



The Ethiopian Herald

Vol. LXXX No 197 27 April 2024 - Miyaziya 19, 2016

Saturday

Price Birr 10.00

MoFA debunks rumors of AU's hesitation to keep forex deposit

• AU lauds bank's precautionary measures



Nebiyu Tedla

BY YESUF ENDRIS

ADDIS ABABA-The Reporter newspaper's recent rumor about the African Union's (AU) hesitation to keep foreign currency deposit in Ethiopia is fake news which the Union itself rebuked, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) said.

At a press briefing he held yesterday, MoFA Spokesperson Nebiyu Tedla stated that the newspaper's report about the AU officials' lack of confidence in keeping the foreign currency deposit due to the allegedly increasing fraudulent attempts, is baseless and far from reality.

In its April 20, 2024 news report, The Reporter stated that the AU has become increasingly hesitant to keep its foreign currency in Ethiopia and would shift its deposit to abroad. The news was published after an individual's fraudulent attempt to withdraw a large sum of USD from the Commercial Bank of Ethiopia's branch located in the AU compound.

Refuting the claim, the Spokesperson indicated that the AU has the official and diplomatic channel to announce such a measure if it was true.

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Ambassador Abdu Yasin

Strong public diplomacy curtails intended sanctions on Ethiopia

BY BETELHEM BEDLU

ADDIS ABABA- Due to strong public diplomacy activities at the international level, Ethiopia has curtailed sanctions that were going to be imposed on it, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) said.

Speaking to the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA), MoFA Public Diplomacy Director-General Ambassador Abdu Yasin stated that the United Nations Security Council

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EDS expects to raise 3 mln USD for Abbay dam

BY BETELHEM BEDLU

ADDIS ABABA- Ethiopian Diaspora Service (EDS) said it has planned to collect over three million USD from the members of the Diaspora community across the world for the remaining construction works of Abbay dam.

EDS Deputy-Director Belayneh Atenaw told the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) that the Diaspora community has so far played an immense role in the construction of Abbay dam contributing some 55million USD ever since the beginning of the construction.

EDS has set a plan to gather over three million USD from the Diaspora community to support the remaining construction works, he said.

Mentioning that EDS along with Office of National Coordination for the Construction of the Abbay dam has organized a new committee that is said to facilitate the contribution, he indicated that discussion was held with the members of Diaspora communities residing in the country.

"The hydroelectric mega project is being built by its people and the Diaspora community has remained committed and



enthusiastic to see the completion of the dam," he underscored.

To this end, Commercial Bank of Ethiopia (CBE) has introduced new application that would allow Ethiopian nationals and members of the Diaspora community make contribution directly from their whereabouts, as to him.

He further noted that the contribution could

be made through alternative platform of other banking system.

Belayneh mentioned that the contribution would be collected by categorizing the countries regionally in Far East, America and Africa. Discussion has been held with the committee to facilitate the contribution by meeting the Diaspora communities in their respective countries if necessary, he added.

Sidama to make strides in turning unbanked into banked: CEO

BY MENGESHA AMARE

ADDIS ABABA— Sidama Bank Chief Executive Officer stated that converting microfinance into banks is of paramount importance in further reaching out to the unbanked.

In an exclusive with *The Ethiopian Herald*, Sidama Bank Chief Executive Officer, Tadesse Hatiya said that Changing the status of microfinance institutions into bank level would help increase the capacity of financial institutions to do much more in due course of addressing a number of beneficiaries in terms of loan releasing and providing customers with quality financial service with the required quality as well.

He said, "It is obvious that micro finance institutions have been converted into banks upon fulfilling all the parameters the law requires

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News

Office acknowledges stakeholder's contribution to Abbay Dam

• Receives 990 strategic copies of books

BY ASHENAFI ANIMUT

ADDIS ABABA – The Abbay Dam National Coordination Office has recognized professional contributions of strategic books, knowledge and documents to properly utilize the nation's resources wisely.

Office received about 990 copies of the book entitled: “Modernity without Electricity ... Unthinkable” foundational concepts of the electric grid operations yesterday.

Speaking at the handover ceremony, Office Director-General Aregawi Berhe (PhD) said that experts of all ways of professional support including knowledge and skill contributions in connection with the project would be significant to create and facilitate projects as well as institutions forthcoming productivity.

He further noted that the Diaspora and the public in all walks of life have been extending their consistent support in terms of finance, knowledge, labor, public diplomacy among many other engagements.

So far, the public has mobilized over 19 billion Birr and labor-based contributions which are equally worth over 120 billion Birr, Aregawi (PhD) added.

Moreover, he said such books that have a direct linkage with the Abbay Dam would have valuable significance to reshape institutional capacities, skills among many



other features.

Askenachew Gebreyes (Eng.), who is a pioneer engineer and author of the book on his part, said that apart from extending financial and other backings, sharing professional skills and knowledge would be highly imperative to realize the country's development aspirations.

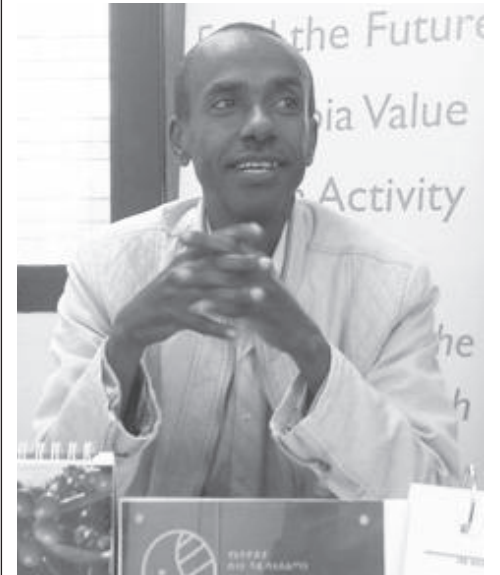
The author said that he has been serving as a senior operation and planning engineer and acquired multifaceted professional knowledge while he was in a giant and state-of-the-art technology American-based Electricity Generation Corporation which generates 80,000 MW.

As to the author, the book is compiled with valuable foundational concepts of the electric grid operations and notes and notes.

Praising the publishing bodies and stakeholders who have been involved in his entire publication, Askenachew remarked that this book would have of a significant importance to share deep knowledge and experiences to the grand dam and institutions and the current and coming generations as well.

He has also expressed his readiness to share, serve and offer professional training to institutions to develop technical capacities. Financial and printing materials were the major bottlenecks facing publications.

While receiving the recognition certificate from the director, the author urged the Diaspora to intensify their unwavering efforts to support their community and country at large.



Coffee export hits 836 mln USD

BY TAMERU REGASA

ADDIS ABABA- Ethiopia has secured some 836 million USD from the export of 175,000 tons of coffee during the past nine months of the current fiscal year, the Coffee and Tea Authority announced.

Authority's Public Relations and Communications Executive Sailamariam Gebremidin told the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) that a plan was set to earn 1.2 billion USD from the export of 240 tons of coffee for the reported period.

Sailamariam also stated that Ethiopia has situated as the fifth largest coffee producer and ninth largest coffee exporter globally. Ethiopian Arabica Coffee is unique in the world in its taste and highly desirable in the global market.

However, for many years, neither the country nor coffee producers have been getting the benefits they deserve from the commodity due to various reasons. Limited ability to provide value added products and the prolonged coffee market chain are among the major setbacks in the sector, he added.

Apart from the plan to shorten the market chain, over 500 farmers have begun directly exporting coffee to the domestic and foreign markets.

“Previously, coffee farmers could not determine the price of their products but accepted the price set by brokers and traders. To avoid this, strategic activity has been carried out to educate farmers and encourage them to bring their products directly to the global market.”

According to the executive, the Cup of Excellence program has been organized to enable coffee producers who produce quality coffee to sell their products at better prices.

Saudi Arabia, South Korea, U.S., Belgium, Japan, Germany, China, Sudan, United Arab Emirates and Italy are the leading destinations for Ethiopia's coffee export respectively.

Ministry, AFLEX ink MoA

BY MESEERET BEHAILU

ADDIS ABABA – The Ministry of Urban and Infrastructure (MoUI) yesterday signed a Memorandum of Action (MoA) with African Leadership Excellence Academy (AFLEX) aiming at empowering urban leadership and ensuring urban management system.

Up on the signing ceremony, MoUI Minister Chaltu Sani said that her institute has been carrying out various activities such as capacity building on urban leaders to realize conducive urban across the nation.

As to her the signing of MoA with AFLEX would play a paramount role in bridging the skilled human power gaps, introducing new ideas and practices, and improving knowledge.

She further stated that more activities expected to provide from short trainings to high level every season in order to create urban leadership that works according to the season. The agreement with the AFLEX will enable to do this effectively.

“So far, the Ministry has been working with the Ethiopian Civil Service University (ECSU) in producing urban leadership by giving bachelor degree to third degree training with a view to attaining proficient



urban leaderships,” she noted.

AFLEX Director General Zadig Abreha on his part said that the development of the capacity of urban leaders not only allows for comprehensive urban development, but also enables balanced and close development of them at the country level.

The Director General noted that ensuring all-inclusive leadership system; providing rewards for better achievement, being thoughtful leaders, and establishing idea and disseminating enters are the focuses areas of the modern urban countries that have

effective management system.

He added that urban cities should be established by futuristic design and conducive for residents whilst it requested skilled human power, technology, finance, effective management and the likes. To realize this, This agreement will bring significant outcome due to work joint hands.

“To make the development of cities sustainable and effective, it is expected to support them with training and education permanently, in addition to placing competent mayors and leaders,” he underlined.

News

Organization joins hands with Japan Embassy to community support

BY MISGANAW ASNAKE

ADDIS ABABA-Resurrection and Life Development Organization (RLDO) said it has been constructing schools, working for improving water access in collaboration with Japan embassy thereby easing women burden on fetching water from remote areas in Ethiopia.

Approached by *The Ethiopian Herald* Executive RLDO Director, Biniyam Belachew stated that the organization is a local non-profit entity which has been working together with Japan embassy in Ethiopia for the last eighteen years in the areas of schools expansion and water development projects.

In so doing, it has targeted at improving access to quality education and minifying women and children water fetching burden in rural areas.

“Embassy of Japan in Ethiopia helps the community create access to quality education by involving in expansion of



school construction projects so as to solve the problems of community. We constructed many preparatory schools with fully furnished blocks incorporating classrooms, library and toilet using the grant secured from Japan government.”

“Over last 18 years, we have implemented six projects in the support of embassy of Japan

through the Japanese Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects (GGP),” Biniyam added.

Biniyam said RLDO mainly focuses on enabling the disadvantaged groups of children, families and communities in rural and urban areas of former SNNP state to improve their wellbeing through

provision of education, health, housing, economic empowerment, skills training, and environmental protection services.

He added they built 29 schools, and 20,000 students are attending their education. Besides, it is working with big organizations in areas of urban development program by building houses for the poor to have house and engage in livelihood activities.

He said, “We are also implementing water development program to alleviate the water supply problem being seen in the country and working in environmental protection and sanitation.

He further said that so far they have implemented six projects in Sidama with a view to increasing the safe water supply provision for over 8,000 people living in Kebado town, expansion of Bochesa primary school construction, expansion of primary and secondary school construction in different woredas of Sidama state, among others.

Strong public...

presented Ethiopia as its agenda 15 times in the last three years. Owing to meticulous public diplomacy at the international level, it was possible to thwart sanctions intended to be imposed on the country.

In the last six years, a lot of work has been done in public diplomacy, and one of notable achievements is Ethiopia's accession to the BRICS economic bloc. Also, the people-to-people platforms have made great contributions in enabling the international community to know Ethiopia's objective reality.

“Public diplomacy is about informing the world about a country. The recreational centers and parks that have been built in Addis Ababa are of great significance for image building. Also, strong work is being done to build Ethiopia's positive image by promoting cultures, crafts, visual arts, traditional music and sports.”

Mentioning the huge role that the ongoing city beautification project would play in Ethiopia's positive image, Ambassador Abdu indicated that extensive promotional activities will be carried out to make the projects dependable sources of income.

Upon completion, the projects would disseminate a great message to the international community and the city

beautification activities are supplementing the public diplomacy.

Mentioning public diplomacy as every one's responsibility, the director general called on every segment of the society to make contributions in promoting their country.

He further highlighted that public diplomacy efforts are bearing fruit as good connections are being made with different countries through education. Amharic is being taught at the University of China. “Since we are consulting to teach other languages, it will create the potential to promote Ethiopia on the world stage.”

Ethiopia, on the other hand, has provided scholarships for students of neighboring countries. “This year, it has provided more than 850 scholarships and the offer will make citizens of different countries to have a good view of Ethiopia.”

Ethiopia has signed sisterhood agreements with many international cities to increase the positive influence of public diplomacy. The agreements are contributing to national unity, regional integration and the development of bilateral relations.

In the meantime, efforts are being made to strengthen bilateral relations by creating strong people-to-people ties, Ambassador Abdu remarked.

Sidama to make...

so. Like the case of other microfinance institutions, Sidama Bank has come from a microfinance entity by fulfilling all the necessities in July 1, 2022.”

According to Tadesse, the Bank has been right now employing all sorts of digital advancements like core banking technology, digital know-how, ATM, mobile banking, tell berr apps, so that it can provide customers with digital banking system.

He further said that the main objective of setting up a formal bank from microfinance institutions is to increase the capacity of loan releasing, addressing many customers at a time and increasing the financial volume to be dispersed and providing customers with quality financial overhaul, too.

As to him, the process of converting or transforming microfinance institutions into banks is of significantly useful in increasing customer base, improving the quality of service, changing the system of working from manual to fully digital and improving the turn around a round in loan application.

He said, “The factors to a very great extent that have facilitated the microfinance institutions, which are now on the formal banking business, in the transformation efforts to formal banking include the ability to optimize business volume, operating through efficient digital systems and processes as well as boosting effective balancing of high and low risk business.”

Responding the question revolving around the challenges compromising the banking system, he said, “Ethiopia doesn't have its own core banking system except some locally operating apps. This results in foreign currency impositions as core banking pay soars year after year following



Tadesse Hatiya

the licensing fee, upgrading fee etc. to your surprise, our neighbor, Kenya sells various software to Ethiopia.”

Transformation of microfinance institutions to formal banking has faced shortcomings such as, he said, high costs of operation, unscrupulous microfinance institutions' capacity to serve the society so, inadequate regulatory and loan management systems, poor customer care, among others.

However, these circumstances are now being well addressed as banks are working together towards avoiding threats and illegitimate working scenario, he added.

Sidama Bank was transformed from Sidama microfinance and has been rendering financial service since its inception, July 1, 2022. It is working in close collaboration with 32 local banks and even with others from overseas, it was learnt.

MoFA debunks...

“Following the news, the MoFA made direct conversations with the AU officials and learned that there is no intention to shift the latter's forex deposit outside of Ethiopia. AU senior officials also confirmed that The Reporter disseminated false information.”

The report is not only misleading, but also harmful and needs to be corrected. Also, news stories that are based on personal assumptions and rumors are not permissible in the journalism profession. Contrary

to The Reporter's claim, the AU senior officials appreciated the Commercial Bank of Ethiopia's precautionary measures that thwarted the fraud attempt, Nebiyou elaborated.

“We consider The Reporter to be our partner... [] So, we need to correct this fault.”

Noting the court proceeding in the fraudulent forex cash withdrawal attempt, he refrained from giving further information in the issue.

Opinion

Ethiopia's advancements in effectuating Pretoria Peace Agreement

BY ADDISALEM MULAT

It is common knowledge that when there is no peace, the lives of the population as a whole will be in danger for the reason that achieving everything required in life would be a challenging task and an uphill struggle. As lack of peace trigger poverty, hunger and unfairness, leading a meaningful life would be a daunting task.

War benefits no one except moving the country into uncharted waters, instigating chaos and turning the lives of the broader community into a living hell. The war that lasted for two years in northern Ethiopia could be a case in point. It is an indisputable fact that since the start of the war, the federal government has been going to the ends of the earth to get to the bottom of the predicaments in an atmosphere of calm coming up with many effective strategies.

Notwithstanding the fact that some internal and external actors have been working at all hours of the day and night intending to rip to pieces the entire nation by inflicting chaos effectuating layers of conspiracies, the government's commitment and determination ended up burying the hatchet. The uncompromising stance of the federal government to effectuate the peace agreement has portrayed that Ethiopia has enabled it to solve any internal problems without the interference of any third-party involvement.

As a matter of fact, concerned bodies have been witnessing the fact that the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement (CoHA) has been seeing the light of day in accordance with the agreement. The implementation of the peace accord has been going through vitally important steps that pave the way for the full implementation of the peace accord.

The Pretoria peace accord however perfectly rings to the continental bloc's catchall phrase, "African solutions to African problems." If AU continues getting to the bottom of African problems in its own way devoid of the interference of third parties, the continental bloc beyond a shadow of a doubt will play a huge role in curtailing conflicts and violence unfolding in every corner of Africa. In light of the present situation, besides winning the hearts and minds of the wider international community, the peace implementation has been in full swing.

Given the current circumstances, actions being taken by the incumbent with regard to making peace happen have been very much appreciated by the global community. After the signing of the cessation of hostilities agreement, the federal government has been expediting the restoration of quite a lot of social infrastructures, provision of humanitarian assistance, and other things of a similar kind.

Following the positive gesture, the federal government has been receiving appreciation from the wider international community, humanitarian organizations, and whatnot. In point of fact, the delivery of humanitarian aid and resumption of essential amenities have been keeping things simple for each and every one apart from returning everything to normal conditions.



The Pretoria Peace Agreement has immensely benefited the Tigray people in enabling them to pursue their daily lives without fear and restoring the damaged social services, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) said.

It is recalled that responding recently to queries of MPs, Abiy highlighted that the accord that was signed in November 2022 with the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) plays a pivotal role in silencing the guns and enabling the Tigray people to access basic services.

The Federal Government's infrastructure renovation projects that have been undertaken in collaboration with the Tigray Interim Administration have enabled the Tigray people to obtain electricity, health, education, telecommunication, air transport and bank services among others.

In addition, the restoration of airports at a cost of about half a billion Birr and the resumption of flights to and from Mekelle, Axum and Shire cities has also relieved the people and saved lives, the Premier underlined. "The flight resumption is a relief for many. At least it helped critically ill patients to get better treatment here in Addis Ababa."

Noting the resumption of Tigray universities and high schools' enrollment of students, Abiy stressed that this result couldn't be achieved had not it been for the strong and collaborative efforts of the Ministry of Education and the state education bureau.

According to him, the restoration of over 1000 km of optical fibers, 475 Mobile Sites and more than 20,000 landlines as well as Ethio-telecom's launching of 4G telecom service in 10 cities at a cost of more than 100 million Birr another success gained after the Pretoria Agreement.

By the same token, the National Bank of Ethiopia has injected 10 billion Birr liquidity to 600 commercial bank branches to recommence bank service in Tigray.

Following the agreement, prompt progress in terms of social infrastructure and delivery of humanitarian assistance has been making

progress in the right direction. It is no secret that taking advantage of the war, the discredited international media outlets had been preoccupied with bamboozling the wider international community with cock and bull stories and echoing groundless allegations.

There is no doubt that the African Union brokered ceasefire accord has proved its effective capability in getting to the bottom of the predicament in its own way. In consideration of the foregoing, the entire situation in the northern part of the country has embarked on getting back on track in the shortest possible time and receiving a pat on the back.

The thing that makes the positive gesture of the federal government unique is its readiness to avert the conflict on its own initiative without the involvement of any third party's dictation. It is common knowledge that right from the beginning, the incumbent has shown its unflinching stance to act in accord with the norms and standards of the African Union.

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed vowed to make Ethiopia Africa's Beacon of prosperity and unity by freeing the country from economic dependence, according to information obtained from Ethiopian News Agency.

A forum that brought together many people to support the reformist leadership of Ethiopia was held in Wolkite town, Gorage Zone of the Central Ethiopian region, in the presence of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed. In his message on the occasion, the premier lauded the people of Gurage zone who promote unity and solidarity.

He emphasized that this is a practical testament which the rest of Ethiopian people should take as a lesson to live harmoniously. Stressing the need for realizing development and prosperity in Ethiopia, Abiy called on the people of the country to seek peace and harmony in order to see a prosperous and convenient Ethiopia.

The prime minister also noted to accommodate Ethiopia's diverse ethnic identities, cultures, languages, and topography, adding that these could not be a

source of difference to build a strong nation-state.

Abiy further highlighted that Ethiopia has repeatedly fought for its independence and it is a country that has thwarted all attempts of external aggressions.

For the sake of truth, the African Union-led peace accord has protected the benefits of the continent giving the cold shoulder to some entities that have been making all possible efforts to twist Ethiopia's arm and encroach its sovereignty. Notwithstanding the fact that some entities have made extraordinary efforts to downplay the African Union brokered peace deal under the veil of many make-believe stories, Ethiopia at the end of the day turned out to be successful putting a damper on the evil mission of scaremongers.

In spite of the fact that more than a few entities have been going to great lengths to besmirch the African Union-led peace accord, Ethiopia has been making progress in the right direction on the grounds that the peace deal has been bearing fruits and producing results. In good truth, the breakthrough milestone taken by the federal government has been assisting the progress of the peace implementation.

It appears clear that since the beginning of time, Africa has passed through many ups and downs, as a consequence of the dictation of the third party in the internal affairs of the continent. It is widely known that no matter what scaremongers say about the African union brokered peace deal, the peace implementation in the shortest possible time metamorphosed into achieving results. In the wake of the firm stance of the incumbent, Ethiopia has been taking the capability of the African Union brokered deal into the next level of accomplishment and showing the continent's wisdom to the entire world.

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

Editorial

Ethiopia's firm stance towards regional peace

Ethiopia and Libya have enjoyed long-standing ties in political, economic and cultural spheres. The recent talks held between Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) and his Libyan counterpart, Abdul Hamid Al- Dbeibeh, during the visit paid by the later to Ethiopia gave the two leaders good opportunity to discuss myriads of bilateral and regional issues such as peace and stability, economic cooperation workforce exchange, and other areas of mutual interest, Premier Abiy stated in a message conveyed on his social media page.

Abiy said in his message, "I am pleased to welcome Prime Minister Abdul Hamid Al-Dbeibeh of the State of Libya."

A statement by the Libyan government's Hakomitna platform said reactivating the Libyan-Ethiopian High Committee meeting between the two countries, which has not been held since 2004, and the organization of Ethiopian workers in Libya were discussed during a meeting. It said the leaders also held talks about the resumption of Ethiopian Airlines flights to Libya.

As the two countries are members of continental and international organizations, the African Union and the United Nations respectively, rejuvenation of their relationship put them at the right track to foster their contribution for regional, continental and global peace and security.

Ethiopia has registered good track record in participating in international peace keeping missions. From the early days of UN peacekeeping to some of today's most vital operations, Ethiopian men and women have played an important role in the Organization's efforts to advance peace in the world's hot spots. The country's participation in UN-authorized operations dates back to 1951, as part of the UN multinational force in the Korean War.

Ethiopia is the largest troop contributor to UN peacekeeping with over 8,300 uniformed personnel, the vast majority of them serving in Darfur (UNAMID), Abyei (UNISFA) and South Sudan (UNMISS).

In addition, the country has kept up this role in the case of Somalia to maintain sovereignty of the country under African Union Mission to Somalia (AMISOM) protecting it from the threat of al-shabaab. Thousands of Ethiopian troops are still paying sacrifice to safeguard Somalia's security.

This responsibility Ethiopia has taken to date emanates partly from its interest to make the Horn of African region peaceful and stable and on the other part because of friendship it established with the people of Somalia.

Regional political, social and economic integration that ought to be transformed to continental unity can be practical if only there is prevalence of peace and Ethiopia is taking the lion's share in this regard. Thus, on top of working on security issues locally, Ethiopia is playing bold role for the realization of regional, continental and global peace.

In order to catch the prosperity it aspires to and achieve mutual growth with the Horn countries, Ethiopia is working on connecting the region with infrastructures like electricity and roads as well as consolidating trade relations. That is why it has established the Ministry of Trade and Regional Integration. Joining Ethiopia's move, for the countries in the region, should be a task not postponed for tomorrow.

Because of its inclusive diplomatic relation, it is working with the countries from all corners of the world whether they are near or far geographically. And the recent discussion held between the Ethiopian and the Libyan prime ministers showcases that the country is walking its talk.

Africa's second most populous nation and the continents emerging economy, Ethiopia has a big potential and the good will to collaborate with peace loving international community. It is committed to make the east African region peaceful and stable despite challenges that arise from some countries that intentionally ignore and stand against its national interests.



The Ethiopian Herald

Established in 1943

Published daily except Mondays
By The Ethiopian Press Agency

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Opinion

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As a matter of fact, concerned bodies have been witnessing the fact that the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement (CoHA) has been seeing the light of day in accordance with the agreement. The implementation of the peace accord has been going through vitally important steps that pave the way for the full implementation of the peace accord.

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Given the current circumstances, actions being taken by the incumbent with regard to making peace happen have been very much appreciated by the global community. After the signing of the cessation of hostilities agreement, the federal government has been expediting the restoration of quite a lot of social infrastructures, provision of humanitarian assistance, and other things of a similar kind.

Following the positive gesture, the federal government has been receiving appreciation from the wider international community, humanitarian organizations, and whatnot. In point of fact, the delivery of humanitarian aid and resumption of essential amenities have been keeping things simple for each and every one apart from returning everything to normal conditions.

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Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed vowed to make Ethiopia Africa's Beacon of prosperity and unity by freeing the country from economic dependence, according to information obtained from Ethiopian News Agency.

A forum that brought together many people to support the reformist leadership of Ethiopia was held in Wolkite town, Gorange Zone of the Central Ethiopian region, in the presence of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed. In his message on the occasion, the premier lauded the people of Gorange zone who promote unity and solidarity.

He emphasized that this is a practical testament which the rest of Ethiopian people should take as a lesson to live harmoniously. Stressing the need for realizing development and prosperity in Ethiopia, Abiy called on the people of the country to seek peace and harmony in order to see a prosperous and convenient Ethiopia.

The prime minister also noted to accommodate Ethiopia's diverse ethnic identities, cultures, languages, and topography, adding that these could not be a source of difference to build a strong nation-state. Abiy further highlighted that Ethiopia has repeatedly fought for its independence and it is a country that has thwarted all attempts of external aggressions.

For the sake of truth, the African Union-led peace accord has protected the benefits of the continent giving the cold shoulder to some entities that have been making all possible efforts to twist Ethiopia's arm and encroach its sovereignty. Notwithstanding the fact that some entities have made extraordinary efforts to downplay the African Union brokered peace deal under the veil of many make-believe stories, Ethiopia at the end of the day turned out to be successful putting a damper on the evil mission of scaremongers.

In spite of the fact that more than a few entities have been going to great lengths to besmirch the African Union-led peace accord, Ethiopia has been making progress in the right direction on the grounds that the peace deal has been bearing fruits and producing results. In good truth, the breakthrough milestone taken by the federal government has been assisting the progress of the peace implementation.

It appears clear that since the beginning of time, Africa has passed through many ups and downs, as a consequence of the dictation of the third party in the internal affairs of the continent. It is widely known that no matter what scaremongers say about the African union brokered peace deal, the peace implementation in the shortest possible time metamorphosed into achieving results. In the wake of the firm stance of the incumbent, Ethiopia has been taking the capability of the African Union brokered deal into the next level of accomplishment and showing the continent's wisdom to the entire world.

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

Art & Culture

Promoting reading habits in Ethiopia

BY FITSUM GETGACHEW

We have heard recently that the national radio FM Addis 97.1 has begun a 100 day reading habit promotion in the country. These 100 days are promoted by interviewing and asking the experience of reading among well known personalities in various fields, and people very much familiar with books in general. These intellectuals are asked to advise Ethiopian readers, suggest books that need more attention than others. They are asked to recommend the three most impressive books that they have read and would like to see others read them and experience what they did. It is often stated that reading a book could change the life of a person just as watching a movie could have the same effect as art is a powerful weapon that can go deep into the psyche of a person. It has the power of changing the attitude of people. That is why it is said that such choice can be vital.

Records show that reading habits are not particularly spread in Ethiopia as authors are heard lamenting expressly their dismay and disappointment that their efforts in writing books has not met their hopes and expectations. Taking in to consideration the size of the population in this country they argue that the proportion of those who buy books or even go to libraries and read is dismal, very poor. And yet there are millions of students in Ethiopia who would need to read books of all sorts, not only academic textbooks or manuals in their field of study or specialization to pass exams, but also other stories and experiences written in books.

Very often students read only those books which their teachers order them to read. They are not seen voluntarily engaging in the habit of reading not only for academic purposes such as research or preparing certain exams but also for pleasure, entertainment, and passing some leisure time by enjoying reading. This extends to newspapers and magazines, journals etc because the press also suffers from buyers, subscribers and readers. This testifies to the fact that reading habits are not well developed in our country.

In the past few years there has been some significant progress in reading particularly about political issues. People seem to realize that these issues affect their day to day livelihood and they are anxious to know what is going to happen and what communications the government may be interested in conveying to citizens. But book sellers say that even psychological, spiritual, biographical and historical accounts or novels attract some audience among habitual readers. However, they are very few if we count the potential number of readers the country could produce. 'Why is this happening' is a major ask and worth looking at deeply.

Various explanations have been given but the most fundamental authors note is the fact that reading habits have not been persistently and permanently promoted and publicized to the level required, especially in the early days of schools among young

and growing pupils.

The lack of massive promotion of readership, telling readers that it is very important and useful to read for one's life has not been well stated, including in schools, because eventually, psychologists say, reading habits must be developed in childhood days. Children who are conscious about the importance of reading will very probably love to read and continue with that practice through out their life. They find out that it is the right road to academic achievement and success in their prospective life. It helps them face exams with confidence given also their knowledge they get from reading a variety of books, experiences of others who are well versed in life. They are bound to learn from the experience of others who may have passed certain difficult stages in their lives and how they overcame them.

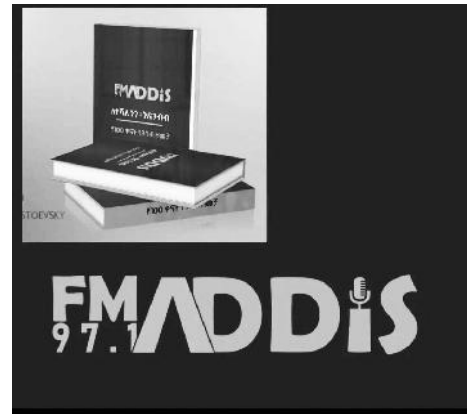
If there were enough readers, authors would certainly be encouraged to write more books. Reading clubs and circles in schools and even outside are very important to promote readership because people can discuss books and exchange ideas presented in the books they read. Admittedly there are several radio and television programs on books and readership but evidently they have not driven the message in an original and interesting manner. Many people say that it probably has not been managed to win the hearts of radio or TV audiences.

There must be something lacking in the programming or in the hours of broadcast or explanation of the programs or shows and who presents the program, the interviewees and ideas expressed. It would probably be more convincing and attractive if popular and revered personalities such as artists take the floor and recommend their fans and admirers to read books. It may be more effective and the 100 days of promotion of books and readership that has been launched by FM Addis 97.1 should in this respect be admired and given all the attention it deserves because it is a very good initiative. It has the potential of extricating millions of youths who seem to be addicted to certain social media outlets distracting them completely from other intellectual activities such as reading books.

The content of these social media outlets are often presented in a manner that can attract and keep the attention of youths for long hours. Social media such as Facebook and Tik Tok have been inundating our society lately as it is very easily available and books and readership have been severely affected by this modern social phenomenon.

Of course social media do have their own positive role in society but if they are used for the wrong reasons, and purposes then it would be time to regulate them without encroaching on peoples' freedom of expression protected by constitutional principles. In fact, even writing books is an aspect of exercising this constitutional rule of freedom of expression.

Regarding the role of books and bookstores, authors lament that there are too few readers and with the cost of publication and paper skyrocketing particularly very lately,



they say it is inconceivable to go ahead and publish books. Our writers are not assisted by editors and publishing houses who can cover the costs of publication as it is usual in many countries. Even some African countries have shown us how books can be published thanks to these investors who know the potential of the market. In fact, the current economic situation would not stimulate potential writers because they know they can never find the necessary finances to publish their work. They would consider their efforts a waste of time, energy and resources.

If on the other hand there were houses that are ready to publish books and authors are not worried about the market or the income they may secure from the sale of their intellectual produce, it would further stimulate their creative potential. They would also commit more time to produce a good work. This would undoubtedly attract more clients, more people interested in reading. The publicity for books would grow as we know now seeing on TV sponsorship of certain popular talk shows or dramas. Books would be publicized just as commercial banks, diapers, real estate companies and soaps with which we are inundated in our electronic media. Publicity for readership and books must increase because it can contribute for society's cultural advancement. Writers would not be limited in their creation too worried to embark on this profession even if they may have the passion of writing books or engage in some research and produce a good academic work. They are limited by the lack of resources.

This however is not to say that we should despair and abandon all efforts of publishing books or trying to sell them. We have seen lately certain books sponsored by commercial firms and others particularly famous and popular writers who have acquired through time their faithful readers engage in publishing books and even advertise them on our media. This shows that the potential is there. We must try to expand our efforts to make a good turn around and develop a new generation of passionate readers.

Our investors must assess the market and embark on it rather than produce only merchandises that are easily sellable and profitable. If they engage in this industry of financing authors and alleviating the burden of writers by sharing with them the eventual profits, they would also augment their popularity among the huge population of youths who in one way or another cannot abstain from reading, especially if the

product is interesting. For these companies it would also be taken as fulfilling their social or corporate responsibilities; giving back to the communities from which they earned riches and reputation. Their names would be associated with the good work they are doing and they would be more credited than those who are not ready to engage with similar activities.

Another idea of expanding readership and encouraging works of art would be ranking the popularity of books by stating 'book of the month' and 'book of the year' and other parades as are done with films and songs etc that occupy a good chunk of our media including the very popular phenomenon of social media. Awards for the excellent work would also have a good impact in this respect.

The potential of promoting readership is hence unlimited also because readership is so low currently. The recent constructions of libraries such as Abrohot must be admired and more of the same need to expand in every city of the country. The expansion of 'chat' houses and 'shisha' smoking shops and residences that are attracting more and more youths contributing to many social problems including crimes would be restrained for lack of clients.

Hence, we must hail the efforts of FM Addis 97.1 and other efforts must be followed by other media outlets and create a new generation of passionate readers. It is unacceptable that even 3000 copies of a book can not be sold in Ethiopia for months. With more than 32 universities and thousands of students, and hundreds of thousands of teachers at all levels, we must worry when authors do not manage to sell even a thousand of their books in a short period of time. Special consideration must be made to ameliorate this situation. The efforts of our mass media are very much needed to raise awareness. Similarly, the business community should seriously consider this gap and try to help fill it with their financial muscles. This must be taken as a growing industry and in the end, it could result very profitable.

If we consider the experience of certain countries, we will find out that we have a lot to learn because publishing companies approach famous writers and give them lavish contacts so that they write a book. With the publicity of promotion of the product, they create a huge expectation among the readers and you see buyers queuing to buy the product. This may look like farfetched for a 'poor' country such as ours, but we must remember that the advanced economies reached this level from very modest beginnings. What we need to do is focus on serious objectives such as this and free ourselves from conflict and disagreements on virtually every political or social idea and waste our time and resources stalling our economy and growth and get distracted from doing what will in the long run is useful for our country. We should be careful not to stifle the bright prospects of the coming generation. In this regard books have a huge role. Reading is a window from where one can watch the world.

Law & Politics

Keeping hate speech, misinformation at bay

BY FITSUM GETACHEW

We are living in a special age of technological advancement and communication. The various social media have taken over that traditional mainstream media. Journals and newspapers are being undermined by the spread of this modern technological breakthrough. Lately, we are also faced with the phenomenon of artificial intelligence AI which can be used for positive outcomes but also misused leading to incalculably negative outcomes.

Traditional media houses and professional journalists are being overwhelmed by the so-called citizen journalism where anyone has the possibility and means to film, write and post any kind of happenings in day-to-day life. Anything that happens in the world is being posted on various social media but even more, than Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp and Twitter (which now has been re-branded as X), the phenomenon TikTok has spread like wildfire with millions being clients and subscribers and participants of this social network. What is more, it has given opportunity for millions to acquire some form of employment that can guarantee decent income and livelihood.

The spread of social media has its positive sides because a lot of precious information could very easily and speedily be disseminated and shared with the entire world in no time or even in real-time, at times live. Certain incidents in any part of the world could be reached and avoid further damage or warn people to beware and keep them away from eventual damages such as a fire that breaks at some place, an inundation in a certain area or a traffic jam due to an accident etc.

Social media have also helped many people find friends and even result in engagements that have ended up in marriages or defeat loneliness by exchanging information or engaging in friendly conversations with like-minded people. Above all any kind of news is conveyed to the subscribers in no time anticipating even the well-established, reputable, fast and reliable mainstream media.

However, there is one very important weakness in the use of social media, especially when it comes to certain individuals or firms that disseminate false information or advise people to do what they should but because they are taking advantage of their innocence or naivety. Some people try to earn improper income by spreading false and sensational or exaggerated information.

As social media do not have editors and the platform is free to everybody's use, people tend to take advantage of this freedom; the consequences could be dangerous and harmful. There is no way to recover the expenses eventually incurred by these social media clients.

True, the government and the users of social media themselves keep on warning to make

a reality check on the creation of information to avoid damages not only material but also psychological. People could be affected very negatively in their lives. At times the result could be even tragic due to false and invented information.

However, the most dangerous of all these media users is the fact that they use misinformation, false information or ambiguous ones to lead people to do things they otherwise would never even think of doing. These social media users can invent certain stories and use them to malicious ends, particularly in political objectives and matters that can have the effect of leading people to unwanted and dangerous acts. The fact that these media spread in no time, it is also very easy to appeal to the emotions of people and make them react negatively. This is a challenge for many governments. There are certain social media which are twenty-four hours active in conveying damning information against whichever government they oppose and trying to mobilize as many people as possible to come out in protest against the government in question.

Social media nowadays are very important actors in influencing and at times becoming even determinants in the outcome of elections by siding this way or that one. We have seen many states using social media to convey their political policies to the public. At the same time, certain social media are used to transmit very extreme and militant views against the existing establishment and the stability of nations. The message is spread by social media and used to radicalize particularly youths who are exposed to these media. Many people rely on information they obtain easily from the social media to which they are associated closely or have subscribed to. They trust blindly these outlets and would not accept different views.

The most dangerous of all is however the spread of hate speech, hateful statements that are disseminated against a certain group of people just because they belong to that group or are associated with it. In societies such as ours where there are disparities among the population, expressing hate speech against a certain community is very dangerous because it incites to be engaged in certain statements and eventually become a time bomb due to unpredictable reactions.

Violence could very easily explode and lead to civil conflict. Hate speech can be used even in certain private electronic media such as what happened during the Rwandan genocide of 1994 that cost the lives of 800,000 people targeting them on the grounds of belonging to this race, ethnic origin, and language or religious group. The media continued to spread hate speech against the Tutsi for months calling them 'cockroaches' and killing them was justified.

History tells us that during the Nazi Germany administration in the nineteen twenties and thirties, the nationalist government was engaged in continuous negative propaganda

and hate speech and attempt to justify the extermination of Jews in the Holocaust and those who sided with them. The assertions made by Nazi Germany or the hate speech disseminated by the Hutu-led government against the Tutsi community has led to mark one of the most devastating and shameful episodes in the history of mankind.

Today with the spread of hate speech even in very modernized, sophisticated and fast means, the consequences could also be very damning and a huge risk of leading to civil wars. It has a huge effect of destabilizing societies and governments are very much anxious about the long-term outcomes of the spread of hate speech.

In the case of Ethiopia, we have seen the fast spread of hate speech without any reasonable ground or generalizing an act or crime committed by someone even possibly a crazy individual make a sweeping generalization at the expense of every member of that ethnic group or nationality. Responses are also given to such hate speech by others in an attempt to settle accounts. A dangerous vicious circle is thus created with alarming consequences and politically this has the potential of resulting in unwanted election outcomes basing things not on ideas or policies but on belongingness to this or that group.

UNESCO has been very much worried about the spread of hate speech and has been trying to devise a strategy to contain and eliminate it. Here in Ethiopia the government has been advising and warning that people should refrain from resorting to hate speech and misinformation because it is very dangerous in inciting violence and eroding the fundamental social fabric of harmonious life that has been a fact of Ethiopian communities' life. These recent dangerous narratives and rhetoric are very dangerous and contribute to the formation of a time bomb with unforeseeable consequences.

People should learn from the experience of other nations such as Rwanda remains one of the worst acts that humans could do to other humans most of whom were their neighbors and people who lived side by side for years sharing and exchanging favors and courtesies in harmony and peace.

Hate speech is dangerous because it can very easily appeal to the emotions of people and the result can only be negative and even catastrophic. Some may try to justify all this as an expression of freedom of speech but this cannot be defended with legal provisions because there are punishments the law provides against those who resort to hate speech and misinformation that can incite people to engage in violence and destabilize communities. The easy spread of modern technological inventions may have exacerbated the issue in its negative aspect but we can also use these modern means to foster peace and harmony among people by using them to provide useful information and advice to people.

The easy spread of modern technological inventions may have exacerbated the issue in its negative aspect but we can also use these modern means to foster peace and harmony among people by using them to provide useful information and advice to people



The possession of sea gates is crucial for development

Yasin Mohammed (PhD)

BY GIRMACHEW GASHAW

For all creatures living on earth, water is a great boon of nature. It is very difficult to find anything that is not related to water. Even if we only associate the benefits of this natural gift with the existence of human beings, we (human beings) can get a lot of basic benefits. To put it simply, water gives us food, hygiene, transportation, and many other benefits. It doesn't take much research or digging to realize these basic benefits; just being human is enough.

However, water has many other positive aspects. If we look at this not at the individual level but at the national level, we can see the benefits of the sea, oceans, and rivers. Based on this, we would like to talk about the importance of water in terms of the economic and political interests of a country and related issues. We have been talking extensively with the guests we have invited, especially about the natural water resources that Ethiopia has and the historical and natural rights that Ethiopia should have.

Before that, let's try to explore a little what the research results say about the economic and political benefits of a sea gate for a country. Access to seaports plays an important role in the economic and political situation of a country. The first role is economic growth, trade, and foreign exchange earnings; scholars mention that seaports facilitate international trade, allowing countries to earn foreign currency by exporting and importing. Another benefit is a cost reduction. This means that owning a seaport can reduce the cost of efficient transportation of imported goods, consumer products, and raw materials.

Another advantage is that it makes countries competitive. Scholars explain that access to (owning) seaports increases a country's competitiveness in the international market. In addition, they explain that it has made a significant contribution to political influence and freedom. Mainly, coastal access gives a country more political influence, allowing it to assert its interests in regional and global affairs. These same studies have confirmed that owning a sea gate provides geostrategic options.

The studies show that seaports help a country effectively manage changing regional conditions by expanding its geostrategic options. Based on the above detailed information, today's guest, Yasin Mohammed (Dr.), Addis Ababa University African and Asian Research Center instructor, raises various concerns. The Ethiopian Press Agency raised questions related to these issues while it had spent a few minutes. Have a nice read!



Would you brief us on the role of water bodies for the international benefit of a given country?

Water plays an irreplaceable role, from the individual to the nation. Oceans serve as connectors between different parts of the world. Commercial ships transport goods across natural and man-made harbors, navigating these bodies of water for weeks or months. Seaborne trade routes meet humans' basic needs, making it essential for governments to control these sea areas to ensure the safety and sovereignty of their citizens.

Viewing water from this perspective reveals its significance beyond hygiene, drinking, food, and cooking, both globally and domestically. Consequently,

countries worldwide dedicate extensive efforts to managing water resources, formulating policies for the careful utilization of rain and groundwater resources, and asserting control over adjacent seas for strategic advantage. In general, water plays a pivotal role in political, economic, and related human issues, underscoring its importance for both nations and individuals.

Water has been historically fundamental to civilization. For instance, ancient cooperative societies based their lives on nature, primarily subsisting on fruits and hunting. However, as they transitioned to agriculture, settling near rivers, the foundations of civilization were laid.

Major civilizations like Greece, Rome,



By prioritizing water resources and addressing internal and external challenges, Ethiopia can unlock its full potential and pave the way for long-term growth and prosperity



Mesopotamia, and China originated from agricultural practices along riverbanks. Subsequently, these civilizations expanded their reach through water-based transportation, with notable explorers like Magellan navigating the globe via water routes. Rivers have been crucial for agriculture, transportation, and trade, serving as the main arteries of world commerce.

Many scholars agree that Ethiopia is a water tower in East Africa. How much of this resource has been exploited so far?

Despite abundant water resources, Ethiopia has not fully harnessed its water potential. The country's rivers, like the Abbay and Baro Akobo, remain

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underutilized, while other rivers are primarily used for electricity generation. Properly utilizing these resources is essential for maximizing their benefits. Ethiopia must address internal capacity constraints and external influences to optimize water resource management effectively. Historically, external pressures, such as colonial perspectives on Africa, have hindered Ethiopia's water resource development. Addressing these challenges through expert-led solutions and policy discussions is crucial for leveraging water resources to alleviate poverty and foster national development.

Water is indeed the foundation of civilization and development, highlighting the importance of water management for sustainable growth. Access to ports and rivers is critical for landlocked countries like Ethiopia, necessitating strategic planning and diplomatic engagement to secure sea gateways. Collaborative efforts across sectors and generations are essential to enhance water resource utilization and promote economic prosperity. Educating future generations on water management and instilling a sense of responsibility towards water conservation from an early age is vital for sustainable development. By prioritizing water resources and addressing internal and external challenges, Ethiopia can unlock its full potential and pave the way for long-term growth and prosperity.

What is the benefit of possessing access to the sea for a country?

The possession of sea gates is crucial for a country's development and regional influence. Seaports play a pivotal role in economic growth by fostering trade, investment, and industrialization, with significant contributions to infrastructure development. Ports also play an indispensable role in promoting development, creating jobs, and enhancing infrastructure in surrounding areas. Ethiopia, a landlocked country, faces inherent disadvantages due to its lack of access to the sea. While Djibouti currently serves as the main port for Ethiopia's foreign trade, relying solely on one port poses limitations and risks. To mitigate these challenges, Ethiopia is exploring equitable port utilization agreements with neighboring countries like Eritrea, Djibouti, and Somaliland, and considering future collaborations, such as the Lamu port in Kenya. The strategic significance of sea gates is multifaceted, enabling global connectivity, trade, and economic prosperity.

How do you see the distance Ethiopia has gone to find a sea gate?



It is necessary to find a solution by knowing the problems and solving them properly. One of the solutions is to remove the old barriers that prevent us from using our water resources and alleviate the problems. Expanding port access and conducting extensive diplomatic work is another

If we say that water is the foundation of civilization, we use the average port. Our country has been landlocked for a long time. At present, questions are being raised about whether it is good if there is a port. For my part, I look at these questions very favorably. I believe that the question should be asked. If

this question is answered, perhaps it will be beneficial not only for the government or any individual, but for all Ethiopians. Therefore, it is the role and responsibility of the relevant parties to present the question in an appropriate manner and to conduct the work in a highly diplomatic manner.

Of course, any Ethiopian should think about and work for his country. I don't think there is anyone who doesn't want Ethiopia to get a sea port or use its rivers for its development, as water is the basis of growth for a given country. When the conditions are right to take advantage of this large base, it is better to support and encourage than to oppose and hinder.

Experts are expected to support Ethiopia in being able to use water resources in a scientific way. Other people should also understand that water is very important for the development of our country and provide the necessary support.

If we agree that water is the basis of life and development, how should everybody handle this precious resource?

Doing this as much as possible will not only save our water from being wasted, but also help us get a wider benefit. However, especially the younger generation needs to understand more about the country's water resources. How many rivers does Ethiopia have? How can the country use its rivers? How much can the state grow if it uses water resources? They should think more about water resources; ask related questions and analyze the situation as well as the area they can contribute to their country while reading books.

Above all, if possible, it is necessary to work with children to learn about water from their primary and secondary education in the curriculum. At this level, as we have informed them, their ability to control wasted water and to understand more about the benefits and harms of water will be developed.

Therefore, everyone should pay attention to water. There is no doubt that growth will come when attention is paid to water. As the world grew with water, it became the basis of the development of the countries in the world. Ethiopia, on the other hand, has lost its number-one port. On the other hand, despite having many rivers, it is not using its rivers properly.

It is necessary to find a solution by knowing the problems and solving them properly. One of the solutions is to remove the old barriers that prevent us from using our water resources and alleviate the problems. Expanding port access and conducting extensive diplomatic work is another. On the other hand, I believe that in order to have sustainable development, it is necessary to work from the lower elementary level so that the generation knows about water in depth.

Thank you very much for your kind collaboration!

It is my pleasure

Society

Addressing past injustice, curing trauma through transitional justice

BY MENGISTEAB TESHOME

Ethiopia, in its history, has gone through a number of testing times. During those trying times, human rights violations, abuses, conflicts and wars have occurred and left a number of scars and traumas in the minds and hearts of individual citizens; impacting them severely.

Unfortunately, abuses, repressions and inconveniences that were committed in the past but left unattended and addressed in a proper manner coupled with the increase in the number of offenders and victims are challenging the country and causing greater peace and security threats.

To resolve the problems, heal the trauma, sustain lasting peace, develop a unifying narration that could bring the people together and reach a national consensus where justice and truth is ensured throughout the country, Ethiopia has established the National Dialogue Commission (ENDC). At the same time, it is working to implement a successful Transitional Justice (TJ) system to close the chapter of recurring conflicts, address untreated societal grievances and other injustices through holding proper either judicial or non-judicial mechanisms.

The Ethiopian Herald had a short stay with Oromia Development Association General Director Dereje Itticha to share his insights regarding this same issue. According to him, the move to apply TJ is instrumental in terms of healing the wounds of the past. Each ethnic group and entities have its own wound that should be treated and acknowledged in the process of TJ. "In my view, coming with the TJ approach is a feasible political commitment to come to common ground. It could help societies to stand in unison for justice and unity rather than division. It will also help to close the challenges of the nation - recurring conflicts that may arise at different times and occasions among different ethnic groups."

"Over the years, deep rooted ethnic divisions, grievances as well as fabricated narrations for political goals complicated the country's pursuit for justice, reconciliation and nation building effort. Now, it is crucial to come to the middle and scrap the divisions through ensuring inclusivity, addressing the concerns of all affected groups to make trauma, hatred, enmity go away," he underlined.

According to him, ensuring productive TJ is possible if inclusiveness is ensured, thus, he called on stakeholders to examine the root cause instead of separately addressing the human rights violations as well as pit crimes.

He finally said that applying TJ could help in orchestrating the three government parts in a more balanced fashion and based on accountability to let citizens develop a sense of ownership.

In an exclusive interview with *The Ethiopian Herald* Communication Director with the Ethiopian Road Fund Asrat Asale said that transitional justice should be translated through independent institutions. Each actor should come up with rational thinking and seek truth that could pave the way to ensure conventional procedures are put in place for the sake of humanity.

As the objective of TJ is to prevent conflicts by promoting peace, justice, reconciliation and rule of law, each actor should be ready to accept the decision.

"The path toward healing and reconciliation undoubtedly could be long and arduous. However, addressing the challenges with commitment and sensitivity, is crucial to build a more just and equitable future for citizens. In this regard, media houses should enhance efforts in creating awareness towards TJ and its ultimate goal. Not revenge, but rule of law should be the bottom line; so stakeholders should act in line with the objective and build lasting peace that all citizens can enjoy."

Moreover, the step could pave the way to believe in citizenship rather than ethnicity and build the nation in the spirit of unity. "I am optimistic that TJ could address the hurdles piled up for years," he opined.

The whole work of TJ should center on humanity and rule of law. Thus, each actor should make his/her mind to compromise on some points for the sake of ensuring lasting peace in Ethiopia, of course in a way making individuals who committed crimes against humanity and caused serious physical and property damage accountable.

According to him, Rwanda had conducted a productive TJ that enabled the Rwandese to forgive and live in peace. The government has high political commitment and showed to pushing forward all its effort to persecute the perpetrators.

"I have been in Rwanda and witnessed how Rwandan citizens have benefited from the TJ process. Nowadays, the people of Rwanda are found in a new chapter and coexist peacefully and harmoniously, sending important messages to the international community."

Though the tragedy that occurred in Rwanda years ago had shocked the international community, the country has witnessed remarkable progress and this was witnessed at the time Rwanda marked its 30th anniversary of the genocide against

the Tutsi, in 1994. Since then, Rwanda has embarked on an ambitious justice and reconciliation process with the ultimate aim of making all Rwandese stand as one rather than being divided.

He further noted that the transitional justice groups are grasping knowledge and experiences from different countries with better experiences so that the members can draft a sound comprehensive policy to heal Ethiopia's past and present grievances.

He finally urged all citizens, religious and community leaders as well as civic societies to support Ethiopia's move to carry out successful Transitional Justice and achieve a productive outcome.

Responding to the media once in relation Ethiopia's initiative to TJ, Misganaw Mulugeta, a member of Ethiopia's TJ, said that in order to implement Transitional Justice in Ethiopia, it is compulsory to take lessons from countries which passed through this process. In order to crack down past recurring conflicts, unaddressed violations, grievances and other injustices, there must be proper judicial or non-judicial mechanisms, proper tools, and evidence to address the past injustices and make perpetrators accountable. Doing so will create a chance for a better future, a future with democracy, rule of law, and justice to blossom.

The expert said that members of transitional justice groups are grasping knowledge and experiences from different countries with better experiences so that the members can draft a sound comprehensive policy to heal Ethiopia's past and present grievances.

Rating the ongoing process and stage of TJ process, the expert said members of the working group are currently consulting on policy options before drafting the policy. According to him the agenda of drafting policy for TJ is something different from drafting other policies. It is a different agenda and process that demands warrants, even before drafting a policy, it warrants some discussion, some consensus among the public.

Hence, the working group has been consulting with the broader community, stakeholders and other bodies to grasp inputs to draft the policy. On this stage the public express their views on how to go about it, what type of options should follow under each component of TJ, and what kind of institutional arrangements are more appropriate.

"I think Ethiopia will definitely benefit from such a process, including Transitional Justice, as it helps to address the past inconveniences, and create a future based on the principles of justice, reconciliation, and truth," he remarked.

Members of transitional justice groups are grasping knowledge and experiences from different countries with better experiences so that the members can draft a sound comprehensive policy to heal Ethiopia's past and present grievances

Verbatim and Caption

Ethiopia's Green Legacy sets example for Africa

Ethiopia's Green Legacy tree-planting program is a leading example for Africa. Ethiopia has progressed since the Durban COP in terms of planting, and a number of examples stand out. The tree planting is really good, really important in a country where forestry is a key part of the economy. The UK has a long-standing partnership with Ethiopia on climate change initiatives and hopes that the country can successfully deliver on its ambitious commitments.

**Julian P. Wright, UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
Climate and Nature Africa Directorate Head**



Gov't reaffirms commitment to implementing Transitional Justice Policy

Implementing the Transitional Justice Policy is essential for a better Ethiopia. Designing and implementing a participatory transitional justice based on the nation's political and social circumstances with a clear policy framework is vital.

The Ministry of Justice has a huge role for monitoring and coordinating the implementation of the policy and law documents. The House of Peoples Representatives (HPR) will continue its unwaveringly support to the implementation of transitional justice.

Tagesse Chaffo, House of People's Representatives Speaker

Verbatim and Caption



Ethiopians should stand for development and prosperity: PM Abiy

Ethiopia is striving to realize prosperity. To realize development and prosperity, maintaining peace and security is vital. Ethiopians should seek peace and harmony in order to see a prosperous and convenient Ethiopia.

The diverse ethnic identities, cultures, languages, and topography, could not be a source of difference in building strong nation-state. By preserving peace and security, Ethiopians should strive to ensure peace, development and prosperity. We have to strive to extricate our country from economic dependence.

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) said addressing a rally in Wolkite town last week

Ethiopian becoming reliable MRO services provider: CEO

Ethiopian Airlines operates a modern Maintenance, Repair and Overhaul (MRO) facility at its hub in Addis Ababa, established in 1957, and developed over the years. Ethiopian Airlines MRO Services is ready to cooperate with fellow African Airlines and manufacturers.

This facility is providing different MRO services, airframe, engine and component maintenance, engineering and material services to other airlines both in Africa and the Middle East.

Mesfin Tasew, Ethiopian Airlines CEO said at African Aviation MRO and Aviation Training Conference and Exhibition organized in Addis Ababa

