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Photo: Hadush Abraha

Ethiopia aspires to replicate agri success in industry

• Premier inaugurates Gada economic zone construction in Oromia

BY BACHA ZEWDIE

MODJO-The government aims to replicate the agriculture sector's success in the manufacturing industry and to expedite Ethiopia's economic progress, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) said.

The Premier made the above remark while launching the construction of the Geda Special Economic Zone (GSEZ) in Lume District, East Shewa Zone of the Oromia State yesterday.

Speaking at the occasion, Abiy (PhD) noted that the GSEZ serves as a pivotal platform to realize the government's vision of replicating its successes in the agricultural sector in the industrial domain.

The success that has been registered in wheat and other agricultural commodities should not

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EMC underpinning media's role to curb env't crisis

BY BETELHEM BEDLU

ADDIS ABABA- The role of media professionals in tackling ecosystem and environmental crisis is indispensable, so said Ethiopian Media Council (EMC).

During the World Press Freedom Day which was hosted by the EMC along with the Embassy of France in Ethiopia under the theme: 'Journalism in the face of Environmental crisis', Tigist Yilma, EMC's Chairperson of General Council stated the above statement.

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Expert hails Addis Ababa's architectural dev't

BY YESUF ENDRIS

ADDIS ABABA-The ongoing urban architectural developments in Addis Ababa are aligned with international standards and making visually appealing and fully functional infrastructure, an expert in the issue said.

Addis Ababa University Ethiopian Institute of Architecture, Building Construction and City Development (EiABC) Lecturer Bisrat Kifle told the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) that the Corridor Development and Greening projects are aligning with Addis Ababa's metropolitan status.

While acknowledging past missteps in urban development particularly violations of the structural plan in building and road constructions, the architect highlighted the significance of the new reformative measures. The Corridor Development Project would enhance the city's aesthetics and functionality by creating attractive and

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Ethiopia eyeing industry competitiveness to build shock-resilient economy

• MoI holds panel discussion on export competitiveness

BY TSEGAYE TILAHUN

ADDIS ABABA- Ensuring the competitiveness and effectiveness of the manufacturing industry is critical to build a shock-resilient economy, the Ministry of Industry (MoI) said, expressing its desire to reexamine the sector.

The MoI held a panel discussion yesterday with relevant stakeholders on maximizing domestic production, export competitiveness and import substitution as well as scaling up industrial capacity and other related issues.

At the event, Industry Minister Melaku Alebel said that attention has been given to the manufacturing industry not only to create jobs, but it is considered as core sovereignty issue. The sector is the reason for countries to register economic growth Ethiopia has been revising policies and strategies to reexamine the sector with continental and international context.

"Ethiopia has been heavily importing high-level food and food related items,



Photo: Gebabo Gebrie

clothing, chemical, engineering and metals from abroad and to balance the situation, the country prepared import substitution strategy."

So far, the country identified some 96 imported items to substitute in local

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News

Addis chamber delves into AfCFTA's opportunities

BY MISGANAW ASNAKE

ADDIS ABABA— Apart from encouraging trading each other, African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) highly benefit African nations reducing transport cost and shortening the long traveling of African products to another continent.

The aforesaid remark was made by the Addis Ababa Chamber of Commerce and Sectoral Associations (AACCSA).

AACCSA President Mesenbet Shenkutie said that AfCFTA is very useful for African continent since it reduces transport cost and shortens value chain of produced or raw products to reach to each African country soon.

She further noted that AfCFTA also helps alternative products to appear in market in quality manner, boost the GDP, benefit the private sector with free of tariff in exporting products to neighboring countries.

‘It is high to support business in a bid to gain vast manufacturing inputs in the continent via creating value chain platform.’

‘AfCFTA connects 1.3 billion people across 54 countries with a combined GDP valued at 3.4 trillion USD this further help to achieve



Photo: Dagne Abera



agenda 2063,” she said.

The president explained that it is expected to create one currency in market exchange in Africa and stabilizing the current market inflation that happens because of monopolization, logistics problem since products aren't moving freely.

Agenda 2063 is designed to help African nations to lead better lives that accompany by stable market situation and peaceful continent.

Mesenbet said: “Ethiopia’s participation in foreign trade is low we need to work together with our fellow Africans as it has great impact on import and export products.”

AACCSA Secretary General Shibeshi Betemariam said AfCFTA will bring great opportunity for Ethiopia market as Ethiopian businesspersons meet with African counterparts.

This is the best time to organize panel discussion with Custom Commission and Ministry of trade and regional integration and others, it was learnt.

He said that chamber is working to create favorable working environment for businesspersons, facilitate trade and investment activities, keep the interest and protect right of chamber member in AfCFTA trade platform.

Japan supporting startupers in Ethiopian universities

BY MISGANAW ASNAKE

ADDIS ABABA—Addis Ababa University (AAU) Interim President Samuel Kifle (PhD) said that the university of Tokyo facilitating and fostering AAU startup effort to further develop sharing its knowledge and promoting innovation.

The lecture series was organized yesterday by Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) in collaboration with (AAU) on Japan's development experience in the field of entrepreneurship, innovation and others.

Recently, AAU and JICA signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) and the MoU represent significance milestone the partnership between our institutions and will facilitate collaborative effort in supporting the growth and development of startup in Ethiopia that helps AAU to work with Japanese universities, he said.

The vice president of the University of Tokyo has shared his experience to AAU’s students and lecturers in the fields of startup and innovation, Samuel added.

He further noted that AAU has been working with various Japanese government institutions over the years.

The Japanese universities and the government will provide support the reform works being implemented by the AAU.

‘AAU is setting up a center in front of the



Photo: Gebabo Gebrie

main campus where students with new ideas can enrich into business ideas and startups.”

Ambassador Extraordinary of Japan to Ethiopia, Ambassador Shibata Hironori said Ethiopia and Japan share a common history in that both countries have long been independent and have maintained their own identities, sense of values, and cultures, while adopting and developing technologies from developed countries. That's why Ethiopia would like to learn about the nation's systems and advanced technologies from Japan.

Ethiopia has great unlimited potential for growth and human resource is the key to its prosperity. Japan, as an old and close friend

of Ethiopia, would like to work together for our prosperity.

‘‘You can learn about the potential and positive impacts that startups can have in Ethiopia today, which will shed light on a better future for Ethiopia.’’

At the event, Vice President of University of Tokyo, Prof. Someya Takaohas presented the research paper under the title ‘‘Startup Ecosystem Development Experiences and Lessons from Japan’’. His research and social implementation of organic electronics like ‘‘Electronic Skins’’ and the next generation wearable worldwide and shared his expertise and experience with young Ethiopian people about the formation of start-up ecosystems within universities.

MoH, ICAN marks World Hygiene Day

BY STAFF REPORTER

ADDIS ABABA- Ministry of Health (MoH) in collaboration with the Infection Control Africa Network (ICAN) – Eastern hub, marked World Hand Hygiene Day at Eka Kotebe General Hospital on Thursday.

Officials from both sides underscored the importance of hand hygiene in healthcare settings, uniting healthcare professionals, experts, and stakeholders in a collective effort to advocate for improved practices.

At the event, MoH National Infection Prevention and Control Coordinator Markos Paulos emphasized in his keynote address that many peoples, particularly across rural areas needs to be aware about the criticalness of hand hygiene in preventing healthcare-associated infections.

He also underscored the significance of prioritizing infection control measures in healthcare facilities nationwide.

Representing the Infection Control Africa Network (ICAN), Bethlehem Tadesse (MD) also shared her insights into initiatives aimed at advancing infection control practices across Africa.

The collaborative efforts of organizations like ICAN are pivotal in driving positive change and fostering a culture of hygiene in healthcare settings.

She also highlighted the significance of hand hygiene comprehensive awareness creation to the people. The exchange of ideas and experiences fostered a deeper understanding of effective strategies for improving hand hygiene practices, she noted.

ICAN also officially handed over hand hygiene supplies to Eka Kotebe General Hospital, reaffirming its commitment to supporting infection control efforts and ensuring that healthcare facilities have the necessary resources to maintain high standards of hygiene.

Eka Kotebe General Hospital CEO Muluken Tesfaye (MD) also appreciates the support.

The World Hand Hygiene Day celebration at Eka Kotebe General Hospital highlighted the Ministry of Health and ICAN’s dedication to advancing infection prevention and control practices nationwide and across Africa, it was stated.

News

Ethiopia ascends to TJ implementation

• Unveils progress monitoring digital platform

BY ASHENAFI ANIMUT

ADDIS ABABA –Ethiopia’s progression to Transitional Justice (TJ) implementation process expedites and ensures its journey towards ensuring sustainable peace, reconciliation, and stability, the Federal Supreme Court President said, calling for stakeholders’ vigorous involvement.

Speaking at the launching ceremony of TJ’s implementation yesterday, the Federal Supreme Court President Tewodros Mihret said that Ethiopia has been engaging in a comprehensive and inclusive TJ process in line with its political and social context. To this end, the country has been formulating and propelling the international human rights principles and experiences.

Tewodros also underscored that the government has been establishing a group of independent experts, documents and consultative forums in the course of transitional justice policy preparation to meet the country’s lasting peace aspirations.

“The national justice system propelling with a guided and clear policy framework should not only be conceived as a mere task but also it needs to be a compulsory principle.”

Moreover, TJ is a viable mechanism to address old-aged hardships, injustices, severe human rights violations and injustices. It also helps build a system that ensures lasting peace, reconciliation, stability and sound democratic culture.

Accordingly, the Ministry of Justice has launched a digital platform to disseminate any information; documents evaluate and monitor the overall implementation processes of the TJ.

He noted, “The swift progression to the implementation phase is a real testimony for the government’s firm commitment to mend significant human rights violations and other fractures that occurred in the past and currently.”

The president reaffirmed the Supreme Court’s readiness to stand with the process

and execute policies to realize the mission.

Praising institutions and stakeholders during the policy development process, Justice Minister Gedion Temotheos (PhD) called on the large communities to actively participate in the entire implementation process to yield meaningful outcomes.

As to Gedion (PhD), the ministry has been conducting chains of discussions on the TJ draft policy in various parts of the country by establishing groups of experts, scholars, advocates among many others.

The landmark TJ implementation process was launched in the presence of ministers, commissioners and senior government officials, diplomats and civil society representatives.

It is to be recalled that the Council of Ministers has recently approved the Transitional Justice Policy with a view of overseeing and executing the process in a systematic, cohesive, and efficient manner.

Expert hails ...

efficient pathways.

Bisrat also mentioned potential challenges in implementing the plan, including difficulty in adhering to all regulations, especially in the emergence of new architectural styles. “Utilizing well-studied plans and involving more architects and urban planners in decision-making processes is of great significance for effective implementation of the project.”

Addressing concerns about residential areas’ transformation into commercial centers, he urged concerned bodies to address the issue and prevent recurrence.

Despite potential conflicts with existing regulations, incorporating contemporary design elements is important, the expert noted, adding that the implementation of architectural and building color regulations is commendable. “The measure would also contribute to sustainable urban planning and align with the practice that is common in big cities across the globe.”

Addis Ababa’s architectural initiatives on greening are also vital to foster an inclusive environment for residents and visitors alike, Bisrat remarked.

Ethiopia aspires...

be taken as means for boasting but should serve as a spring board for the bulk work ahead. It is the time to gear focus towards the manufacturing industry since sticking on agriculture alone does not take the country forward, he emphasized.

“For Ethiopia to become competent in the global economic arena, leveraging on manufacturing industry is crucial. In this regard, the establishment of the GSEZ is instrumental in unlocking Oromia’s and Ethiopia’s vast potential for manufacturing industry.”

PM Abiy pointed that with the establishment and operation of the Lume Free Trade Zone within the GSEZ, it will become the second free trade area after Dire Dawa, amplifying opportunities for economic growth and development.

Upon completion, the economic zone, which is equipped with the necessary facilities, is expected to produce various export standard products and play vital role in creating

sizable number of jobs for citizens.

Ethiopia is endowed with untapped natural resources that need the concerted efforts of all stakeholders to utilize the potential and help the country to get rid of poverty, the Premier remarked.

Oromia State Chief Administrator Shimelis Abdisa said on the occasion that state has gone long distance in transforming the economy from agriculture led to manufacturing industry. The special economic zone will make the country a regional and continental trade hub.

Meanwhile, a Memorandum of Understanding for the construction of the industry complex was signed between GSEZ and Chinese Civil Engineering Construction Company (CCECC).

High-level government officials, CCECC representatives and other guests were in attendance in the construction launching ceremony.

Ethiopia eyeing...

capacity in the future and it has fully shunned importing some products and exporting these items to neighboring countries. Accordingly, there is an ongoing discussion with Djibouti, South Sudan officials to export military and security personnel uniforms that will meet their standards, the Minister elaborated.

Melaku further noted that the Made in Ethiopia Movement requires investing in skilled labor force, quality inputs, infrastructure quality development, improving logistics systems, standardizing certification processes and others. The movement has been registering results in increasing products’ quality and shed the light for the need for continued improvement via technical support, standardized production processes, and strong regulatory systems.

For his part, Trade and Regional Integration Minister Gebremeskel Chala (PhD) mentioned the importance of product quality in the entire manufacturing process and rebranding. The products must meet international standards and customers’

safety. Moreover, it needs balancing product quality with competitive pricing to satisfy customers.

Gebremeskel also emphasized the crucial role of a strong private sector to driving production and productivity as well as to prioritize competitiveness.

Ethiopian Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Association President Daniel Waktola (MD) said that Made in Ethiopia Movement has been contributing greatly for pharmaceutical sector’s successful model for import substitution.

Last year, the local supply share for the pharmaceutical sector was only 8%, after the launch of the initiative; it has been covering about 37% of the market. The association plans to cover 60% of medicine demand by local products in the coming five years, the president remarked.

The Made in Ethiopia Expo was launched on last Thursday to showcase the capabilities and potential of the Ethiopian manufacturing industry.

EMC underpinning...

Environmental and ecosystem crisis globally is putting enormous pressure on billions of people around the globe. Ethiopia is amongst the countries that are being affected by the crisis. To this end, the nation has undertaken several environmental protection projects over the past five years, she stressed.

The ongoing planting of seedlings and the soil and water conservation activities best showcase how the environmental issues has been given due emphasis.

In this regard, the immense role that the media professionals and institutions have played is worth mentioning. Still, they are expected to deeply understand the impact of crisis of the ecosystem and deliver adequate rights information for the society.

“While the role of media professionals is not limited to creating awareness

but to strengthen the societal changes, improve regulations, discuss on wrong environmental perceptions. It is vital to allow media personnel to perform their duty freely and independently.”

“I am confident in the profession of journalism but it is important to note that freedom comes with responsibility,” said Rémi Maréchaux, the French Ambassador to Ethiopia on his part.

Expressing his delight to be partnered with EMC to host the World Press Freedom day, he also noted that the embassy of France has been engaging with different media institutions and carried out several activities including providing trainings on different areas.

Rita Bisonawz (PhD), UNESCO’s Director in Ethiopia, highlighted a study that UNESCO published recently which

showcased that 70% of environmental reporters have been victims of attacks, threats and oppression because of their work.

The report also revealed that 44 environmental journalists around the world have been killed in the last 15 years.

“World press freedom day is a call to action to protect journalism, free and pluralistic information. It is also a call to make the major social networks accountable so that they and step up their motivation, regulation measures to counter disinformation,” she underscored.

The day would also be instrumental to equip citizens with critical thinking skills as well as confront disinformation, to protect media professionals’ and new generation, as to her.

She further highlighted that UNESCO will launch an initiative that is especially dedicated to environment, to protect environmental journalists.

Representative of Director General of Ethiopian Environment Protection Authority, said the role of media professionals on the green legacy initiative that has been implemented in the nation is worth mentioning.

The nation has been facing environmental crisis such as drought, flooding and other that caused socioeconomic problems. Thus, journalists are expected to play major role in sensitizing and alerting the society.

The World Press Freedom Day which was being marked for the 31st day globally, centered on the major role of journalists in tackling the global pressing challenge of environment.

Opinion

Gallant step for thriving Ethio-US bilateral ties

BY MENGESHA AMARE

It is well recognized that Ethiopia is one of few ancient African countries admitted to the League of Nations and one of the founding members of the United Nations. During the Scramble for Africa, Ethiopia had maintained its full sovereignty over colonial powers and fought its foes and foreign aggressors. The country has been entertaining bilateral, trilateral and even multilateral relations with a number of nations of the globe since long back. The relationship between Ethiopia and the United States is one of the most strategic and consequential of the 21st century and this amicable relation has accounted for 120 years. The United States has supported Ethiopia to be a peaceful, stable, and prosperous nation.

Entertaining color blind diplomacy, Ethiopia has been enjoying reaping the fruits of diplomacy and amicable ties with a number of nations from east and west blocs. Ethiopia and United States of America have built strategic diplomatic relations over the last two decades plus. True, one of the most fruitful diplomatic relations of the twentieth first century, the diplomatic relations between the world's biggest economy and the fastest growing economy in Africa, USA and Ethiopia respectively is gaining momentum.

The United States and Ethiopia commemorated 120 years of diplomatic relations in 2024 and share mutual interests in promoting peace, stability, and economic development. As the second most populous country in Africa and has a longstanding relations with the U.S., Ethiopia has hosted a number of American citizen residents and visitors, advanced mutual goals for regional stability, and represents an attractive market for U.S economic and commercial interests.

A sizeable United States-based Ethiopian Diaspora underpins dynamic people-to-people relations, too. The United States is committed to help Ethiopia address challenges and regain momentum for crucial reforms regarding a number of sectors.

As far as peace and security are concerned, Ethiopia has made positive strides towards peace, despite internal conflicts that continue to compromise its stability. Without a shadow of doubt thus Ethiopia and the United States have strong economic ties, and U.S. exports to Ethiopia are dominated by aircraft, aircraft engines, and parts; and Ethiopian exports to the United States feature coffee, garments, and leather and leather products. Ethiopia lost African Growth and Opportunity Act eligibility in January 2022 due to human rights concerns. Hopefully, such decisions would be reversed soon.

The U.S. Government remains committed to consolidate recent improvements through its bilateral assistance programs. For instance, its humanitarian agencies are working hard to support Ethiopia. The case of USAID can be cited a case in point as it is advancing

democratic reforms, supporting civil society and media capacity, and strengthening judiciary capacity to improve the rule of law. USAID is also supporting human rights accountability and strengthening the capacity of human rights organizations. The over a century diplomatic journey between the two great countries has to be well reinvigorated and help them reap the bounties, benefits and diplomatic assets.

When United States of America establishes fruitful diplomatic relations with many African countries, it has given due emphasis to its national interest, and so does Ethiopia. The foreign policy model put in place by the former leaders has born fruits, indeed!

Since the inception of their diplomatic ties, the two sides have been discussing bilateral and regional issues of common interest, as well as people-to-people bond in areas such as investment and trade. The firm link between the two countries will further promote the enduring diplomatic relationship between the United States and Ethiopia.

Needless to state, bilateral diplomacy works with individual foreign states on a variety of topics to further one's own domestic and international goals. Recognizing differences and taking prompt action to minimize possible problems are crucial. Security is the first concern of each state, and it is at the foundation of foreign policy. Besides, bilateral relations are essential diplomatic ties between two countries, shaping their political, economic, political and even cultural interactions. These relationships facilitate trade, foster peace, and encourage mutual understanding on a global scale. Cognizant of the fact that understanding the complexities and benefits of bilateral relations is key to grasping international diplomacy, Ethiopia and US have further bolstered their diplomacy aiming at enhancing mutual benefits through international relations and concords.

It is also well recognized that diplomacy is the established method of influencing the decisions and behavior of foreign governments and people through dialog, negotiation, and other lucrative means devoid of violence and war. Truly speaking, modern diplomatic practices are a product of civility and transformation. Historically, diplomacy is meant to the conduct of official, usually bilateral, dealings between two sovereign nations.

Since the nature of diplomacy, its history, and the ways in which modern diplomacy is conducted, including the selection and training of diplomats and the organization of diplomatic bodies needs scrupulous approach, countries do carry out careful dealings in their reach.

Unequivocally, diplomacy is the chief, but not the only, instrument of foreign policy, which is set by political leaders, though diplomats may advise them. Foreign policy establishes goals, prescribes strategies, and sets the broad tactics to be used in their accomplishment. Using the diplomatic they have been employing so far, Ethiopia and

the United States of America have garnered myriads of benefits. The two countries have also been strengthening their relations and undertaking a lot of activities revolving around social, economic, political even cultural spheres.

Yes, diplomacy normally seeks to develop goodwill toward the state it represents, nurturing relations with foreign states and peoples that will ensure their cooperation; hence it has to be well nurtured. The wise use of diplomats is a key to successful foreign policy, indeed!

The U.S. had a renewed interest in the region, and the Ethiopian government needed diplomatic, political, and economic assistance. After 1991, the new regime declared a democratic style of governance, adopted a constitution that enshrined fundamental human rights and promised free, fair, and periodic elections.

Despite being one of the world's underdeveloped nations and a landlocked country, Ethiopia has been said to have many facets to attract other to be allies and to be an attractive partner for the U.S.

Geographically, as a large country that borders all the other countries in the Horn of Africa, Ethiopia contributes to the stability—or instability—of the entire region. As an anchor state, Ethiopia also commands great influence, either negatively or positively.

Ethiopia also has a strong military tradition and institutions that make it a dependable security partner for many countries. True, from its strategic geographical location, Ethiopia can serve as an important base for military operations to collect intelligence information and conduct security operations throughout the region, and the U.S. is likely very much aware of the solid military and security cooperation Ethiopia can deliver.

As a result, the U.S. has no alternative but to cooperate with the Ethiopian government to ensure peace and stability in the region. In terms of political leverage, Ethiopia has built a highly respectable position both continentally and internationally from which U.S. policy makers can draw support to buttress their security interest not only regionally, but also globally.

Interestingly, the Embassy of United States (U.S.) opened a photo exhibition depicting its 120th years of diplomatic journey in Ethiopia at the National Museum to portray the longstanding relations it has had with this great and ancient nation—Ethiopia. Yes, the cultural and people-to-people ties between Ethiopia and the U.S. are growing from time to time. Besides, the photo exhibition showcased captivating images that captured key moments in the long, thriving relations of Ethiopia and the U.S. plus to this, the increasing number of the Ethiopian Diaspora in the U.S. is playing a key role in nurturing the cultural and people to people relations between our two countries, no doubt. As stettered time and again, Ethiopia is the closest allies of the U.S in sub-Sahara Africa, and the two sides work together

in diverse areas of cooperation including economic development, security, health care and education, among others.

It is also well recognized that Ethiopia remains committed to fortify the bilateral or multilateral or you name it with the countries which would like to see its progress and development following a win-win approach.

Basically, the Addis Ababa's political stability would undoubtedly be important to Washington as the country has had a long-standing diplomatic partner and a major destination for USA investment in the East African region.

Not only is Washington interested in protecting its economic investments, but the close relationship with Addis Ababa has quickly made Ethiopia a diplomatic hub.

It is worth remembering that Ethiopia has been in the driver's seat to come up with sustainable diplomatic efforts and trajectories.

As Ethiopia and USA have enjoyed 120 years of diplomatic relations, the two countries had long history of contacts, and Ethiopia and US enjoy excellent relations, and this is due to the convergence of interest between the two sides. The Ethiopian government places economic diplomacy at the helm of its foreign policy.

True, US-Africa relations, as a strategic partnership to build a fair International Political and Economic Order, would be a reliable means to bring about change in all aspects.

US, as one of the most important development partners of Ethiopia, needs to respect interest on extending its assistance.

In 1957, the relationships between the U.S. and Ethiopia were stained when the U.S. government announced that Washington would provide financial assistance to Egypt, Ethiopia's traditional enemy, to build the Aswan Dam.

Regular exchange of high level political visits has provided sustained momentum to bilateral cooperation. Today, the Ethio-U.S. bilateral cooperation is broad-based and multi-sectoral, covering trade and investment, defense and security, education, science and technology, cyber security, high-technology, civil nuclear energy, space technology and applications, clean energy, environment, agriculture and health. Vibrant people-to-people interaction and support across the political spectrum in both countries nurture there bilateral relationship. Regular exchange of high level political visits has provided sustained momentum to bilateral cooperation, while the wide-ranging and ever-expanding dialogue architecture has established a long-term framework for Ethio-U.S. rendezvous.

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

Editorial

A commitment that should be reciprocated!

It can be recalled that when it came to power, the reformist leadership was initiating reconciliation and forgiveness in order to address the deep-rooted grievances and mistrust among Ethiopians. These initiations played significant roles in minimizing the then possible damages; they curtailed the power of inherent grievances that might lead the nation into disintegration.

Though the federal government travelled extra miles in pursuing peaceful means to settle any disagreement, the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) could not choose similar path; instead the Front unceasingly demonstrated warmongering that resulted in a two-year conflict, threatening the stability and peace in the northern part of the country. Unquestionably, the situation had been grave challenge. Central to this challenge is the conflict between the federal government and the TPLF that caused incalculable loss in lives and properties.

As the nation has been cultivating a path to sustainable peace and reconciliation, there is a growing call for the TPLF to demonstrate its commitment to implementing the principles of the Pretoria Agreement since the federal government has been demonstrating relentless efforts in paving the ways for a sustainable resolution through implementing those principles.

The Pretoria Agreement, signed between the federal government and the TPLF, served as a beacon of hope for resolving entrenched disputes through negotiation, mediation and forgiveness. The agreement's principles had offered valuable insights into the art of conflict resolution, which Ethiopia can leverage to bring about lasting peace in the Tigray region.

One of the fundamental pillars of the Pretoria Agreement is negotiation and dialogue. Ethiopia's government has taken significant steps in this regard by expressing its willingness to engage in talks with the TPLF to find a peaceful solution to the conflict. Despite challenges and setbacks, including disagreements over preconditions and the suspension of communication channels, the commitment to dialogue underscores a crucial first step toward reconciliation.

Moreover, Ethiopia has sought international involvement and support, recognizing the importance of regional and global actors in facilitating peace processes. The government has welcomed mediation efforts from the African Union and other international organizations, signaling its openness to external assistance in resolving the crisis. Such engagement not only amplifies the diplomatic pressure for a peaceful resolution but also fosters a conducive environment for dialogue and negotiation.

In addition to diplomatic efforts, Ethiopia has demonstrated its commitment to addressing the humanitarian consequences of the conflict. The government has undertaken rehabilitation and reconstruction initiatives in the Tigray region, aiming to alleviate the suffering of affected communities and rebuild infrastructure damaged during the conflict. Humanitarian aid, including food assistance and medical supplies, has been provided to those in need, reflecting a commitment to the well-being of all Ethiopians, irrespective of their political affiliations.

Furthermore, the Ethiopian government has taken steps to foster inclusive governance and representation, recognizing the importance of addressing underlying grievances and promoting national unity. Efforts to engage diverse stakeholders, including regional leaders and civil society organizations, highlight a commitment to building consensus and fostering dialogue beyond partisan divides. By embracing diversity and inclusivity, Ethiopia can forge a path toward a more resilient and cohesive society.

While challenges persist, Ethiopia's commitment to implementing the principles of the Pretoria Agreement offers a ray of hope in the pursuit of peace and stability. By prioritizing negotiation, international involvement, rehabilitation, and inclusive governance, the government can lay the groundwork for a brighter future for all Ethiopians. As the nation navigates this critical juncture, unwavering resolve and collective action will be essential to overcome obstacles and build a more peaceful and prosperous Ethiopia.

In sum, Ethiopia's journey toward implementing the principles of agreement has shown its peace-loving stance. Through continuing the implementation of the Pretoria Agreement and harnessing the spirit of cooperation and dialogue, Ethiopia can eliminate any possible conflict and grow stronger as a united nation. Meantime, the TPLF is urged to show similar commitment in implementing the principles of the Pretoria Agreement.



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Opinion

Ethiopians should advance common narratives to conquer isolated narratives

BY SOLOMON DIBABA

Addressing the dangers of isolated narratives requires promoting inclusive narratives that recognize the diversity, dignity, and rights of all Ethiopians, while also fostering national unity, reconciliation, and social cohesion. This involves promoting dialogue, understanding, and empathy across different communities, fostering inclusive institutions and policies, and addressing the root causes of marginalization, discrimination, and conflict in Ethiopia.

Despite its ethnic and cultural diversity, Ethiopia also has a strong sense of national identity rooted in its ancient history, shared traditions, and collective memory. Common narratives often emphasize Ethiopia's historical continuity, cultural heritage, and contributions to African and world civilization.

Ethiopia has a long history of resistance against external aggression and internal oppression, with narratives of heroism, sacrifice, and resilience permeating its national consciousness. Common narratives celebrate the struggles for liberation, unity, and sovereignty against colonialism, dictatorship, and injustice.

Across diverse ethnic and regional identities, there is a common desire for development, progress, and prosperity in Ethiopia. Common narratives often focus on the need for economic growth, social justice, and inclusive governance to address poverty, inequality, and underdevelopment.

Common narratives in Ethiopia also emphasize the importance of democracy, human rights, and rule of law as fundamental principles for a just and inclusive society. These narratives highlight the aspirations for political reform, accountability, and respect for fundamental freedoms and rights.

While isolated narratives may reflect specific perspectives and experiences within Ethiopian society, common narratives provide a shared framework for dialogue, reconciliation, and nation-building. Recognizing and bridging the gaps between isolated and common narratives is essential for fostering mutual understanding, social cohesion, and inclusive development in Ethiopia.

The essence of common narratives lies the fact that it promotes civic nationalism as opposed to isolated narrations. Pursuing common narratives in Ethiopia offers several comparative advantages.

Common narratives foster a sense of national identity and shared belonging among Ethiopians, transcending ethnic, regional, and religious differences. By emphasizing common values, historical experiences, and aspirations, common narratives promote national unity and solidarity, strengthening the bonds of citizenship and patriotism.

Common narratives contribute to social cohesion by promoting understanding, empathy, and mutual respect among diverse communities. By highlighting shared interests, challenges, and aspirations, common narratives bridge divides, reduce prejudice, and foster inclusive social relations, fostering trust and cooperation across ethnic and religious lines.

Common narratives play a crucial role in peace building and reconciliation efforts, particularly in post-conflict or divided societies. By acknowledging past injustices, grievances, and traumas while emphasizing common humanity

and forgiveness, common narratives promote healing, dialogue, and reconciliation among conflicting parties, paving the way for sustainable peace and stability.

Common narratives underpin democratic governance by promoting inclusive political participation, dialogue, and accountability. By fostering a shared vision for the future and common goals, common narratives encourage civic engagement, political pluralism, and respect for human rights and the rule of law, strengthening democratic institutions and processes.

Common narratives create an enabling environment for economic development and growth by fostering stability, confidence, and investment. By promoting social cohesion, trust, and cooperation, common narratives reduce risks, transaction costs, and uncertainties for businesses, investors, and entrepreneurs, stimulating economic activity, innovation, and entrepreneurship.

Among other things, common narratives enhance Ethiopia's international standing and diplomatic relations by projecting a unified and coherent national image. By emphasizing shared values, interests, and priorities, common narratives strengthen Ethiopia's diplomatic leverage, credibility, and influence on the global stage, facilitating cooperation, partnerships, and alliances with other countries and international organizations.

Furthermore, common narratives contribute to the preservation and promotion of Ethiopia's rich cultural heritage and national identity. By celebrating cultural diversity, traditions, and achievements, common narratives foster pride, belonging, and cultural continuity, empowering Ethiopians to embrace their cultural identity while embracing the values of tolerance, inclusivity, and respect for diversity.

Overall, pursuing common narratives in Ethiopia offers significant comparative advantages in fostering national unity, social cohesion. This needs to be exploited to the maximum as it pays off to strengthen unity and solidarity in diverse societies like Ethiopia.

In addition, promoting common narratives is of vital importance to ascertain constitutional order in the country and is very useful to ensure the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the country.

As Ethiopia is on a hotspot of instability in the entire Horn of Africa, promoting common narratives is of crucial importance for maintaining a united statehood in the country. Finding solution on issues of human rights and promotion of justice is possible only when the people of Ethiopia join hands to rectify and correct older grudges, biases, stereotypes that will have negative impacts of social harmony and peace building.

As Ethiopia is conducting various development programs across the country, reaching out to hitherto underdeveloped regions and zones will help to foster common narratives which in turn increase social mobilization for peace and peaceful coexistence. Over the coming years, common narratives will prove to be instrumental in increasing the visibility of Ethiopia both in regional and global context. Ethiopia's foreign policy and diplomatic objectives could reach the desired goal only through the promotion of common narratives at the national level.

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

Art & Culture

Preparing regional and All-African Cultural Events -time to take the initiative

BY MULUGETA GUDETA

BRICS, or the organization for the economic cooperation of eight countries from Europe, Asia and Africa, including Russia, China, India, Brazil, Egypt, the United Arab Emirates, South Africa and Ethiopia had recently organized a cultural event of great significance. That was the BRICS film festival that took place within the framework of the annual Russian international film festival. Although the film festival contains the seeds of a great cultural and economic promise, the event was mostly symbolic at this stage.

Culture is generally known to be a great force for unity and cooperation among nations. The more nations know one another, the greater will their appreciation, respect and admiration for their cultures and traditions. Mutual respect and cooperation is key to a world facing many challenges that emanate from failure to know one another better in order to pave the way for economic and other forms of cooperation. Europe or America could thrive economically because it managed to overcome differences by building cultural bridges rather walls. Walls divide, bridges unite and give incentive for cooperation, integration if now unity.

Africa still finds itself at a historic stage of seeking unity and cooperation within and outside its borders by building bridges and by pulling down walls. Economic integration is one tool among many that is helping us turn our dream of continental integration and unity. Culture is also another potent weapon to bring the dream closer by fostering neighborliness, cooperation and integration.

This process although still at its initial stage of development, has already proved to be effective in helping Africa deal with its myriad challenges that it is trying to overcome at present. Bringing cultural interaction into this picture would help enhance or the common further cement Africa's common vision of economic freedom without which political freedom stands on a shaky grounds.

Culture and economy are interactive. The BRICS countries now face a better opportunity for building a new world order based on mutual understanding and the harmonization of multi-polar global interests. This process in turn would prevent the domination, political or economy, of one bloc of countries over the other. It would prevent political and economic hegemony and prevent conflicts from happening. Most conflicts are born of lack of understanding and appreciation of our cultural heritages that are basically humane and peaceful. Wars are mostly born from misunderstandings of cultural realities, among other factors, that would lead to peace and stability among nations.

The BRICS cultural initiative is therefore the first of its kind in breaking the old paradigm in the sense that it is an event that included almost all the continent and is basically inclusive. European film festivals



are only European and do not include others at an institutional level. The good thing about the BRICS film festival is that it is based on solid economic foundations and as an extension of economic cooperation.

Africa should create similar all-African cultural events on the basis of and within the framework of the ongoing African economic integration and unity as its foundation. The initiative can start at regional level and become through time an example worth emulating elsewhere in the continent. Imagine of an annual East African cultural event such as a film festival that would be duplicated in western, northern, and southern Africa. This can be imagined a part and parcel of the ongoing economic integration process, because the film industry in Africa can be exploited as both an economic bonanza and a force for accelerating economic integration at both regional and continental levels.

The major aim of the BRICS film festival at this stage is an engine that would fuel and fire economic cooperation among member countries. But with time, it is bound to turn into a mighty industrial force that would break the monopoly domination of Hollywood over the world's film industries and release them from unequal relationships by releasing the creative force latent within the BRICS countries. This would of course be a good a news and a trend worth supporting because it will certainly inspire other countries to follow suit.

An annual and all-African or regional film festivals would have the same effects or implications. It would allow cultural exchanges and sharing of experiences. It would bring the people of Africa together and show them the virtues of dreaming and working together. It may not prove a panacea to the all the problems Africa is facing at present but it will give broader perspectives and mutual concern towards the realization of the continent and its people's collective dream. This may not be possible in one or two generations. It is nevertheless achievable through the efforts

of many generations. All film festivals were not born and grew overnight. They required a long period of gestation and a long period of practical implementation before they became powerful cultural forces at present. The same is true of the new BRICS initiative as well as the individual initiatives of member countries.

The all-African annual film festival will not obviously start from scratch. There are already various African film festivals with rich experiences under their belts. What is needed is to bring all these film festival together and give them an all-African perspective and motive. "Africa is a continent bursting with cinematic talent and nowhere is this more evident in the diverse film festivals.

There are at least ten African film festivals that take place more or less annually and are still vibrant in creating Africa's independent cinematic perspectives to the world. The following information about these film festivals is taken from a publication on African film development.

The African Film Festival in Nigeria (AFRIFF) is a cornerstone in Nigeria's cinematic landscape. AFRIFF has also formed significant partnerships with other organizations working to promote African cinema. Last year, the festival attracted over 100 000 film enthusiasts from around the globe, offering master classes that cover everything from script writing to financial management.

The Marrakech International film Festival in Morocco has rolled out red carpets for Hollywood bigwigs like Martin Scorsese and Bollywood sensation Shah Rukh Khan. MIFF offers a range of categories from feature films to documentaries with awards like the coveted Golden Star.

Addis International film Festival (AIFF) in Ethiopia was founded by Indrias Getachew and Meseret Lemma. AIFF is a platform documentaries and short films that focus on social issues like gender equality and climate change. Esteemed figures like Haile Gerima have judged the

festival which takes place at the Italian Cultural Institute and the Alliance Ethio-Francaise in Addis Ababa.

The Carthage Film Festival (JCC) in Tunis was initiated in 1966 and held in various venues across Tunis, including the Municipal Theatre. The festival has been graced with by judges renowned Tunisian filmmakers, who specialize in showcasing films that delve into political and social issues.

The Rwanda Film Festival is also known as "Hollywood" is a beacon of Rwanda's burgeoning film industry. The festival takes films to rural areas screening films atop hills. The festival offers a range of awards including "Best Rwandan Feature" and "Best African Film".

The Amakula International Film Festival in Uganda was established in 2004. Amakula is Uganda's oldest film festival. Held annually at the Uganda Museum in Kampala, the festival is known for its "Golden Impala Award" which honors the best feature film.

FESPACO from Burkina Faso was founded in 1969. FESPACO is an institution in African cinema. It is held in biennially in Ouagadougou and the festival is the largest of its kind in Africa. Esteemed judges like Soulaymane Cisse have lent their expertise, and the festival's top honor, the "Etalonde Yennenga" has been awarded to cinematic legends like Idrissa Ouedraogo.

The Zanzibar International Film Festival in Tanzania was established in 1997. ZIFF is East Africa's largest film and arts festival. It is held annually in Stone Town, Zanzibar. ZIFF has been a springboard for Tanzanian filmmakers like Amil Shivji.

The Cairo International Film Festival in Egypt was founded in 1976. CIFF is one of the oldest and most prestigious film festivals in Africa. and the Arab world. Held annually in the historic Cairo Opera House, the festival has been a significant platform for Egyptians filmmakers.

The Durban International film Festival in South Africa was established in 1979. DIFF is south Africa's premier film event held annually in various venues across Durban. DIFF is renowned for its best African film award which has been a launch pad for South African filmmakers.

As it can be seen from the above, Africa has a rich and varied background to push with effort to create an All-African Film Festival (AAFF) or regional hubs for such festivals in a rather short time. The realization of this vision obviously requires the full attention of African filmmakers and film establishments as well as respective governments and the Africa union cultural affairs commission. A big conference can be organized to discuss the vision while external backers as well as international cultural organizations can be called on to promote these efforts. "These festivals are platforms for cultural dialogue, industry, networking and global recognition."

Law & Politics

The legacy of Ethiopia's patriots

BY FITSUM GETACHEW

Historians say that most of human history is characterized by wars, conflicts, power struggles and insurrections among peoples, their rulers or aspiring ones. People fight for the control of resources, land, power as well as glory. States try to dominate other states and wage wars leaving aside diplomatic efforts because they want to show their might, their strength. Once might was usually considered as right and in this case no one third party may be ready to involve in some wars unless there is a national interest to protect or preserve in that particular conflict.

There have been countless wars in the world including attempts of colonization of other states. So many wars have taken a place in the world ever since the formation of states beginning ancient times. There were also several civil wars in the same country for the control of central power. Wars inevitably destroy the resources of the states involved in the conflict. Huge numbers of people are killed or wounded. And yet wars have continued to rage the world for a number of factors including the ego of certain leaders or war lords.

The wars or campaigns of colonization could be considered as the outstanding feature of the nineteenth century particularly regarding African countries. One of the victims of these invasions was Ethiopia. Most of African countries fell under colonial yoke but Ethiopian patriots were able to halt the trend by defeating the invading forces of Italy, one of the major powers of the then Europe.

The Victory of Adwa has gone to the annals of modern history with the immense victory of Ethiopians over European aggressors and a lot has been written on this momentous chapter of the history of Africa. This event became a symbol of defiance and resistance to any form of aggression and injustice imposed on a people by alien forces. In the end it was to inspire other peoples that with a brave fight against aggressors they could be successfully repulsed. It was to be a warning for colonialists. The victory raised the consciousness of all oppressed people and was a source of anxiety for colonialists. That was why all of them regretted that Italy opened uncertainty among the colonizers as their invincibility was shattered. Ethiopia became a standard bearer of freedom, independence and justice. The Victory of Adwa gave a new dimension to the history of Ethiopia and it also stretched to the entire continent. It was to carve a new balance of power that was redesigned and redrawn. Adwa is considered by many scholars that it is a watershed moment in the history of the modern world.

After forty years yet, Italy led by the Fascist regime of 'il Duce' Mussolini wanted to take revenge against Ethiopia for the defeat of his country inflicted at Adwa and tried to invade Ethiopia and put it under his control. He was very anxious to conquer Ethiopia and add it to what he called the 'Italian East Africa' (Africa Orientale Italiana) after Italy had already conquered Eritrea and Somalia. He said Italy had to wipe away the memory people had of the defeat of Adwa and the shame should not be inherited by the new

generation.

On May 5th 1936, the Fascist forces entered Ethiopia waging a war of attrition from several directions boasting victory. However, Ethiopians never admitted defeat and continued to fight in the countryside, the mountains, the valleys and gorges and the bushes. Although the Fascist forces even used internationally prohibited chemical gas to quickly break the morale and resistance of Ethiopian patriots, they were never intimidated by it. For five years they continued fighting with fierce and persistent resistance movement.

Meanwhile the then Ethiopian emperor Haile Selassie went to Geneva, Switzerland at the League of Nations to demand justice, to let Ethiopia continue its fight with weapons it tried to buy. But the then European forces did not want to listen to the emperor. They were afraid of facing the negative reaction of the Fascist Italy then getting nearer and nearer to being associated with the powerful Nazi dominated Germany and that was not considered as worth the pain of listening the Ethiopian plea or helping it foil the naked aggression it was subjected to.

Ethiopia asked in earnest the League of Nations to condemn Italy and sanction it so that it could not have all the resources it could buy from other nations to continue with the aggression. Ethiopia's diplomatic efforts fell on deaf ears and could not produce the desired outcome. Ethiopia was left alone to be the sacrificial lamb to the Fascists.

Then the emperor made a historic and prophetic speech in which he warned the world that if they disregard such an injustice and aggression against arrogant invaders, there would be no guarantee that the same fate would not reach other small countries. In fact his prophesy did realize when there followed other invasions by the Nazi-Fascist forces in Europe and the world had to respond defensively in earnest.

Fascist Italy along with Nazi nationalists of Germany allied themselves for the same cause of conquering the world and subject it to their rule. They mounted a huge campaign against European countries such as Poland, France, Soviet Union and others including England itself had no choice but act promptly to gather together and organize their forces and resources under one command. They decided to counter the emboldened aggressors which were appeased when they initiated with the invasion of Ethiopia, a sovereign nation and a signatory of the League of Nations to then extend it to others.

That was when they began to consider Ethiopia's case and this move encouraged more Ethiopian patriots in their fight of resistance against the occupiers of Ethiopian sovereign territory. This state of facts even added more morale to Ethiopian patriots who carried out their stiff resistance more intensely, with more belief in victory at the horizon. They were also galvanized by the news of the approaching of the emperor to return to his country in a triumphant mode. He was accompanied by the British who were a part of the Allied Forces that included the Americans and the Soviet Union.

The emperor and what were called the Black

As we celebrate the Victory Day we must not forget all the sacrifices that have been paid by patriots and even civilians to keep this country free and independent with its dignity, pride and glory intact. The new generation must not forget or undermine these tremendous exploits and sacrifices

Lions of Ethiopia were attacking the Italians from the Sudanese border of Ethiopia and other Ethiopian patriots were heading on to Addis destroying the last resistance of the Fascist forces in several fronts. In the end the Fascist forces had to succumb to their more stimulated and encouraged Ethiopian patriots along whom the British troops were associated.

World War II had involved almost the entire world in one way or another and the Fascist Italians, the Nazi Germans and the Japanese forces had formed a kind of alliance to dominate the world by force, but the Allied Forces that included the US, Russia, France and Great Britain along with other forces from Africa and Asia were superior in resolve, resources, weapons and man power and the fate of invaders was nothing but defeat and surrender and the death of the principal leaders like Hitler and Mussolini.

Ethiopia was considered as the first victim of this 'axis of evil' including the Fascist forces and the Nazis who created massive damage to Ethiopians destroying the quiet life of communities who lived in peace and harmony. For five long years there was no peace and stability in the country as guerrilla warfare raged in the entire country and even people who did not take part in active military operation were never trusted by the invaders. It was normal for the Fascist occupiers to take revenge when they were ambushed by the patriots. They resorted to attacking civilians subjecting them to various summary executions and other atrocities in various parts of Ethiopia. And yet these cruel moves of the Fascist forces did not discourage Ethiopian patriots or lead them to despair. Rather it stimulated them to fight even with more resolve and prowess involving even the participation of women. Women served particularly in

communicating new development in the urban areas to the patriots. Information on the moves of the occupiers was crucial to the strategies to be followed by the fighting forces.

Patriot leaders in various parts of Ethiopia gathered their faithful followers and attacked the invaders systematically and in an organized manner. The Fascists never had full control of the territory of Ethiopia and had to engage thousands of troops to try to keep their strategic positions free from sabotages and guerrilla incursions or sudden attacks.

In the end and above all, after the Fascist forces were engaged in multiple fronts due to their joining the German and Japan coalition, their fate was to be doomed. The Ethiopian forces intensified their resistance and after five long years, just to the day, on May 5th 1941 the triumphant entry of the emperor to his capital city happened. This is recorded as another milestone and another victory of Ethiopia over aggressors and colonizers.

History books have recorded that Ethiopia does not have a history of subjugation or defeat and its patriots have never taken defeat as their destiny. They had to fight back every time aggressors waged war against their country, and surrounded by many historical enemies and regional rivals, Ethiopians had to mount their resistance and foil any potential aggression.

May 5th 1941 is just another glorious chapter of modern history of Ethiopia. Today Ethiopia is required to continue on its traditional path and defend itself against any potential form of interference in its internal affairs including against those who would be engaged in proxy wars. While it continues to strengthen its defensive military forces to discourage or deter any form of attack to its integrity and territorial sovereignty or even independence, it is also engaged in intense and extended continuous efforts in strengthening its diplomatic relations with other nations, both near and distant.

Ethiopia's diplomatic moves are characterized by first of all defending its national interest but governed by the principle of give and take and guarantee peace and stability in its territory and environs. It is also characterized by its strict and unwavering adherence to international law and practice. Its recent joining of the BRICS economic group is one example of this diplomatic policy and a success at that. Due to its geopolitical position Ethiopia needs to keep itself always vigilant that it is not threatened or subjected to any negative or dangerous move by external forces as well as those who could operate inside the country but are sent as Trojan Horses for enemies.

As we celebrate the Victory Day we must not forget all the sacrifices that have been paid by patriots and even civilians to keep this country free and independent with its dignity, pride and glory intact. The new generation must not forget or undermine these tremendous exploits and sacrifices. We must give them utmost credit because they inherited us a free and independent country and not one that is colonized and subjected to humiliation and indignity. Long live Ethiopian patriots.



To cope with climate change we need to move from a reactive approach to a proactive approach

BY ZEKARIAS WOLDEMARIAM

Climate change has become the number one, and looming global threat against humanity. It is causing disasters like drought, flood and heat waves, among others that are claiming the lives of thousands. Developing countries especially those in Africa are also facing the brunt of the crisis due to their capacity limitation.

Especially East Africa has become one of the most hard-hit parts of the world due to climate change. For decades it has been suffering from protracted seasons of drought which in turn led to conflict, migration and slow down of development and poverty. Yet in recent years or months, it has been facing the other side of the consequences of climate change, which is longer wet seasons including unprecedented levels of flooding. Is such a situation to remain a permanent change of weather conditions or a temporary disaster? What can governments do to cope with the impacts?

The Ethiopian Herald has recently held a brief interview with Dr Hussein on the current climate crisis in the region and measures that the governments and concerned institutions should take to curb the possible crisis.

Born in 1986 in Ethiopia, Dr. Hussein Seid Endris graduated from Arbaminch University with a Bachelor of Science (BSc) degree in Meteorology. He then Postgraduate (Pre-PhD) in Earth System Physics, at Abdus Salam International Centre for Theoretical Physics (ICTP), Trieste, Italy. He held his PhD in Atmospheric Science from, the University of Cape Town, South Africa.

Currently, he is working as a Climate Scientist at the IGAD Climate Prediction and Applications Centre (ICPAC). Dr Hussein is a senior climate modelling expert at the IGAD Climate Prediction and Applications Centre (ICPAC). He has solid experience in climate forecasting, regional climate modelling, statistical downscaling, model evaluation, uncertainty analysis and climate change scenario development. Dr Endris has actively participated in and made significant contributions to various climate prediction and climate change-related projects, including but not limited to: (1) Intra-ACP Climate Services and Related Applications (ClimSA) (2) Accelerating the Impact of CGIAR Climate Research for Africa (AICCRA) (3) GCRF African Science for Weather Information and Forecasting Techniques (GCRF African-SWIFT) (4) USAID funded Planning for Resilience in East Africa through Policy, Adaptation, Research, and Economic Development (PREPARED), (5) Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment (CCVA) of Kenya Water Towers (Mau Complex, Cherangani and Elgon Water Towers) (6) Downscaling Climate Data and Runoff Projections for Kenya Integrated Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Project (KIWASH) Project Counties (Implemented jointly with Regional Centre for Mapping of Resources for Development (RCMRD)).

Dr. Hussein has authored and co-authored several scientific journal articles, demonstrating his commitment to advancing knowledge in the field. He is one of the contributing authors in the Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) fifth and sixth assessment reports (AR5 and AR6) on the climate section of the Africa chapter. Furthermore, he has gained leadership and management competencies through his participation in the One Planet Fellowship Programme. Enjoy reading!

Could you tell us about the overall, current trend of climate in the East Africa region?

Eastern Africa is one of the most vulnerable regions to climate variability and change. The region has experienced several climate-related challenges. And as you have also noticed in recent years the region has witnessed a very high frequency of extreme events including the prolonged droughts that we have seen from 2020 up to 2022 on one side and the intense flooding on the other side that we are currently experiencing. So these events have caused widespread destruction and displacement of communities and also the loss of lives. And as we also know like the other parts, our region is also experiencing an increase in temperature.

For the last 2 decades starting from back there is 2009 to 2011 the region has experienced one of the worst droughts, which led to famine. Then in 2015 again there was a very strong El Nino in then which led to droughts in the northern part of the region during the June to September rainfall season, which affected parts of Ethiopia, South Sudan and Sudan. Then in 2018/19, several tropical Cyclones occurred over the tropical Indian Ocean which again led to intense rainfall in our region and the region has experienced a very severe, rainfall. Then also in 2019, it was one of the strong Indian Ocean dipoles. Then again that also led to heavy rainfall, as you also might remember, during the start of 2020 and the region also experienced one of the worst, desert Locust Invasions because of those heavy rainfalls that happened in 2018/19. Then again from 2020 up to 2022,

Hussein Seid Endris(PhD)



there is an experience of one of the worst and prolonged, prolonged droughts. So basically we are going from one extreme to the other.

East Africa has been known for climate-related crises, especially drought. But now the region is suffering a series of flooding events. How long do you think this change will persist? Is it a permanent transition from prolonged drought to regular wet season?

Between 2020 and 2022 the region experienced one of the worst drops with 5 to below-average seasons. Now since the beginning of 2023, March to May 2023, there has been an experience of heavy rainfall also for the end of the year October to December and then again because of the Indian condition, there is an experience of heavy rainfall. Then since the beginning of 2024 again, the season that we are in, we have seen this heavy rainfall and also, flooding events across the region.

Concerning a permanent transition from a prolonged drought to a regular wet season, the answer is no. This is not a permanent transition from prolonged drought to a regular season but rather a temporary shift from one extreme to the Other Extreme. We have to prepare like for a dry season toward the end of this year October to December which is one of the main rainfall seasons for southern Ethiopia most parts of Kenya and Uganda and also Somalia. So we are expecting a drier than usual, conditioned



We need to use the available information. Now the national methodological agencies are issuing forecasts and one information. Also, the Regional Climate Center, ICPAC is producing this information. So the information is there but the action is not really to that level



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To cope with climate...

towards the end of the season towards the end of this year. So basically we are just moving from one extreme to The Other Extreme. So it's not a shift from a prolonged drought to a wet season.

How does ICPAC work in managing climate-related issues in the region?

ICPAC as a regional climate Prediction Center predict the weather and climate conditions and we share this information with the various stakeholders, as well as the government agencies and also the International Organization. We are now expecting these trials than usual conditions, so governments and as well as humanitarian organizations need to prepare for that one. We need to move from this kind of reactive approach to a proactive approach. So the government should prepare, to mitigate or reduce this impact throughout rather than responding later on after it happened.

What does it mean there is a large variability in rainfall in East Africa?

What it means is that the rainfall patterns in the region show a significant, variation, over time and space. So when you talk about variability can be over time it can be also over a space. So just looking at the variation over time. So we have like the interact variability. This is the variability like a year to it. So that is what we are currently seeing. And also there is variability even within the season. Within a single season you can have an even distribution of rainfall you can have periods of very intense rainfall and you can have also periods of dry weather. So there's also that is in the season then again, you can also have this decadal kind of variability that is like changes over 10 to 15 years.

Then there's the spatial variability. So rainfall also patterns can vary from one place to the other. Just to give you an example last year it was wet in parts of Eastern Africa, but it was also dry in some parts of the region the March to May rainfall season was extremely wet over the equatorial parts of Eastern Africa, but the June to September rainfall season was dry over the northern part of the region and which affected also several thousands of people. Then again October to December, it was with so there's also that spatial variability and temperature.

Are there unique or special factors that contribute to climate change in East Africa?

Geographically, East Africa has a unique picture. It is just one of the regions with this is a complex kind of job. Geographical features have very high land areas. It has very low land areas. It has also coastal regions and plateaus. So this led to a variation of rainfall complications in the other locations but looking at how the effects of these extremes, one of the reasons that we are seeing this is because of the limited capacity. Many countries in the region have limited resources and also

they have limited institutional capacity and infrastructure. The rainfall is heavy it is obvious but looking at for example the number of people who died in Kenya because the roads were not well, then the sewage system and many parts of also East African countries were not that very good. So this kind of thing increases the impact of these extremes.

People, especially agrarian communities have traditional ways of predicting the length or duration of seasons. Do you think this climate change will affect their work? How is Climate change going to affect agriculture and prediction of seasons?

Climate change is likely to affect the traditional methods of predicting climate conditions; They often rely on natural indicators like it can be the behaviour of plants be the behaviour of animals or it can be a behaviour of weather patterns Now climate change is so those indicators and is going to make these traditional forecasting methods less reliable. So the best way is to integrate the traditional, forecasting methods with the modern scientific methods.

Given all these changing trends in climatic conditions in East Africa, and the decades-old vulnerability of the region, do you think governments and concerned institutions have to take equivalent reactions, like policy changes, development works ... etc?

The governments and the concerned institutions must take proactive action to address the impact of climate change. So as I mentioned earlier we need to move like from this reactive approach Which is responding and reacting quickly to the situation to more of this proactive approach which is preparing and planning for future circumstances.

It's the reality we are now living with it. And is going to also increase these climate Extremes in the future in our region. So we should invest in climate-resilient infrastructures. This could be like flood protection measures it could be resilient agricultural practices, and also the irrigation systems or strengthening dams. This kind of I think Investments are very key to reducing the impact of climate extremes. Also, we need to implement adaptation strategies tailored to local contexts if there are areas affected by droughts then we need to promote these drought-resistant crops. And also implement sustainable land management practices. So also even diversifying the livelihoods of the people to reduce dependence on the climate sector. So there are several ways and also one of the adaptation tools is the early warning system or government really should invest in the development of a robust early warning system that provides timely and accurate information to the vulnerable population. If

you have that information, we can prepare or we can reduce the impact of these extremes.

As an expert in climate science, what would like to advise governments in the region?

These climate extremes are increasing from time to time and we are likely also to experience more extremes in the future under a changing climate. So we need to prepare for that one. We need to use the available information, to prepare and also, reduce the impact of this climate extreme that we are currently seeing. We need to invest as I mentioned in the climate smart infrastructures. So all the things that we are doing currently should be climate Smart in the agriculture sector in the infrastructure or even the other sectors, need to be climate smart. So that is what I'm saying. We need to use the available information. Now the national methodological agencies are issuing forecasts and one information. Also, the Regional Climate Center, ICPAC is producing this information. So the information is there but the action is not really to that level. So for example for this season, we have issued a forecast in February that we are going to experience and enhance the rainfall over our region. So we issued we have shared this information with our stakeholders but the actions that are taken are not really that satisfactory.

How do you make and disseminate your climate predictions with stakeholders?

At ICPAC we prepare a weather outlook forum three times a year. One is in February for the March to May season. Another one is done in May, which will take place next week in Juba and we will be sharing information for June to September season. For the October to December season, we officially communicate that information by August. Now the coming very soon is the June to September season which will be sharing, this forecast for that particular rainfall season for various stakeholders, and we will officially communicate that one.

Do you have a working relationship with the meteorological services of member states?

ICPAC as a regional climate organization, works with national meteorological services. Particularly doing this area of capacity development. All the national Research Services from this great home of Africa region or the Eastern Africa region covering 11 countries have access to our high-performance Computing, system so they can access system. They can run high-resolution level models and can produce information. So even if they don't have that level of capacity, we still we are still providing those resources to them and they are building also the capacity of them their technical industry infrastructure capacity.

Thank you very much for your time!

You're most welcome!

we need to move like from this reactive approach Which is responding and reacting quickly to the situation to more of this proactive approach which is preparing and planning for future circumstances

Society

Ethiopia's blossoming flower market

BY TEWODROS KASSA

Ethiopia has established itself as a key player in the global flower trade, with its high-quality flowers gaining recognition in international markets. The country's position in the global market continues to strengthen for the reason various flower importers across the globe are showing growing demand and attracted by the Ethiopian flower market.

As a result, the country's cut flowers export market has shown positive trends, with increasing demand for Ethiopian flowers in international markets. Ethiopia, by exporting a wide variety of flowers to destinations worldwide, is playing a major role in the global flower market.

The flower market has emerged as a thriving industry that not only contributes significantly to the country's economy by generating valuable foreign exchange earnings but also by providing employment opportunities for many Ethiopians and enabling the country to hold a prominent position in the global floral trade.

In fact, the Ethiopian flower industry emerged in the late 1990s. In spite of being a late-comer, the industry has shown remarkable growth over the past years and has become the second-largest flower exporter in Africa.

In 2021, Ethiopia exported cut flowers valued at 235 million USD, making it the 5th largest exporter of cut flowers in the world. The main destinations of exports from Ethiopia are Netherlands (157million USD), Saudi Arabia (21.5million USD), United Kingdom (9.53million USD), Norway (9.39million USD), and Seychelles (5.46 million USD).

Incentives from the federal government for agricultural investors as well as the Ethiopian Cargo facility contributed immensely to the development of the industry as a whole.

About 80 percent of the flower exports from Ethiopia are roses, they are known for their high quality, long stems and vibrant colors. Roses have a universal symbol representation of love and are used on different occasions depending on their color. They have an approximate vase life of two weeks if well taken care of.

Last year, Ethiopia exported 2.7 million kilograms of flowers to the European market during Valentine's Day alone and the bulk of them were fresh-cut roses. The busy season occurs from December until June especially for celebratory occasions such as Christmas, Valentines and Mother's Day. There are a number of varieties including the African rose, fedora, Sanaa, Euphoria and the Kiwito.

The National Bank of Ethiopia (NBE) reported revenues from cut-flower export at 600 million USD for the 2022/23 fiscal year, making flowers the second-most valuable export commodity after coffee.



The Ethiopian Airlines also disclosed that Ethiopian Cargo and Logistics Service has transported around 250 million stems (4500 tons) of flowers for this year's Valentine's Day.

Having conducted in excess of 60 flights within the preceding fortnight, Ethiopian Cargo and Logistics Service facilitated the transportation of approximately 4500 tons of flowers from Addis Ababa, Nairobi, and Bogota to destinations worldwide, the Airline indicated.

Currently, the Ethiopian floriculture industry is booming, becoming one of Africa's biggest flower exporters. It has created more than 85,000 jobs and women take up 80 percent of these jobs.

Recently, the United Kingdom has announced a temporary removal of 8 percent export tariffs on cut flowers that it imports from East African countries, including Ethiopia, with the aim of making trade with the UK easier and cheaper for growers in East Africa and beyond. The tariff suspension that remains in place for two years is expected to increase Ethiopia's cut flower export, allow blooming cut flower trade and earn better.

Ethiopian Horticulture Producer Exporters Association Executive Director, Tewodros Zewdie told local media that the recent UK's removal of the 8 percent tariff on cut flowers for two years will increase Ethiopia's flower export.

The UK's tariff on cut flowers will be suspended for two years from 11 April 2024 to 30 June 2026, allowing the entry of unlimited quantities of flowers at zero percent tariff, even if they transit via a third country.

Tewodros said that the move will boost Ethiopia's flower export and will increase the competition of flower producers in Ethiopia in delivering their products to their

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customers in the UK, he stated. For him, the removal of the tariff is a great opportunity and stressed the need to strive for the maximum benefit.

The support to the sector, including land supply and administrative assistance, should be improved to increase investment in the horticulture sector, he urged.

Ethiopia is the second largest cut flower producer in Africa, making up 23 percent of Sub-Saharan African exports. In 2023, the value of trade in cut flowers between the UK from Ethiopia was valued at 12.6 million Euros.

The removal of the 8 percent duty for cut flowers is a big win for major flower growing countries including Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Uganda.

Accordingly, Ethiopia's flower industry contributes significantly to global supply chains, meeting the demand for flowers in various countries. The country's ability to produce a diverse range of flowers has made it a valuable player in fulfilling global demand for fresh blooms.

However, flower farmers in Ethiopia face challenges such as inconsistent weather patterns, high transportation costs, and stiff competition in the global market. Additionally, access to finance and skilled labor can be hurdles for smaller producers. Navigating these obstacles requires resilience and strategic planning. Despite the challenges, the Ethiopian flower market presents exciting opportunities for growth and diversification. By expanding into new markets, investing in technology for improved efficiency, and exploring sustainable practices, flower farmers and exporters can tap into the growing demand for Ethiopian blooms globally.

What is more, the future of Ethiopia's flower industry lies in technological advancements that enhance productivity and quality. Innovations like automated irrigation systems, digital monitoring of plant health, among others are expected to shape the way flowers are grown and exported from the country.

In sum, from unique color combinations to eco-conscious packaging, the industry is poised to surprise and delight flower enthusiasts with innovative offerings in the years to come. With a strong foundation built on history and a promising outlook driven by emerging trends, Ethiopia's flower market is poised to continue blossoming and making a lasting impact on both local communities and the worldwide floral landscape.

Verbatim and Caption

“Made in Ethiopia” campaign championing local producers: *PM Abiy*

“Made in Ethiopia” movement helps to revive the manufacturing industry. It promotes local production and competitiveness in the sector. We must uphold the achievements of the movement by championing local producers and utilizing domestic products.

The productivity of the industry sector is increasing and we have to develop the culture of using domestic products. Manufacturing industries should harness Ethiopia's vast resources, energy, markets, and human capital to maximize outcomes and drive sustainable growth. The Ethiopian Government is working to further develop the sector and to work hand-in-hand with investors.

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) said while opening the ‘Made in Ethiopia’ 2024 Expo



Digital telethon challenge targets 50M birr in single day: *PMO*



For Sunday, May 12, 2024, a new initiative of 50 million Birr digital telethon challenge will be launched to support the ‘Clean Ethiopia’ initiative. The initiative will stay for 10 hours period.

Every Ethiopian concerned is invited to participate in the digital telethon challenge on Sunday, tomorrow. ‘Clean Ethiopia’ initiative, introduced by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed seeks to build modern, hygienic, and respectable public restrooms. The initiative targets public engagement to realize the initiative.

Office of the Prime Minister

EU Visa restriction imposed on Ethiopian citizens unfair: *MoFA Spokesperson*



The Visa restriction imposed by the European Union Council on Ethiopian citizens is unfair. Ethiopia has informed the European Union Council about the visa restriction decision regarding Ethiopians.

The council decided that people from Ethiopia will have to wait 45 days instead of 15 days for their EU visa to be processed. The decision is unfair.

A national committee has been established to investigate citizens who are returning to the country after their case has been investigated and is working with the union.

Nebiyu Tedla, Spokesperson of Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia



“Made-In-Ethiopia” movement contributes to increase GDP: *Industry Minister*

The measures taken to resolve the bottlenecks in the industry sector with through the “Made in Ethiopia” Movement helped the sector to increase its contribution to the overall GDP of the country. The movement has been registered tangible outcomes in improving the productivity of the industry sector.

The share of the industry sector has grown to 39 % of the GDP. Thanks to the “Made in Ethiopia” movement, Ethiopia substituted import products worth 1.9 Billion USD over the past nine months of current Ethiopian fiscal year. The movement significantly enhances local production.

Melaku Alebel, Minister, Ministry of Industry said during the launching ceremony of ‘Made in Ethiopia Expo’ at the Millennium Hall this Friday