaceful coexistence, stability should not be left solely to the government, regional states, ministries such as the Ministry of peace, organizations working on the area and so forth as the issue definitely requires the combined effort of all and peace itself knows no boundary.

Undeniably, peace is everything and the firm foundation of stable life. Besides, war and conflict could never be, cannot be and even will never be a solution to problems created everywhere. Ethiopia is not exceptional in this regard. For instance, the situation in Amhara, Oromia and Tigray states has to be solved following the Pretoria agreement and principles of peace deal that have led the nation to comprehensive peaceful coexistence have to be well observed thereby creating a stable nation.

Cognizant of the fact that war is never the answer, and it is never a lasting solution to any problem, the country has to exhaustively employ all sorts of mechanisms for solving any disagreement, conflict and rivalry using only a peaceful means. Everything should be concluded in a peaceful manner and parties have to come to the round table discussions and entertained close talks since nothing could beyond genuine and heartiest discussion and amicable approach.

No doubt, the country has to work to ensure peace and security at every state and locality as lack of peace has come up with dual disadvantage: demolishing the existing development and getting the planned ones retarded. Here, every citizen has to work for peace and even some Diaspora members leading luxurious life abroad have to refrain themselves from adding fuel to fire as no one benefits out of conflict and war, it is quite obvious, and crystal clear for human race.

Without a shadow of doubt, in a world filled with complex challenges and diverse perspectives, the idea of war often emerges as a seemingly quick solution. However, the consequences of war extend far beyond the battlefield; this has to be well comprehended. Yes, the human toll of war is immeasurable for lives lost, families shattered, and communities torn apart etc which are the heartbreaking outcomes of armed conflicts and war. Beside, resources that could be invested in education, healthcare, and infrastructure are diverted to fund military operations. The long-term economic consequences, including the burden of post-war reconstruction, can cripple the nation for decades and even for millennia. Thus redirecting these resources towards sustainable development and

mutual prosperity is a more prudent choice.

Choosing peace over conflict allows citizens to channel their collective efforts towards addressing pressing social, economic and even political issues and safeguarding all citizens for future generations. Effective discussion and open dialogue provide avenues for conflict resolution without resorting to violence indeed! True, even the most entrenched disputes can be resolved through negotiation, close talks, dialog and understanding. Obvious, investing in discussions fosters long-term stability and builds bridges among/between citizens and beyond.

Conflict or war stifles innovation and hinders progress. The resources and intellect devoted to military endeavors could be redirected towards scientific research, technological advancements, and social innovation. By cultivating a culture of collaboration, peaceful coexistence, close talks, genuine discussion and citizens can harness human ingenuity to address the root causes of conflict and work towards shared prosperity. It is this time stable, economically fatten and diplomatically competent nation can be created.

Unequivocally, building and strengthening national democratic institutions is crucial for maintaining peace on a national, regional, continental and even global scale. Here, by empowering such muscular organizations is of paramount importance in fostering a commitment to international law, creating a framework for resolving disputes peacefully, ensuring that dialogue prevails over confrontation.

In a globe which has been interconnected by technology, trade, and shared challenges, the idea that war is the answer is an outdated and perilous notion. By recognizing the profound human, economic, and environmental costs of armed conflict, people can collectively strive for a more enlightened approach to resolving disputes solely through peaceful and nonviolent scheme. From this, one can deduce that discussion, dialogue, and cooperation are the prime and true cornerstones of a peaceful scenario, opposed to differences that have encircled disagreement, rivalry, enmity, and conflicts. After all, the true mark of a resilient and full of civility society lies not in its ability to wage war, but in its capacity to build enduring peace.

It is well known that human beings pay much interest in peace from the ancient time until now. Moreover, it can be stated that peace is the greatest and highest goal or hope that everyone wishes to achieve personally and expects to be created in society and in the world.

Therefore, people have to try by all means to gain peace as peace has been talked, thought, taught and studied in many ways and many aspects. Whenever wars occur, people need peace and ask for peace. Peace that people needed and asked for is the state

of the absence of wars, the state of having no fights. Peace is not merely the absence of war but the presence of justice, of law, of order, in short, of government.

It is a state of tranquility or quiet since in comprises freedom from civil disturbance, a state of security or order within a community provided for by law or custom, freedom from disquieting or oppressive thoughts or emotions, harmony in personal relations and as well as state or period of mutual concord between and among nations and nationalities, in the case of Ethiopia. Therefore, all Ethiopians have to think deeply about peace and try to garner peace in order to understand it and finally bring it into this soil. Needless to state, peace is a state of harmony in which individuals and communities coexist in respect and understanding.

One essential aspect of peace is the establishment of justice. Without justice, true peace cannot be achieved. Justice entails fairness, equality, and the protection of human rights. It involves creating a society where everyone has equal access to opportunities and resources, regardless of their background or circumstances. By upholding justice, citizens can address systemic inequalities and create a foundation for lasting peace. Such audacious assignments have to be dealt with the government of Ethiopia, but the support of all citizens has to be there.

Yes, peaceful societies benefit from increased stability, which attracts investments, promotes entrepreneurship, and stimulates economic growth. Conversely, conflict and instability have severe economic costs, impeding development and exacerbating poverty. Besides, stable societies provide conducive environment for businesses to thrive, attracting investors and generating employment opportunities.

The social fabric of peace in all parts of Ethiopia encompasses inclusive communities, equitable opportunities, and the protection of human rights. This trend has to be maintained and everyone has to work for the successful trek of efforts geared towards peace and stability. Societal or community cohesion is vital for establishing peace. When individuals feel a sense of belonging and identify with their communities, they are more likely to foster cooperation, support one another, and work towards shared goals.

The government of Ethiopia needs to work on promoting community engagement, dialogue, and inclusive discussion as such a pivotal means strengthens the bonds that hold societies together, fostering understanding and peace. Viable strategies and policies for peace that can involve proactive measures aiming at preventing conflicts, ensuring social cohesion, and addressing structural inequalities have to be put into practical actions thereby providing the nation and its citizens with stability and conducive atmosphere at every step.

Plus to that, the government has to prioritize investments in education and healthcare, promote inclusive governance, and work towards economic growth via formulating policies that promote dialogue, mediation, and conflict resolution which can contribute to peaceful resolutions of disputes, at domestic, continental and even international levels.

By engaging in constructive dialogue, negotiations, and diplomatic efforts, the Ethiopian government needs to strive to resolve disputes and prevent armed conflicts. It has also worked on the entire society as mindsets for peace involve cultivating attitudes of empathy, compassion, and open-mindedness.

True, individuals, including those in action to command the war from remote; have to come to their mind and overcome prejudice, build bridges, and foster understanding by embracing diversity and recognizing the humanity in others. Education, awareness campaigns, and promoting dialogue can help shape mindsets that prioritize peace, peaceful coexistence, fraternity, unity and collaboration.

In addition to this, conflict resolution skills empower individuals to address differences peacefully, resolve conflicts, and build mutually beneficial relationships. Effective communication, active listening, and negotiation techniques are also invaluable tools for transforming disputes into opportunities for growth and understanding. That is why it is repeatedly stated that investing in conflict resolution training and education equips individuals with the skills necessary for creating peaceful circles.

Most definitely, there is a way to end war, and one sees signs of the solution appearing wherever people realize that they share the same goal, to achieve a prosperous, healthy, sustainable, suitable and stable Ethiopia.

Understanding that conflict and war don't serve the shared goal, and could hardly lead to prosperity and progress, coming to round table discussion and genuine dialog is the best way out, indeed!

In sum, all Ethiopians have to work on deescalating enmity, treating the other side with respect, recognizing diversity, preparing themselves for forgiveness and ask for forgiveness. Here forgiveness means letting go of our desire for retribution and revenge. This is an act of true courage. Even if you believe that the other side doesn't deserve forgiveness, we deserve peace.

Besides, not insisting on self being right and proving the other side wrong. Yes, these ideas work in any negotiation, whether between/among nations or in a family even when we lack these ideas, we cannot turn them into coping mechanisms. Truly, the basis of peace is peace consciousness in individuals.

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

Editorial

Urgent response essential to thwart humanitarian catastrophe

Following the UN announcement of the need to raise about 1 billion USD to respond to the Humanitarian crisis in Ethiopia, donors that gathered in Geneva have pledged to donate more than 600 million of the stated amount. This is a good and encouraging step towards realizing the call made to quickly thwart the impending catastrophe before it causes further damage.

In the last couples of years or since the outbreak of the COVID 19 pandemic, Ethiopia has passed through series of interrelated challenges that exposed it to the current disaster. Especially the global threats of climate change have had its toll in the Horn of Africa over the last two to three years. Erratic rainfall that lasted for about four rainy seasons in many parts of the region has left many farmers in crisis and killed a huge number of cattle.

The drought has continued for consecutive years to the extent it becomes difficult to the agrarian society revive easily and for the government and other humanitarian institutions to help them quickly recover. Essentially, the humanitarian agencies should respond to this urgent need through providing comprehensive and effective responses.

Furthermore, locust infestation has also innumerable sum of damage over large areas of farms in various parts of the country. The locus infestation has also left many incapable until they recover for the coming two or more years.

The most disastrous incident during the stated period is the war that broke out in the northern part of the country. Obviously, war causes a lot of damage on cross sections of development facilities, infrastructure, residential units ... etc. The farming community is also a primary victim in many ways.

Now that there is relatively better condition of peace and suitable weather for farming the government is making all the necessary efforts to help farmers reengage in their usual farming activities. Such supports include the timely delivery of select seeds and fertilizer that are the vital inputs in the production.

However, considering the magnitude of the impact of the above mentioned negative factors that affected the rural community it is unlikely to extricate the entire number of victims from the harmful consequences overnight. It needs years of concerted efforts to rehabilitate them fully. Therefore, concerned donors, countries and international organizations need to lend a hand in time to assist the ongoing efforts of the government to avert the eminent crisis.

Just as the pledges made during the resource mobilization event in Geneva, partners should expedite their responses to speed up the lifesaving efforts in the hard hit areas. Accordingly, they should follow suit to the commendable pledges of the US 253 Million USD, the UKs 125 Million USD and that of EUs 135 Million USD.

It is also important to consider that as majority of the hard hit areas are found in the northern part of the country where the two years of devastating war took place, there is a need to ensure that the rehabilitation response goes well in line with the agreement to Demobilize, Disengage and Rehabilitate (DDR) the participants of the conflict as per the Pretoria Agreement.



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Opinion

Embracing a holistic approach for successful national dialogue implementation

BY ADDISALEM MULAT

The remarkable degree of public assistance and engagement seen throughout the Ethiopian National Dialogue Commission's (ENDC) initial tasks acts as a substantial indication of individuals' need to be listened to as well as their deep-rooted inspiration to proactively add to the nation's change. The general public's growing initiatives can play a huge role in stirring up favorable adjustment as well as leading the way for a brighter future for Ethiopia.

Apart from supporting a comprehensive system for conversations and improving the discussion procedure with a wide variety of perspectives as well as experiences, ENDC plays a huge role in bringing the general public together.

For decades, Ethiopia has been facing must-solve political polarizations turbocharged by divisive rhetoric. Undeniably, Ethiopia has been marred by decades of unresolved setbacks that still put a strain on the nation building process. In this regard, with the process going smoothly, the planned national dialogue allows all concerns to be tabled at public queries.

By the same token, the general public's resolute decision to participate in positive discussions focused on enhancing the country is both remarkable as well as motivating. Besides, it showcases a common understanding of the relevance of promoting discussion as well as discovering commonalities. This belief originates from the understanding that an extensive and comprehensive conversation is important to deal with the different demands coupled with desires of the whole country.

If properly it is utilized properly, the national platform is also a genuine and millstone attempt to reconcile differences and to find a middle ground. The steps taken so far to ensure transparency in the early works of the national dialogue would lay a foundation for future undertakings.

In actual fact, the involvement of people from varied histories plays a crucial duty in producing an all-natural system for significant conversations. Witnessing such a high degree of excitement and enthusiasm has actually had a profound impact on inspiring the general public to continue in their undertakings.

Briefing the media recently, ENDC Spokesperson Tibebe Tadesse stated that the commission has been undertaking various activities to identify dialogue participants and mapping about 1,300 districts across the country in a bid to make the process inclusive and participatory. He also indicated participants' identification has been taking place in 940 districts across the country while the commission has finalized the two activities in 850 districts. Participants' identification would take place in the remaining districts in the coming weeks.

Out of the 130, 000 citizens participated in the preliminary activities; more than 14,000 are selected to take part in the agenda collection for the final dialogue. The representatives are drawn from different states and segments of the society excluding Addis Ababa, federal institutions and Diaspora communities.

The spokesperson further highlighted that the commission has finalized the identification of representatives who will participate in the final dialogue in Afar, Benishangul Gumuz, Gambella, Harari, Sidama, South Western Ethiopia, South and Central Ethiopia states as well as in Addis Ababa and Dire Dawa city administrations.

Participants' identification is taking place in Somali and Oromia states and after completing such activities, the commission would attain 70-

75% of the total representatives that are required for the final dialogue. The remaining 25 to 30% will be filled by participants' identification and agenda collection activities in Amhara and Tigray states and preparation is underway to this end.

So far, the dialogue is undergoing a democratic and independent process. In fact, the public is the primary driving force to make it more sound and acceptable to all. This helps to bring each and every voice to the national platform. The dialogue is receiving public acceptance and many are pinning their hope on it to cement Ethiopia's democratic path and prosperity.

In the modern-day period, the accomplishment of an effective nationwide discussion requires the collective initiatives of a wide range of entities. Other than that the Federal government of Ethiopia has been playing a paramount role in helping with the discussion procedure by developing systems as well as structures for open and comprehensive conversations.

As one would expect national dialogue plays a major role in the nation-building process, forestalling discords and repairing hostilities of multiple types through dialogue with the audience and the conflict-resolution process. Apart from supporting living in peace and harmony, the national dialogue plays a major role in giving rise to stability as well as prosperity and taking the country to the next level of accomplishment at the earliest possible time.

In actual fact, the various Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples of Ethiopia are generally known for resolving their problems in their way in accordance with their respective cultural traditions. For centuries, they have been getting to the bottom of their disagreement with no trouble. Reasoning from this fact, Ethiopians have been living under Ethiopia's skies with entrenched homegrown cultural and religious values that enable them to live together peacefully and harmoniously.

Furthermore, civil culture companies, consisting of non-governmental companies (NGOs) and community-based teams, add considerably to the nationwide discussion by promoting for the engagement of marginalized groups as well as enhancing their voices. They commonly arrange online forums, workshops, as well as town conferences to motivate energetic resident interaction as well as promote significant discussions on essential concerns.

The government of Japan handed over 12 vehicles and 100 computers to Ethiopian National Dialogue Commission (ENDC). As to the statement sent recently to The Ethiopian Herald, the Embassy of Japan in Ethiopia stated that this support covered procurement of 12 vehicles through UNDP at ENDC premises.

During handover ceremony Japan Ambassador to Ethiopia, Hironori Shibata stated that the handing over ceremony has shown the strong ties between Ethiopia and Japan through supporting National Dialogue process the latter to create peace in Ethiopia.

"Japan is always a strong supporter to the people and the government of Ethiopia, and work together for recovering the beautiful and peaceful nation. Since I arrived in Ethiopia, I have reaffirmed that National Dialogue is one of the key activities for realizing eternal peace in Ethiopia," he added.

In addition to such mobility and equipment, this fund will also support the public-relations materials of National Dialogue to spread the key information of National Dialogue to the people all over the nation, according to the statement.

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

Business & Economy

Enhancing export through expanding agricultural products

BY ABEBE WOLDEGIORGIS

Ethiopia is endowed with abundant agricultural resources and has diverse ecological zones. Agriculture is the mainstay of the Ethiopian economy, accounting for around 35% of the country's GDP and employing over 70% of the population.

The Government has identified key priority intervention areas to increase productivity of smallholder farms and expand large-scale commercial farms. Particularly, under the new administration has given renewed emphasis to develop the agriculture sector and ensure food security. Among the top priorities identified include: small and large-scale irrigations' development, agricultural inputs supply financing, increasing productivity of crops and livestock, improving agricultural production methods using mechanization, post-harvest loss reduction, developing research-based food security system, and natural resources management.

Ethiopia has vast untapped water resources and arable land, but only about 5% of the country's water resources are currently utilized for irrigation. Modernizing the agricultural sector without expanding irrigation farming and using modern inputs is considered impossible. While irrigation farming has been practiced traditionally in the highlands, more large-scale and modern irrigation systems were introduced in the 1950s in the Awash River valley for sugar cane cultivation by the Dutch company HVA Matahara. Additionally, large-scale irrigation farms were established in the northwestern parts of the country in the North Gondar Zone of Amhara region Metema and Humera for oilseed and cereal production. These irrigation-based commercial farms have played a pivotal role in supporting Ethiopia's export earnings over the past decades.

In the last 30 years, small-scale irrigation farming has expanded to various parts of the country, but the full potential remains untapped due to issues like damage to water pumps and lack of spare parts. Nevertheless, the area under irrigation is steadily increasing over time. The Ministry of Irrigation and Lowlands has developed large and medium-scale irrigation schemes, but Ethiopia still vastly underutilizes its irrigation potential, which is key to realizing the country's vision of becoming a middle-income economy by 2030.

The challenge that has to be solved to realize this vision is the question of ensuring food security and building climate resilience economy. If used effectively, irrigation technology is an option that can help solve this issue and have positive trickle-down effects across other sectors. However, this question is also tied with the farmers, pastoralists and semi-pastoralists populations in lowland areas of the country. These areas of Ethiopia have historically been underexplored despite the opportunities they may offer.

Therefore, harnessing the potential of cultivating irrigation farm in the lowland parts of the country further strengthen the nation efforts to boost exporting agricultural



Some of exportable agricultural products

products.

Recently, the Ministry of Trade and Regional Integration announced that Ethiopia has obtained 617 million USD from exported products during the last 8 months of the current fiscal year. The Ministry stated that the amount achieved over the stated period is 87.51 % of the targeted 705.15 million USD. The revenue is obtained from export goods that have been supervised under the ministry. The income shows an increment of more than 80 million USD compared to the same period last year.

Most of the income is obtained from the export of cereals and oilseeds, the ministry said, indicating that improvement of demand for soybean, red beans and masha in the international market as well as an increase in sesame production and the implementation of agricultural investment regulation are the factors that contributed for the encouraging achievements.

According to the Ministry of Agriculture, agriculture is an essential driver of economic growth in the Ethiopian economy. Crop and livestock production account for roughly 65% and 25% of agricultural GDP respectively. Improved inputs, enhanced management techniques, and expansion of irrigation farming help to boost agricultural output. However, significant constraints, such as limited access to finance and technology, slow potential gains. Furthermore, inefficient market systems and underdeveloped research and extension services brought additional challenges.

Ethiopia has been an importer of agricultural goods despite this enormous potential. The government set a plan to replace wheat imports with local production by introducing irrigated farming techniques to harvest wheat twice a year. This will create great opportunities for foreign irrigation equipment

manufacturers to supply their technology to the Ethiopian agricultural sector.

There are also three integrated agro-industrial processing parks and more planned for the years to come. Foreign companies that can supply equipment and technology for food processing plants have great opportunity in the Ethiopian market. The government policy also encourages foreign investors to engage in commercial farming in the selected areas of the country where the necessary infrastructure is availed.

Agri-investment licenses can be obtained from the Ethiopian Investment Commission and land can be leased for up to 99 years from regional and city administration bureaus.

Recently, land allocation, compensation, and relocation have posed significant issues for the government in terms of equity and transparency.

In addition, significant regional autonomy in Ethiopia means that respect for land rights varies across the country. Ethiopia's total agricultural exports in 2022 were valued at \$3.3 billion. Major exports include: Coffee (\$1.5 billion), Fresh-cut flowers (\$591 million), fresh vegetables (\$248 million), Sesame seeds (\$184 million) Pulses (\$137 million).

Agriculture is a priority sector for the government which sees enhancing agricultural production and productivity as a way to increase export revenue and strengthen global competitiveness. To achieve these targets, the government seeks to leverage unutilized arable land, modernize production systems, and enhance the uptake of modern technology.

In the Ten Years Development Plan, agriculture is emphasized as a Pathway to Prosperity 2021-2030. During the plan time, the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) has prioritized commodities for investment and production expansion, including wheat, soybeans, sesame seed, onion, tomato, avocado, banana, poultry, milk, and red meat. In addition, the MoA plans to boost domestic production of rice.

As mentioned above, Ethiopia has abundant resources that can transform the agriculture sector including water, arable land and huge number of labor force. However, due to lack of technology, finance and skilled labor force the resource is not exploited as it is expected. As the result, the nation remains as one of the pauperized nations in the world.

To reverse the situation to the better, the government dedicated to exploit the resources and has allocated huge amount of money for agricultural research and infrastructural development helpful for supplying inputs to farmers and market their products. The expansion of irrigation farm for wheat production showed that the nation, not only realize ensuring food security, but also can enhance garnering foreign currency through exporting agricultural exports.

It also stimulates other sectors' economy including the manufacturing and service sectors through supplying raw materials.

Boosting exporting agricultural products can shore up the shortage of hard currency which is badly needed for the importation of agricultural and manufacturing inputs.

To achieve economic development the nation must be integrated with the foreign world through trade. Currently, the nation imports more than its export and this clearly indicate how the nation finds itself in trade deficits.

Therefore, to balance the gap, Ethiopia needs to exploit its agricultural resources both from the crop farm and livestock and export to the foreign world so that it can import modern technologies for the transformation of its economy.

Ethiopia needs to exploit its agricultural resources both from the crop farm and livestock and export to the foreign world so that it can import modern technologies for the transformation of its economy

Art & Culture

Legacy of Paulin Hountondji, Prominent African Philosopher

BY MULUGETA GUDETA

Tributes had been pouring out following the death of Paulin Hountondji, who passed away on recently at the age of 81. According to his brief biography, Hountondji was born on April 11, 1942 in Ivory Coast. He was educated in France at the prestigious Ecole Normal in Paris and received his doctorate in philosophy in 1967. He soon became one of Africa's prominent philosophers and published a number of books revolving around his critique against what he called ethno-philosophy and the attempt to portray it as a universal portrait of African philosophy. Hountondji maintained that there ethno-philosophy was the fabrication of European intellectuals to denigrate African philosophy that should be viewed as a combination of Western tradition together with a critical appraisal of traditional African world views.

I heard or read about Paulin Hountondji back in 1976, during the seminar on African philosophy that took place here in Addis Ababa. The seminar took place at Africa Hall, which was the appropriate place for the occasion for the symbolic value it had. A seminar on African philosophy could not be held anywhere else. It concluded with the participation of the most prominent intellectuals and philosophers that took part with financial support from UNESCO, if memory does not fail me. Among the scholars who took part in the conference, I still remember people like Jhon Arthur from Ghana, Paulin J. Hountondji from Benin, Pierre Claver Okoudjou from Benin, Naimkery Koffi from Ivory Coast, Cheik Anta Diop from Senegal and others.

From Ethiopia, participants included prominent historians, linguists and philosophers such as Elizabeth Workeneh, Hailu Fulas Tadesse Beyene, Claude Sumner, Alemayehu Moges, Hailu Essaias, and Fekadu Gedamu among others.

Many of them have passed away while the few remaining ones must have aged or are in retirement. There were some 34 participants at the seminar which was led by the late Professor Claude Sumner. Looking back to those days when philosophy was one of the academic subjects that attracted intellectual attention not only in Africa but also in Europe and the United States, one can perhaps say that the emergence of philosophers like Pauline Hountondji can be considered a breakthrough. Hountondji appeared at a time when the debate around African philosophy raged within and outside the continent.

Africa has produced many philosophers whose works reflected the quest for an African philosophy. Almost all of them have been trying to show the world in general and Europe in particular that Africa had indeed a philosophy or philosophies of its own. They fought hard to settle the question whether anyone could speak of African philosophy per se. The alternative was to stick to the Hegelian verdict that denied Africa being able of even knowing what philosophy was all about. Among the most prominent and best known

philosophers of the 20th century, one can perhaps site the late Senegalese president Cedar Leopold Sedar Senghor statesman, poet, and philosopher of negritude.

Senghor was one of a group of African and West Indian students in Paris who inaugurated a movement in the 1930s that was later dubbed *négritude*. "The movement is characterized by its reversal of the colonialist portrayal of things African as evil, subhuman, or, at the least, inferior to all things European. *Négritude* proclaimed all things African superior to all things European.

Even in color symbolism, *négritude* asserted that black is more beautiful than white, and soft, dark night is preferable to harsh daylight." For several decades this movement exercised a powerful influence over Francophone black literature. *Négritude* was not only about identity. It also contained the seeds of an African philosophy of liberation or one strand of African political philosophy.

Although *Négritude* is generally considered an artistic movement, one cannot deny the philosophical undercurrent that serves as its bedrock even though the latter was not systematically developed. Likewise a philosophical undercurrent can be discerned in the literary works of Wole Soyinka, in the political writings of Amilcar Cabral, Steve Biko's 'Black Consciousness Movement' has already a philosophical touch as expressed in one of his famous sayings: "Being black is not a matter of pigmentation—being black is a reflection of a mental attitude." Read mental attitude as meaning consciousness.

Hountondji is different from the above-indicated African 'political philosophers' because he had taken the search for this African philosophy as his main career to which he had devoted his time and intellectual resources. The debate around issues of African philosophy are not as serious as during the 1970s and the following decades. The new generation of African philosophers also tend disregard his contribution to African thought while his works are generally considered important contributions to modern African thought by African thinkers.

At that time, advocates of an African philosophy were few and far between while the opponents of this idea were many simply because for a long period of time the view that Africa had no philosophy to speak of and the detractors that sprouted on around this assumption were under the influence of the well-known Hegelian denial that Africa was not part of modern history and part of what he called the Absolute idea and as such could not develop a philosophy of its own.

Paulin Hountondji has written three major books on African philosophy namely, "African Philosophy: Myth and Reality", "The struggle for Meaning" and "Combats pour le Sens" (Combats for the feelings). In African Philosophy, "is not in some mysterious corner of our supposedly immutable soul, a collective and unconscious world view which is incumbent on us to study and revive. Philosophy and African philosophy for him, "consist essentially in



the process of analysis itself."

According to another opinion, "The philosophy that is fostered by the African cultural experience, tradition and history is referred to as "African Philosophy" Thus, there is always the spirit of African philosophy, a spirit of philosophical and spiritual orientation that emphasizes coexistence with nature rather than conquering and collectivism."

In his first book, Hountondji "attacks a myth popularized by ethno-philosophers such as Placid Temples and Alxis Kagame that there is an indigenous, collective African philosophy separate and distinct from Western philosophical tradition. Hountondji contends that ideological manifestations of this view that stress the uniqueness the African experience are proto-nationalist reactions against colonialism conducted, paradoxically in terms of colonialist discourse."

African philosophy was not much known at that time. Ethiopian philosophy was even unthinkable. So, whenever some academics raised these topics, they considered both philosophies underdeveloped; looking at African philosophy through the distorted and biased prisms of Western philosophical paradigms.

It all boiled down to showing how African philosophy was undeveloped or useless something that amounted to the same a Western academic criticism of its "backwardness". This is what is called the Eurocentric view on African philosophy, which is based on the assumption that Africans can't have a philosophy of their own, a view that was further elaborated during European colonialism.

Tsenay Serequeberhan, an Eritrean academic who published a collection of philosophical essays on African philosophy quoted Jacques Derrida, a French philosopher of Algerian descent, who said that, "Metaphysics—the white mythology which resembles and reflects the culture of the West: the white man takes his own mythology, his own logos, that is, the mythos of idiom, for universal form of that he must still wish to call Reason."

As such, he searched for African philosophy in the post-colonial period is a rebellion against this Eurocentric bias that colonialists used to justify their colonial conquests in the name of "civilization" or

as a civilizing project. In his essay entitled, "Is there an African Philosophy?", Innocent Onyewuenyi says that, "The Africa that is portrayed in books by Western ethnologists and historians is the Africa of savage Africans who did nothing, developed nothing, or created nothing historical.

The man who brought out African and Ethiopian philosophy from darkness to light was Professor Sumner who used his time of academic isolation to articulate the basic premises of Ethiopian philosophy that centered on Zara Yakob and his disciple Wolde Hiwot.

In the 1960s and 1970s, there were many African academic philosophers who lectured or wrote about African philosophy, but none of them had developed a systematic study of this philosophy. Professor Sumner was the first to unearth what he called "the philosophy of man" from under the centuries old rubbles of African traditional thoughts and brought it to international attention; thereby turning it into a respectable field of philosophical inquiry.

It was largely after Claude Sumner's books were published and attracted so much attention that African philosophers took African philosophy seriously and somehow disputed the Western bias that prevailed for so long concerning the non-existence of African or Ethiopian philosophy. According to one source, "The greatest contribution of Claude Sumner is as such found in proving the existence African philosophy through his studies of Ethiopian philosophy,

Such a study identified oral, written, adaptive elements in Ethiopian philosophy." This is to say that Professor Sumner did not directly study the philosophies of African people everywhere but he studied Ethiopian philosophy and through it he logically inferred the existence and substance of African philosophy at large."

However, the major issues of African philosophy that should provoke informed debates nowadays should be how to develop African philosophy in a way that would accelerated the spiritual and material renaissance of the African man and the building of a modern African civilization based on its ancient traditions, value systems, literature and anything that touches upon African thinking and African being in the broadest sense of the terms.

Indepth

Making national dialogue a success

BY DANIEL ALEMAYEHU

National dialogue and reconciliation are amongst the important leaps to take if one considers a holistic and national consensus for a given country. It indeed helps a nation and its people to achieve a certain national goal. Realizing the long awaited dream, the government of Ethiopia has been working more than ever to bring multiple narratives and ideas to the table and create a national consensus.

In the past few years, the government and the people of Ethiopia have faced unprecedented challenges that threaten the existence of the country. The reformist government has tried to overcome those hurdles and put things in order. However, the people have still reflected the need for a national dialogue that should be inclusive and bring about noticeable results.

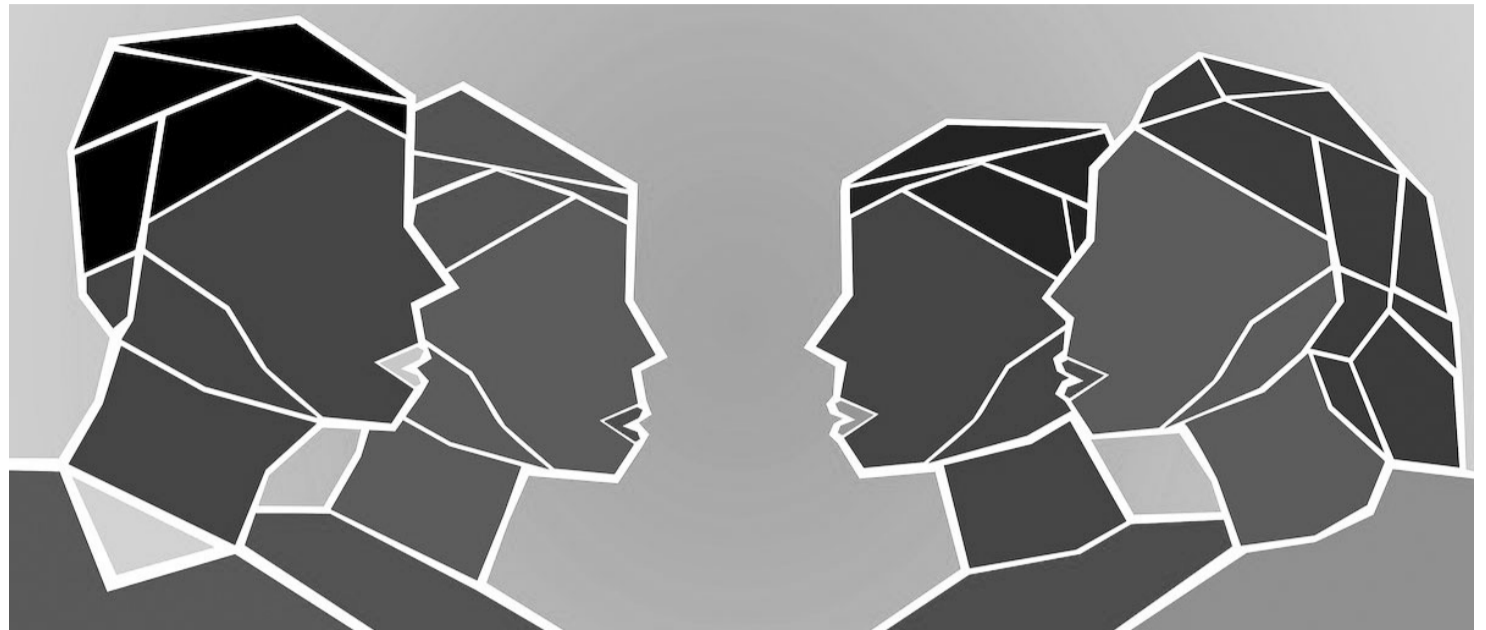
It is important to perceive that the reformist government, from the commencement of its administration, had to give response to some bold queries of the country. Prioritizing some issues, it had given answers for major national matters like easing debt burden to continue as a nation.

During the past six years of the reformist government exercising power, the incumbent has achieved some wonderful and enormous success in the economic, political and social concerns. The diplomatic accomplishments of the country can be labeled as the best of all. The current government has also promised to act up on the national dialogue to make it true.

In fact, the country has faced a number of false narratives that led it to the wrong direction of extreme thought, hate speeches, and the likes. One of the prominent reasons for such division and differences is the lack of opportunity to bring those actors and narratives from different parts to come together under a common umbrella and open doors to discuss differences. Such duties may directly be connected with the government. The administration has the responsibility to create a platform or any means that can pave a way for discussion and national reconciliation.

So as to meet the long awaited national dialogue and reconciliation, the House of Peoples' Representatives of the Federal Government has approved the establishment of the Ethiopian National Dialogue Commission in order to create the platform for national discussion.

In good truth, there are both internal and external actors that crave for such platforms to be real. Countries and international organizations have been showing their interest in supporting the federal government to realize its dream of the dialogue. To this end, some parties



have kept their promises and supported the nations with the necessary provisions.

Recently, it was reported that the Government of Japan has proven itself and its interest by providing some 12 vehicles to the Ethiopian National Dialogue Commission (ENDC) to support its operational activities and lower its burden to reach the rural parts of the country.

During the handover ceremony, Professor Mesfin Araya, Commissioner at the Ethiopian National Dialogue Commission, called on the UN agencies and other international partners to consolidate the resource mobilization efforts to the success of the Ethiopian national consultation process. The Commissioner said the assistance of development partners is critical to realize Ethiopia's ambition of national consensus on the most fundamental issues of significance.

As part of the support from Ethiopia's partners, Mesfin appreciated the Japanese Government for its commitment and the vehicle support to the commission. ENDC has embarked on a reconciliation process to maintain unity and consensus in the country.

Acknowledging Ethiopia's richness in diversity as well as heritages, the chief commissioner explained that the country has faced challenges in realizing a shared vision. Despite extreme political views that Ethiopia is experiencing, the Ethiopian National Dialogue Commission has been working hard for all-encompassing political landscape as well as reconciliation, Mesfin stated.

In this respect, he underscored that the commission stands as a beacon of hope to bridge the gaps that dividing us and pave the way for brighter future. "As we are undertaking this critical national initiative, it is abundantly evident that the participation of more national and international stakeholders succeeds our national expectation," he said.

As the ongoing Ethiopia's national

consultation project requires significant resources, the commissioner added the engagement of partners would have an indispensable role in driving forward the dialogue activities.

Samuel Doe, UNDP Ethiopia Resident Representative, on his part, said we believe strongly that Ethiopia is at a critical juncture for dialogue in which UNDP has been part of the process from the inception. The UNDP is looking forward to working closely with the commission and with all people of Ethiopia, he noted.

"The path of conversation provides shared vision, the path for conversation provides shared solutions, and the powerful conversation provides the pathway for economic prosperity." He added we are also looking forward that the east African nation will address its major outstanding issues through the consultation project."

By the same token, Shibata Hironori, Japan's ambassador to Ethiopia, said that the action shows strong ties between Ethiopia and Japan through supporting the national dialogue process and the government of Japan is continuously supportive of Ethiopia in various spheres.

In May 2023, Japan provided 3 million USD in collaboration with UNDP to enable the Commission to conduct a more efficient and credible national consultation, he indicated. The ambassador reaffirmed his country's commitment to continue its enhanced support for the success of the national dialogue commission and other various development activities in Ethiopia

As much support has been gained and commitment shown from external partners, the realization of the national dialogue is also supported by internal bodies like Ethiopian Teachers Association that wait the action eagerly. The association has been committed to play its role in providing continuous support and identifying education sector participants in the National Dialogue for the upcoming success.

Approached by the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA), Yohannes Benti (PhD), President of the Association, stated that they have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the ENDC in a bid to expedite participation in the National Dialogue and to work together in different areas. The association is undertaking different activities to ensure the inclusiveness and fairness of participants' identification process at district level. Similarly, the association's branch offices at district level have been highly engaged in mobilizing the education community to the National Dialogue participation, he added.

"The experience of different countries showcased the best outcomes of national dialogues. In this regard, we believe that the forthcoming National Dialogue would play a paramount role in resolving Ethiopia's age-long and contentious challenges and that is why we are closely working with the commission."

The association has held fruitful discussions with the ENDC leadership to identify the areas where the commission seeks support and collaboration. Education is amongst the primary sectors that hugely affected by instability and conflicts and not only the schools become damaged but both teachers and students' necessary documents usually get lost due to chaos, Yohannes further added stated.

"Given education is mind work; it needs stable and peaceful environment," he noted, mentioning the association's different undertakings with ENDC, media institutions, and other relevant bodies. Though different countries have carried out national dialogues; few countries did not succeed due to their failure to make the process participatory and inclusive.

In light of the above, the president emphasized citizens' irreplaceable role for the success of the National Dialogue and called on everyone to understand the value of their involvement in the process.

Law & Politics

Ethiopia's leap towards African power interconnectivity

BY FIKADU BELAY

Africa's rosy prospects are mainly hinged on its capacity to generate adequate energy that propels the continent's development aspirations. Africa's reach water resource, be it underground or surface ones, make the continent an ideal clean energy hub on our planet.

Ethiopia is regarded as the 'water tower of Africa'. Ethiopia's rivers, most of them transboundary ones, have an enormous amount of potential to produce the much-needed energy in Africa. If countries work jointly in the spirit of Pan-Africanism, the 'water tower' can achieve its ambition of becoming 'the power house of Africa'.

According to data obtained from energypedia, the country has an estimated hydropower potential of up to 45,000 MW and is the 2nd largest with hydro power potential in Africa following the Democratic Republic of Congo. It is equivalent to about 45% of Africa's total hydropower potential. With its vast potential, Ethiopia has embarked on ambitious plans to develop its water power resources as a means of promoting regional energy cooperation, enhancing power trading, developing power infrastructure, and facilitating renewable energy development in Eastern Africa. Ethiopia plays a leading role in addressing energy challenges, improving energy security, and unlocking the socio-economic potential of the region through a reliable, sustainable, and interconnected power system.

Eng. Habtamu Itefa (PhD), Minister of Water and Energy, emphasized the country's regional leadership role in creating energy links with neighboring countries during his presentation at the World Future Energy Summit in Abu Dhabi. The forum, which is taking place from April 16 to 18, 2024, aims to foster pan-African cooperation in renewable energy development and ensure energy security.

He stated Ethiopia's commitment regarding cooperation and coordination in the region, particularly in laying the foundation and bolstering regional energy linkages. He noted that in spite of the fact that Sudan is under internal conflict, Ethiopia has still continued to supply energy, demonstrating its dedication to regional collaboration.

Speaking of regional connectivity and integration, East African Power Pool (EAPP) is an initiative that focuses on promoting cooperation and integration in the power sector among Eastern African countries. Its objectives include: enhancing energy security, promoting economic development, improving access to electricity, and facilitating the exchange of power resources among member countries. By pooling resources and coordinating efforts, the EAPP aims to address energy deficits, reduce reliance on costly fossil fuel-based power generation, and promote the development of renewable energy sources.

Accordingly, Habtamu elucidated that Ethiopia, in collaboration with its



development partners, is actively playing a significant role to solidify and maintain regional initiatives like the East African Power Pool. The country intends to expand various infrastructures, including power lines, roads, and telecom networks to its neighboring nations. Such an act of expansion will not only facilitate energy transfer but also it will foster greater connectivity and regional integration.

The Ministry of Water and Energy has incorporated a regional coordination strategy into Ethiopia's short, medium, and long-term national plans, with an eye toward its development at the continental level. The minister emphasized that Ethiopia's experience in harnessing its hydropower potential has positioned it as a leading center for green energy in East Africa. The country's expertise in building and managing energy facilities has garnered international recognition.

Ethiopia's notable hydropower projects include the Abbay Dam (Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam, GERD) which is under construction along the Abbay River, and among others. Once completed, it is expected to be the largest hydropower plant in Africa, with a capacity of 6,450 MW. This potential is expected to fulfill the demand for electric power in the region.

In addition to Abbay Dam, Ethiopia has developed several other hydroelectric projects that contribute significantly to its energy mix such as: Tana Beles and Genale Dawa III hydropower projects. These initiatives have helped Ethiopia increase its electricity generation capacity, reduce reliance on fossil fuels, and promote sustainable development.

Moreover, Ethiopia's commitment to renewable energy extends beyond hydropower. The country has vast untapped potential for other clean energy sources like wind power and solar energies. These resources complement the hydropower sector, providing a diversified and environmental friendly energy choice.

Ethiopia's water power potential is not only crucial for its own development but also holds great significance to the Horn of Africa at large. The country has been actively engaging in regional energy integration projects, aiming to export electricity to neighboring countries, including Sudan, Kenya, and Djibouti. Besides, Ethiopia has an agreement in place with Tanzania. Interests emerging from nations like South Sudan, Somaliland, Uganda, and Rwanda indicate the region's willingness to import electric power from Ethiopia. Such initiatives foster regional cooperation, stimulate economic growth, and contribute to the overall development of East Africa.

Having stayed with the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) a week ago, Yacob Arsano, an Associate Professor at Addis Ababa University, expressed confidence in Ethiopia's ability to navigate external pressure challenges, drawing on the experience gained from the GERD and the country's diplomatic skills. As the first of many large-scale dams planned for the future, the lessons learned from the Abbay Dam will inform and direct Ethiopia's approach to upcoming projects, opening doors for improvements regarding management and mitigation of potential concerns.

Looking ahead, Yacob emphasized the importance of organized diplomacy at the national level to bolster Ethiopia's position on the international stage. Thanks to its proactive engagement in regional and global affairs, Ethiopia's strength and influence are poised to grow in the future, he highlighted. By leveraging its diplomatic capabilities, Ethiopia aims to address any grievances or misunderstandings that may arise from its dam projects, fostering greater cooperation and understanding among all stakeholders involved.

Again, Habtamu further stated the importance of public-private partnerships in Ethiopia's energy sector. The government is actively incorporating the private sector to spur investment and innovation in

energy development. By implementing collaborative initiatives with private enterprises, Ethiopia aims to accelerate the growth of its energy infrastructure while fostering economic development.

Ethiopia has already established power connections with three neighboring countries based on its continental power system master plan. The minister vowed to further strengthen these connections and stretch its hands of power supply to additional nations. However, he stressed the need for substantial investment, highlighting the crucial role of development partners in supporting the construction and development of power infrastructure.

He also emphasized that Ethiopia's engagement in energy development investments extends beyond its national borders. By undertaking these ventures, Ethiopia aims to contribute to job creation and address peace and security issues in the region. The country sees energy development as a catalyst for socioeconomic progress and regional stability.

Abbay Dam is a project that serves as a testament to Ethiopia's commitment to regional integrity, stability, and economic development. Developing its own resources, Ethiopia aims to emancipate its people from poverty and contribute its share to the progress of the African Continent. The completion of the Abbay Dam will mark a significant milestone in Ethiopia's journey towards becoming a regional powerhouse, driving economic growth, and improving the lives of its citizens.

Besides, Ethiopia's water power potential in East Africa is a remarkable asset that positions the country as a key player in the region's energy sector. With its abundant water resources and ambitious hydropower projects, Ethiopia is paving the way for sustainable development, energy self-sufficiency, and regional cooperation. As Ethiopia continues to tap into its water power potential, it holds the promise of a brighter, greener future for both its citizens and the broader East African community.

Women in Focus

An equal world is a better world

BY ELIZABETH MENGISTU

Despite the multifaceted efforts exerted to empower girls and women: and fully ensure their rights, achieving gender equality and social justice seem to be a thing that is so close yet so far.

Even though countries pulled out all the stops to narrow gender disparity and ensure the rights of women by devising numerous gender-responsive policies and strategies as well as linking their national development agendas in a way benefitting women, attaining gender equality still remains a daunting task. As a result, even after decades, promoting women's political, social and economic benefits continue to be unresolved matters across the world. It is common knowledge that these days, millions of girls and women face gender related discrimination and challenges.

Strangely enough, despite the successes achieved so far, the gender gap across the globe is increasing and expanding alarmingly.

According to a recent report issued by the United Nations agencies, gender gaps worldwide are widening, instead of narrowing. In such a way, they are moving further and further away from the 2030 Agenda.

In the month that International Women's Day was celebrated, UN-Women predicted that by 2030 a quarter of women will suffer moderate or severe food insecurity, hence the need to reduce gender gaps in agri-food systems, which would boost the global Gross Domestic Product by almost one trillion USD.

In this regard, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) warned that the existing gender disparity is most evident in rural areas with limited access to agricultural assets and inputs and wages up to 18.4 percent less than men in this type of employment.

Existing inequalities due to discriminatory social norms increase women's vulnerability to hunger and poverty. In 2022, some 388 million women were living in extreme poverty, and 27.8 percent of them were severely or moderately food insecure, the report further stated.

A recent annual Summit, Women Political Leaders (WPL) 2024 Summit, which convened some of the high-level women political figures, prominent dignitaries, policymakers, and advocates from across the globe, including President Sahle-Work Zewde and Greek President Katerina Sakellariopoulou and held in Athens, Greece also highlighted the importance of strengthening the position of women in every aspect, including in political leadership positions.

As it was stated at the Summit held under the theme "Democracy for the 21st

When women equally participate in decision-making, their joint influence on policy priorities means less corruption and conflict, better education and health outcomes, and greater opportunities for all.



century", increasing the representation of women in political leadership has a profound impact on societal progress.

In her keynote speech delivered at the Summit, President Sahle-Work Zewde also reiterated the need for bringing more women to positions of leadership.

As to the President, these days, democracy is backsliding and when democracy is under threat, its adverse consequences for the rights of women are very clear. This year [2024], as some call it, is a record year for the reason that about 64 countries will hold elections. As it is known, election is one of the most important aspects of democracy and it is really vital in any given country for various reasons. But holding elections alone does not make it free and fair. Women, who constitute the majority of the population, are electorates. So, the logical conclusion of the fact is that only men make it to the top position; women are the one contributing in a substantive manner to bringing men to power. So, if we want more women in a higher position, things have to be changed, she underlines.

"There needs to be a proportional representation in our parliaments for inclusivity. There is a need for women to be at the table of power. In many situations, we have seen elections becoming a source of conflict when it should have been a process by which we elect a new person or give another term to the other. Unfortunately, elections are also a source of conflicts that parliaments are too often

not representative of the society as well as political forces; and there is a need to introduce a proportional representation in order to make democracy alive in our respective parliaments, senates and different assemblies."

Much has been said on all these issues. There is a pressing need for women to be at the table of power where they can decide because their participation is a fundamental prerequisite for gender equality, to make decisions, effect change and indeed to genuine democracy.

According to her, this has to be really something that we have to achieve because it has been proven that women will give higher attention to women issues that they cannot bypass- for women to be candidates, to hold political positions, joining or creating their own political parties. Unfortunately, most of the time, they have not been successful because the mentality has not changed.

"Women should lead change. We should change the nature of power and not power changing the nature of women. I think this has to be clear in our mind. We cannot afford not doing something as it will not come out of the blue, but through concerted efforts of all," the President stressed.

According to her, African leaders have goals to improve the continent on the basis of the African Union (AU) 2063 Agenda and called for more efforts to address challenges with direct impacts on women, such as unconditional change of government and related issues.

"Africa is the continent of the future. Africa is a young continent where the average age is 19, and a rich continent, but also the poorest of the poor, we have to do something to change this," she stressed.

As in Europe or anywhere else in the world, African women must be empowered to ensure that we are all in this together, she urged. Mentioning that currently there are only a few women in senior management positions, the President emphasized the need to increase the number.

President Sahle-Work also called for collaboration and cooperation among all stakeholders to address the challenges that women face today. She also urged women leaders to include gender equality on their agendas.

"Different attacks and harassment against women are increasing day by day. We need to make efforts to ensure that any form of violence against women is addressed," she concluded.

It is to be recalled President Sahle-Work was the recipient of the WPL Trailblazer Award in 2023 in Brussels.

WPL, a global network of women politicians, has a mission of increasing the number and influence of women in political leadership positions.

There is a pressing need for women to be at the table of power where they can decide because their participation is a fundamental prerequisite for gender equality, to make decisions, effect change and indeed to genuine democracy

Society

Fostering love for reading, bridging the path to a better future

BY LEULSEGED WORKU

There is consensus among scholars that inculcating the habit of reading books at an early age is an essential component to prepare children for their future development and success. Reading books and listening to stories from an early age have several benefits for children. Improving their language, fostering imagination and enhancing their cognitive abilities are some of the benefits.

Scholars also have a firm stand that children who are exposed to books at an early age are more likely to become proficient readers. They also said, reading books, mainly reading with mother tongue will encourage children to develop love for books and improve language skills.

In addition to improving language skill, books have a key role in helping children to build their vocabulary and comprehension competence. However, these days, challenges associated with skilled educators, authors, illustrators, digital technology and other factors are limiting the interest of children to enjoy reading.

Lately, Ethiopia Reads, a non-profitable nongovernmental organization that works in collaboration with the Ministry of Education to promote children literature and the culture of reading in Ethiopia, had organized a forum on children books. During the event several stakeholders have participated and reflected their view concerning reading culture and children literacy.

Birhanu Girma is Ethiopia Reads Program Coordinator. According to him, the active involvement of all stakeholders in the area of children's books and nurturing the culture of reading among children will equip the future generation with knowledge and help them to develop self-confidence. Reading culture among children is deteriorating. Several factors are contributing to this problem. To curb the challenges, promote the culture of reading in children and improve children literacy, the active involvement of all stakeholders and establishing effective networks is of critical importance. It will also help stakeholders to identify individual responsibilities for common interest. Without the active participation of stakeholders, it will not be easy for policy makers and the Ministry of Education to identify the major bottlenecks in the area of reading skill.

Laurie Curtis is Early Literacy Program Manager of the Education Department at Kansas State United State of America and Board Member of Ethiopia Reads. During her stay with this reporter Laurie said that children who are nurtured with the skill of reading have the competency not only to express themselves or lead their future in an organized manner but also to contribute meaningfully to their country. "Reading is an outlet towards literacy and it should not only be left to either the government or NGOs. It should be the responsibility of every individual and every sector. That is



why it is imperative to come together and discuss the issue of literacy and reading as a prime concern of the Ethiopia Reads."

When asked how we can nurture the culture of reading among Ethiopian children, Laurie said that prioritizing and preserving oral tradition and encouraging parents or other family members in storytelling will inspire children to learn more about local culture and develop the skill of using language. What is more, teachers should be well trained to provide instruction in their mother tongue.

According to her, the more children are exposed to oral tradition and storytelling cultures, the more they will understand their true identity and also it will help them to have proper understanding of their environment even without having books or other resources, which are scarce in most developing nations and the number of books in mother language is still inaccessible.

When asked about the challenge of digital technology in discouraging children from reading books and limiting their reading skills, she said, digital technology is a one way where information is exchanged and a platform that children would be forced to receive information without interacting. This is one serious challenge for this generation. "There is one way of communication that will not let children interact and develop their literacy or reading skill. We are witnessing that the more children are exposed to digital technology, the more they are losing interest in writing and reading. This is not the only problem faced by children.

We, adults, are also trapped in a one way information access. We are losing a two way interaction of information. Children must have a chance to ask questions and interact with the people around them. As a Literacy Program Manager, I advise concerned

The issue of quality education and children literacy are highly dependent on the culture of reading

bodies to fill the capacity of educators, authors, publishers and teachers through training."

Laurie also advised publishers to give more emphasis on the quality and the content of books that are prepared for children. The training capacity of teachers is still a challenge to nurture children with a culture of reading. This is especially true for those early grade teachers who laid the foundation for future readers. Teachers should get proper training that will let them teach children the techniques of reading and proper teaching skills.

She also highlighted that giving priority for books and other materials does not bring the expected result without investing in teachers who are working in the area. "We focus on

a lot of materials and books but we need to focus on building the capacity of teachers. When they are valued and honored, they will execute their responsibility with confidence. Educators need to be confident enough regarding their skills and knowledge. They also need to have proper training before they consider themselves as educators. The more they invest in themselves, the more they can develop self-confidence. This will let them nurture responsible citizens."

Yitagesu Getnet, a literary scholar, was among the participants at the forum organized by the Ethiopia Reads. Asked what importance this kind of forum has for children, teachers, parents and other stakeholders, he said that conducting common discussion forums among stakeholders will give policy makers and others an insight to identify gaps in the area of children books and reading culture.

According to him, whenever researchers, policy makers and other stakeholders discuss openly, the challenges related to children's books and literacy issues will be addressed. "For instance, research that was conducted by Ethiopia Reads indicates that within 14 years (2008- 2021) a total of 2, 800 children books were published in Ethiopia. This kind of research enables policy makers, educators, publishers and others to identify the major gaps in the area."

Indeed, the issue of quality education and children literacy are highly dependent on the culture of reading. The more the nation gives an emphasis to the culture of reading, the more it ensures quality education. In this regard, producing quality books that draw children's attention plays a key role. To this end, the active involvement of authors, the Ministry of Education, illustrators, parents, educators, policy makers and others will pave the way towards creating the culture of reading among children and ensuring quality education.

INTERNATIONAL

The higher education group, ATLANTIC GROUP, announces the entry of CDG INVEST into its capital

CASABLANCA, MOROCCO -- CDG Invest has acquired a 20% stake through its Generation Entrepreneurs program in the capital of Atlantic Group. This strategic partnership marks a significant turning point for Atlantic Group and underscores CDG Invest's confidence in the group's potential to become a center of excellence in higher education in Morocco.

Thanks to this partnership, Atlantic Group will have the necessary resources to accelerate the deployment of its higher education model focused on pedagogical innovation, academic excellence, and professional immersion.

A press conference detailing this partnership is scheduled for Monday, April 22, 2024, at the Atlantic Business School campus, the management school of the Atlantic Group.

Based in Casablanca, Atlantic Group positions itself as a major institution in higher education, benefiting from the dynamism of private higher education in Morocco and the support of the Moroccan state for the development of private centers

of excellence in higher education. It is committed to providing top-tier education that combines academic excellence, pedagogical innovation, practical experience in a professional environment, and a strong social responsibility.

Initially, Atlantic Group includes two specialized higher education schools: Atlantic Business School, the Management school established in 1985 (formerly ESIG), authorized by the Ministry of Higher Education, Scientific Research, and Innovation under number 13/85, and the Atlantic Engineering School, the Engineering school, authorized by the Ministry of Higher Education, Scientific Research, and Innovation under number 497/2023.

It also includes a continuing education center, Atlantic Executive Center, offering over a hundred training programs aimed at supporting businesses and developing their executives, as well as a center for applied research, CERUNA, and a foundation whose main missions are promoting research and supporting deserving students.

Atlantic Group is supported by a team of founders recognized in the higher education and education sector: Professor Rachid M'RABET (President of Atlantic Group, who served for 20 years as the General Director of ISCAE and founder of the Center for Doctoral Studies at ISCAE), Younes SLAOUI (President of Averroes Holding, co-founder of the international Odyssey Education Group and the French International School of Casablanca), and Professor Abdellatif MÂZOUZ (a university professor who has directed several higher education institutions in Morocco and is the current President of the Casablanca-Settat Regional Council). Additionally, Atlantic Group has established an International Scientific Council comprising eminent national and international academic personalities, as well as leading figures from the professional and institutional world, tasked with guiding the group in its educational and research positioning.

"The Atlantic Group, through its various schools, aims to endow our country with a new center of excellence, generating

skills, where one takes pleasure in learning and that is capable of offering varied and future prospects to its students. The goal is to train for professions and skills that ensure sustainable employability and contribute to Morocco's influence in Africa and internationally," declared Professor Rachid M'RABET, President of the Group. The purpose of the Group is to train new generations of specialized, high-performing, and competent executives, in line with market expectations and bearing ethical and civic values.

The current campus, with a capacity for 2,500 students, features high-quality training facilities and spaces designed to foster creativity and interaction, thus providing an environment conducive to learning and the flourishing of both students and teaching teams. The campus is located in Sidi Maarouf, at the heart of one of Casablanca's most important business activity centers. It is easily accessible by Tramway, Busway, and other public transport.

Source : Atlantic group



Global Gateway: EU launches 17 new regional programs to boost youth mobility and skills in Africa

The European Union has recently launched 17 new regional programs, most notably including 'The Team Europe Initiative on Opportunity-Driven Skills and Vocational Education and Training' and the 'Africa-Europe Youth Academy', aiming to boost youth mobility and skills in Africa.

The 17 new regional programs under the flagship of Youth Mobility for Africa were launched by European Commissioner for International Partnerships Jutta Urpilainen at the Global Gateway High-Level Event on Education in Brussels last week. "The European Union's Global Gateway investments in education are focused on enhancing access to quality education and skills training for all in an

equitable way," Commissioner Urpilainen said. "Education and skills are key to combating inequalities and to creating jobs and prosperity."

At the event in Brussels, the EU brought together the global education community to take stock of the Global Gateway education investments so far and mobilize partners, as well as new investments ahead of the 'United Nations Summit of the Future' that will take place in New York City on 22-23 September. Commissioner Urpilainen used the occasion to sign 17 programs totaling €245 million, including, for example, support to girls' education in Zambia and support to research and learning mobility in Nigeria, highlighting the EU's commitment to empowering

African youth with education.

Among those attending the event was also the Permanent Secretary at Nigeria's Federal Ministry of Education, Didi Esther Walson-Jack, who signed an agreement for a transformative initiative, which secured a groundbreaking opportunity for six Nigerian universities to access funding under the EU's Intra-Africa Mobility Scheme. These six projects, each supported by €1.8 million from EU funding, aim to enhance learning mobility opportunities for students, trainees, and staff across the continent, focusing on the development of high-level green and digital skills.

Source: The North Africa Post

Abu Dhabi Hosts Major International Summit on Future Energy and Sustainability

The 16th World Future Energy Summit commenced in Abu Dhabi on Tuesday, positioning itself at the forefront of the global discourse on sustainable energy and climate initiatives. Sheikha Shamma bint Sultan bin Khalifa Al Nahyan, president and CEO of the UAE Independent Climate Change Accelerators, opened the summit by emphasizing the need for substantial financial investments to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius. She highlighted the pivotal role of blended finance—merging public and private funds—in marshaling the necessary resources for climate action.

Francesco La Camera, director-general of the International Renewable Energy Agency, pointed out the urgency of increasing renewable energy capacity to at least 11 terawatts by 2030. Despite recording the largest increase in renewable power generation in 2023, La Camera noted that the progress still falls short of the needed annual addition of 1,100 gigawatts, with the Global South being particularly impacted.

Organized by Masdar, the state-owned Abu Dhabi Future Energy Company, the summit serves as a vital platform for discussing energy and water security, climate change, and sustainable development in the Middle East. Leen Alsebai, head of the summit, described the event as a hub for actionable climate strategies.

The three-day summit is expected to draw over 30,000 participants and exhibitors from more than 170 countries, including government officials, corporate representatives, and international delegates.

Source : The medialine.org



Published Weekly in Collaboration with Haramaya University

HU provides fact-checking training to prevent disinformation

BY EPHREM ANDARGACHEW

Haramaya University (HU) Journalism and Mass Communication Department has offered fact-checking capacity-building training for students to verify false and misinformation.

A journalism and communication students' club named "Active Student" was also founded by the department that focuses on fact-checking and preventing false information.

The capacity-building training is critical for the University's students to have the skills that enable them to recognize and identify fraudulent materials while also verifying and disseminating reliable information to communities.

Addis Ababa University organized the capacity-building training in partnership with Ethiopia's Check and Haramaya University with support from the American Embassy.

The training primarily focuses on social and mass media knowledge and applications, as well as methods for verifying and disseminating accurate information through social media, website building, and so on. This, in turn, enables journalism and communication students to distinguish between false and reliable information and offer timely information to the public.

The spread of fake information and its



impacts is currently causing various problems in the world, including Ethiopia. Hence, in addition to the training, a club named "Active Student" has been established to check false information and inform the authentic information to the public. Accordingly, the election of the club leaders was also held.

The dissemination of false information and its consequences are now generating difficulties across the world, including Ethiopia. As a result, in addition to training, a group called

"Active Student" has been formed to combat false information and tell the public about the truth. As a result, the club leaders were elected as well.

Accordingly, a student Jerusalem Dereje, was elected as a chairman, student Abduljalil Ibrahim as a vice chairman, student Derege Negese as a secretary, and student Tsion Wendeyefraw was elected as a public relations.

Addis Ababa University Journalism and

Communication Lecturer and Training Coordinator Dr. Yohans Shiferaw said that however, while every person is responsible for preventing the spread of false information, journalism and communication students have a particularly high level of responsibility.

As a result, the training is offered not only to HU students but also to students from other universities, with the goal of forming an "Active Student" club to assist them in engaging in information verification work and fulfilling their obligations. This, in turn, serves the country and society by equipping students to filter and broadcast accurate information, he explained.

He also stated that by providing them with modern technology, HU students will establish networking with other university students and work together collaboratively. This is crucial to preventing issues brought on by misleading information and providing the public with accurate information.