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Ambassador Dina Mufti



Evgeny Terekhin

Ethiopia set to attract 2 mln global visitors

BY TSEGAYE TILAHUN

ADDIS ABABA – Ethiopia has set a target of two million international visitors for this fiscal year (2024), the Ministry of Tourism (MoT) disclosed.

MoT Minister Ambassador Nasise Chali told Eye on Africa that the tourism sector has the top priority for the government. The country has a favorable policy for private sector to expand their business and invest in tourism sector.

The government itself has been heavily investing in tourism infrastructure like road, airports, helipads, electricity, drinking water and others.

“In some areas, we are building

See Ethiopia set... page 3

Diplomats navigate Ethiopia’s BRICS membership virtues, challenges

BY ASHENAFI ANIMUT

ADDIS ABABA – Apart from cementing global partnership, Ethiopia’s BRICS entry clears the way to advance in trade, tourism, technology and other areas, noted diplomats said.

The above remark came while Ambassador Dina Mufti unveiling his research findings in relation to Ethiopia’s BRICS membership, possible virtues and challenges in the presence of diplomats, scholars and other personalities in the area.

The carrier diplomat remarked that having a

strategic geopolitical partner and immense natural resources, Ethiopia would reap more benefits from the membership through its unwavering efforts and endeavors.

Amb. Dina added, “In addition to promoting international partnerships, the membership

See Diplomats navigate... page 3

Gov’t foresees businesses’ meaningful partake in agro-processing

• 6th agro-food plastprintpack int’l trade show happening

BY BETELHEM BEDLU

ADDIS ABABA–The government is desirous to maximize the involvement of both domestic and international investors in the priority agro-processing sector which is instrumental to enhance value addition, the Ministry of Industry said.

Speaking at the launching of the 6th agro-food plastprintpack international trade show yesterday, Industry State Minister Hassen Mohammed stated that the agro-processing sector increases productivity and supports

See Gov’t foresees ... page 3

MoT pushes for unfaltering Diaspora support to Nat’l dev’t

BY MISGANAW ASNAKE

ADDIS ABABA – Ministry of Tourism (MoT) has called on Ethiopian Diasporas to carry on supporting development activities being undertaken in their home country.

The Ministry made the call yesterday in a panel discussion it has organized for members of the second generation Diasporas.

On the occasion, MoT Minister Ambassador Nassise Chali said that members of the diaspora community are contributing fair share in the efforts

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Realizing Ethiopia’s largest agriculture insurance program

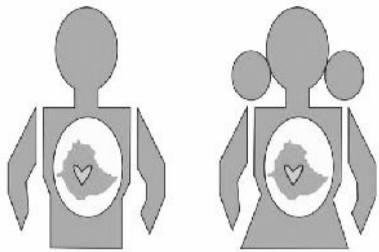
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Addis from eyesore to eye candy (Development projects thoughtful of cultural settings)

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Fostering innovation, research, technology and digitalization (STRIDE Ethiopia 2024 Expo to kick-off tomorrow)

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The Children's Heart Fund of Ethiopia

Over 7,000 children with heart disease in-waiting

BY ESSEYE MENGISTE

ADDIS ABABA-Due to limited capacity, over 7,000 children with heart disease are waiting in line to get medical support, Children's Heart Fund of Ethiopia (CHFE) disclosed.

An appreciation program was held yesterday for media institutions that have greatly contributed to the cause.

CHFE Chief Executive Hiruy Ali said on the occasion that some 30 to 40 new patients also come to the center every week. Due to a high number of children with heart disease and the center's limited capacity, many of them are forced to wait for long to get medical support.

CHFE Board Chairperson Saladin Kelifa, who compared helping children with providing light to the future of Ethiopia, expressed gratitude for media institutions that have contributed in creating awareness about heart disease through various programs, news, articles and promotions.

For her part, CHFE Goodwill Ambassador Artist Meseret Mebrate said that the Centre is a charity entity where children are saved, healed and their hearts are repaired. "For the past several years, CHFE has reached here with the support of kind Ethiopians and the efforts of tireless medical professionals."

In this process, Artist Meseret praised the media for being a bridge between the center and the community and making the voices of the children be heard and get support. "Media has a great potential if we use it for a good cause. It is also a great channel for people who are worried, crying and sad to make their voice heard in the community and find a solution. Although the center is able to do a lot to treat health disease, there are many obstacles and many children are suffering from heart disease and are in-waiting."

The various programs and advertisements that the media made to promote the center's activities in the past three months are estimated to be 11 million Birr.

Since the establishment of the center, over 6,000 surgeries and cardiac catheterization treatments have been provided, and treatments worth more than 40 million USD have been made. Children who have received treatment have witnessed significant improvements in their health, education, and social life, it was learned.

EBI eyes collective action to biodiversity conservation

• *Marks Int'l Biodiversity Day*

BY FIKADU BELAY

ADDIS ABABA- Stakeholders' collective engagement in biodiversity conservation and restoration is critical to usher transformational changes and facilitate shifts in attitudes, policies, practices, and governance structures, the Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute (EBI) said.

The EBI Director Melese Mariyo (PhD) made the above remark yesterday in the 23rd celebration of the International Biodiversity Day which was held under the theme "Be the Part of Plan."

Speaking at the event, the director further noted that everyone has a role to play in biodiversity conservation and different strategies including community engagement, ecosystem preservation, policy reforms, and technology adoption are crucial in achieving long-term sustainability.

EBI advocates for greenery initiatives including the Green Legacy, National Biodiversity Strategies, and ecosystem restoration to address biodiversity challenges. Collaboration and resource mobilization are essential in safeguarding Ethiopia's biodiversity, which underpins its environmental, economic, and social well-being.

According to Melese, the International Biodiversity Day celebration serves as a platform to raise awareness and stimulate action for biodiversity conservation. "Biodiversity, the variety of life forms on Earth, plays a crucial role in sustaining ecosystems and providing benefits to humanity, including food security, medicinal



resources, economic opportunities, and climate resilience."

The global biodiversity framework, consisting of 23 targets, guides efforts towards halting biodiversity loss and promoting sustainable use of natural resources by 2030. Ethiopia has developed 19 targets, emphasizing societal and community engagement to protect and restore ecosystems, combat climate change, promote sustainable agriculture and fisheries, and ensure equitable benefits from biodiversity use, he remarked.

Advisor to the Agriculture Minister, Tarekegn Tsige stated that the EBI has registered remarkable milestones, including the establishment of seven biodiversity centers, three botanical gardens, over 30 community seed banks, 28 forest gene banks, 16 indigenous cattle protection initiatives, and other duplicate gene banks.

The Central Gene Bank of Ethiopia has

collected and organized over 9,000 plant accessions and 70 varieties. Also, these efforts have resulted in the conservation of over 1,300 microbial species, 800 forest species, and the protection of indigenous domestic cattle breeds and wildlife.

Despite these achievements, biodiversity faces unprecedented threats from climate change, habitat destruction, invasive species, pollution, and unsustainable resource exploitation. So, the implementation of these initiatives needs to be expanded and accelerated to fully benefit the country, Tarekegn emphasized.

The International Biodiversity Day celebration, running from May 15th to the end of the month, includes exhibitions, panel discussions, field trips, and awareness campaigns. These activities aim to raise awareness about biodiversity conservation and highlight the importance of preserving plants, animals, and microbial diversity.

Availing climate resilient forage weighs on improving livestock productivity: Experts

• *ILRI forage gene bank marks 40th anniversary*

BY TEWODROS KASSA

ADDIS ABABA-The availability of improved forage is fundamental to increase Ethiopia's livestock productivity and meet the public meat and milk consumption, experts said.

The International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) Forage Gene Bank on Wednesday marked its 40th anniversary and International Day for Biodiversity with the presence of senior officials and researchers at the premises of ILRI Addis Ababa Campus.

International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) Feed and Forage Development Interim Gene bank Manager Alemayehu Teressa (PhD) told *The Ethiopian Herald* that the availability of improved forage is fundamental to generate more from the livestock sector.

As to him, there are three major factors that contribute to improve the livestock productivity; having the best livestock breed itself, ensuring the health of the livestock, and finally availing improved feed to the livestock is important.

ILRI has been conserving, distributing, and conducting successive researches on forage aspiring to diversify the country's feed resources and help the livestock productivity at the household farmer's level, he added.

"However, still there are limitations to fully satisfy the need of the country's livestock population regarding of supplying variety and enough feed. Thus, further efforts and collaborations among pertinent organizations needed to solve the current livestock productivity challenges."

Moreover, with over 18,000 accessions, the ILRI Gene bank conserves more than 1,800 forage species in the past 40 years.

Envisaging the impact of climate change, population growth, change in land use, among others, ILRI Gene Bank started to manage and conserve the country's forage resources before 40 years, he noted.

On his part, Ministry of Agriculture Livestock and Fishery Development Advisor to the State Minister Yohannes Girma said that Ethiopia is ready to commercialize livestock feed through designing a national forage strategy.

The supply of improved forage will have significant contributions to enhance the livestock sector, he said.

Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute Forest and Range Land Plants Biodiversity and Research Lead Executive Abera Seyoum said that the institute is working on conserving, collecting, and distributing the country's biodiversity resources including forage.

News

Authority underscores creating tobacco free metropolis

- *Tobacco smoke free initiative commenced to protect children, env't*

BY MESERET BEHAILU

ADDIS ABABA – Addis Ababa Food and Drug Authority (AAFDA) disclosed that integrated efforts have to be expedited and prioritized to create tobacco free metropolitan city and protect children's health.

Addis commenced an initiative yesterday based on the celebration of World Free Tobacco Smoking Day held for 36th and 32 times at international and national respectively under theme: "Let's Protect Children from the Interference of the Tobacco Industry."

In her opening speech, Authority General Manager, Mulumebet Tadese said that tobacco is having a negative effect on the beauty of Addis Ababa and causes many damage on human beings.

She said, "For instance, smoking has caused physical, mental, and emotional pain and social and economic crisis on human beings, she added.

Supporting the above rationale, Addis Ababa City Administration Chief Speaker Buzena Alkider said that tobacco is the number one killer worldwide as it causes 8,000,000 deaths each year across the globe.

The Speaker added that the number of smoker in Ethiopia is over 5,000,000, as to the research conducted eight years ago and cited over 16,800 deaths per year. Besides, there is only 12.3 % are living with free tobacco smokes area whilst the remained seriously exposed to the matter, according to a survey conducted 2022.

Ethiopian Food and Drug Authority Director General, Heran Gerba on her part said that there are some 7,000 chemicals in tobacco whilst 70 of them are causes cancer.

The Director General added that many people-oriented works are being done in the capital with the aim of producing healthy and productive citizens. Therefore, this initiative is a movement to create a generation that will take care of a healthy city in particular and health country in general.

"There is appreciable outcome in schools, condominiums, health institutions, hospitality service areas, youth centers, and recreation parks regarding combating smoking though tobacco is serious challenges in Ethiopia," she noted.

It is to be recalled that around 188 countries are working together to fight against the negative impact of tobacco across the world whilst Ethiopia accepted the World Health Organization Convention (WHO) in fighting against tobacco.

Diplomats navigate Ethiopia's BRICS...

would also bring massive market investment, resource flows, experience sharing, technology access, and strong bilateral ties with member countries that has been working in various fields."

Remarking the similarity between South-South cooperation and the bloc, he said, sovereignty, joint investment and partnership are among many other normative principles of the global south.

"The country's benefit from the bloc lays on the basis of principles of equality, sovereignty and non-interference. It also promotes not only resources but also geo-political influence," he said.

Moreover, the members are coming with new guidelines to address the possible challenges

related to sanctions, climate change, macroeconomic shocks, and financial volatility among others, Amb. Dina noted.

Mentioning the already undertaken joint substantive and result-oriented works, the Russian Ambassador to Ethiopia Evgeny Terekhin on his part stated that this cooperation will bring practical benefits to all member countries of the intergovernmental organization.

He further remarked that BRICS cooperation in the field of politics and security is free of ideological bias and double standards but is based on respect for the sovereignty of member states and the principle of non-interference in their domestic affairs.

He has also reiterated BRICS cooperation

as economics and finance, science and education, and the humanitarian sphere and in the fields of trade, investment, innovative technologies and social affairs.

Ambassador Evgeny reaffirmed his country's commitment to work closely with partners to deepen cooperation in the field of digital economy, information and communication technologies and innovations.

The diplomats urged the member countries to step up multifaceted cooperation to overcome possible challenges.

The panel discussion was organized by the department of diplomacy and international relations, college of leadership and governance in cooperation with the Ethiopian Civil Service University.

Gov't foresees businesses' meaningful partake...

Ethiopia's aspiration of expanding export and import substitution.

Accordingly, the state minister has invited both domestic and international investors to engage agro-industrial parks; affirmed the provision of various incentive packages to businesses.

Also, the government supports the advancement of new farming practices where the country has registered good results including in wheat production and export. "The strategic investments in irrigation, industry and enhancement in the agricultural value chain have increased productivity. These expos significantly contribute to boost export, job creation and economic growth."

According to Hassan, the expo serves as an essential platform to foster international cooperation, enhance investment opportunities as well as showcases best practices. Moreover, it provides the venue for global stakeholders to exchange innovative and cutting-age technologies which are vital to the industry.

Paul Marz, Managing Director of FairtradeMesse, which is the organizer of Agro food and plastprintpack expo in Africa and other countries, noted that the event aims to bring food processing, packaging, and food and beverage companies across the globe together so that countries can produce locally and become less dependent on import. "Ethiopia is still importing most of its food from abroad though it has the potential to be a food exporter. So we are bringing opportunities into the country which creates jobs and income instead of spending for importation."

Paul pointed out that the expo provides a marketplace for people all over the world. So, it would play a pivotal role in the food and beverage, packaging and plastic sectors and help businesses develop further and overcome challenges.

Mentioning China and Turkey are strong players in the market, he highlighted that countries like India, Pakistan, Italy, Germany have highest interest in the market and are looking forward to coming back

stronger next year. In addition, a growing number of companies are showing keen interest to invest in Ethiopia's food industry.

Nebeyu Lemma, Managing Director of Prana Events on his part mentioned that the 6th agro-food plastprintpack international trade show focuses on enhancing the food, beverage, plastic and packaging sector which improvements are a testament to hard work and dedication of stakeholders in the value chain.

Nebeyu also announced that they will collaborate with FairtradeMesse to host the food and coffee value chain event in the coming October.

The international trade show organized by Prana event and FairtradeMesse, drew together over 120 companies drawn from 12 countries, the event is focusing on agriculture, food and beverage technology, ingredients, plastics, packaging and printing and it will be held from May 16 to 18, 2024 at Millennium Hall.

MoT pushes...

to achieve national growth by responding to the call of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) to get back home and play part in development activities.

"We call on the second generation diaspora living in different parts of the world to come connect with historical roots, involve in various occasions and visit their home, understand their culture, and history," she stated.

The Minister noted that the event is mainly organized to the diaspora to reconnect with their homes to continue supporting country's development. It helps the diaspora to raise awareness regarding history thereby develop pride on their forefathers and foremothers, she added.

Amb. Nassise expressed that another initiates are preparing for Diasporas to come and visit tourist destinations plus involve again in various activities from June to September 2024.

During the panel discussion, Addis Ababa City Mayor Adanech Abebie also urged the Diasporas to continue supporting development efforts of the country and solve challenges working together with the incumbent.

"We can turn the impossible into possible by moving in unison. One indicator of this is the construction of Abbay Dam by this generation and current development undertaking in various part of the nation. If you have anything you need to change or things that are not convenient for you, we can discuss and solve them together" Adanech said.

Ethiopia set...

destinations and tourist facilities. So, these things can make us competitive and help us bring new products to market 2024."

The U.S and Europe remained country's top core markets, but there are a growing interest from Asia and the Middle East as well, which is fantastic. The country is trying to penetrate new markets, she said.

The country has seen close to 1.2 million international tourists or visitors in 2023. That is actually a better number when we compare it to the previous years, she added.

As to Amb. Nasise, the country has unique products which are different from any part of Africa. For instance, you can see everything in Ethiopia as it is ancient country with very long history and culture. And visitors can come and visit Ethiopia all year round.

Moreover, Ethiopia has unique products that make the country competitive destination in Africa. The past four or five years, the sector has become the top priority sector for the government.

The country has been aggressively working to explore new source of market. It has many unique assets to make a sector competitive tourist destination. "So, we have to encourage people to come home to Ethiopia because of cradle of humankind, everyone's origin is from it." She underscored.

Opinion

How well Ethiopia is doing to ensure lasting peace?

BY MENGESHA AMARE

Across the board, the relationship among peace and security, development and human rights has to be well reinvigorated as it is one of the fundamental pillars of national overall change and a means for strengthening fraternity, unity and unwavering communal life among/ between citizens. True, ensuring societal cooperation, peace and togetherness is of the utmost importance to promote growth, development and inclusive change across the nation as well as to resolve the fates of the missing link.

It is well recognized that the first and foremost responsibility of any government is protecting the life, liberty, and property of its citizens and thus backed by them in return. Such a systematic coordination and purpose amalgamation leads the effort to build and maintain relationships, coalitions, and alliances that help create the viable conditions for peace, contain or eliminate potential dangers thrown from local or foreign elements before they can harm citizens, and promote economic, social, political and even cultural alliance.

The security of all Ethiopians is best guaranteed when its citizens from corner to corner are secure, free, and prosperous, and when they respect human rights and the rule of law. At the same time, government's programs help ensure the economic, social, and political stability of the country while combating poverty and threats to security are well met. The question here is how well Ethiopia is doing to ensure lasting peace and security? In principle, no nation can create a safer, better world alone, but seeks the sustained cooperation of all citizens, be they are ordinary ones, armed forces, individuals who have had disparities and other segments of the society so that the combined strength and resources can bring them closer to achieving shared security and peace moves.

Ethiopia in this regard has to be committed to come up with lasting peace and security by ensuring maintaining its vitality and adapt to meet the potential challenges every country has been suffering in our era, the 21st century. No doubt, peace has to be given due focus more than anything else. Yes, if there is long-term peace, it can result in sustainable development; people can farm their land, enterprises and trading communities can do business to make money, and this would be a potential means to do away with poverty and to see it off for good, too. In simple terms, one is tired of listing the significance of peace and peaceful coexistence as stated earlier since it is the basis of all sorts of undertakings on earth, let alone nations, which lie on small plots of land. That is

why the government of Ethiopia has spent a great deal of investment to ensure peace and security so as to promote peace and development across the nation. While the importance of good governance to sustaining peace is widely recognized, the focus tends to be on national governance and impartial administration.

The effort of the government for harmony and serenity can contribute to sustaining peace via delivering services and promoting sustainable development more effectively and efficiently, giving people voice in a representatives and inclusive way and nurturing political will to resolve conflict and sustain peace. This concern has been highlighting how governance actors have to underline serenity and committed to fulfill proper activities effectively.

Building peace is about much more than ending war. It is about putting in place the institutions and trust that will strengthen the social contract and carry people forward into a nonviolent future. Unequivocally, conflict and violence are more likely when a combination of security, economic and political stresses operate in an environment characterized by weak institutions that lack capacity to carry out their core governance functions to deliver services, accountability to the public, and/or the legitimacy to mediate relations between citizens and the government. Thus, the government needs to focus on creating vibrant institutions which can quench the thirst of the general public in all aspects, indeed!

Supporting the effort of the governance is also quite invaluable step in strengthening social cohesion, uphold the rule of law, enhance security and access to livelihoods forms a cohesive package of integrated services for all citizenry and other people residing locally taking Ethiopia second home. In order to encourage the participation of the youth, women and men and all walks of life even as part of inclusive governance systems in Ethiopia, the government, along with all development partners and those who would like to see peaceful Ethiopia, is working hard to ensure peace and serenity.

Yes, the social, economic and political inclusion of all citizens in the country has been a backbone for creating peaceful, stable and inviting country. Hence, the government has been doing all its best along this line discharging its duties and responsibilities as properly as possible though a lot remains to be done.

To ensure increased investment in governance to sustain peace and unleash the transformative potential of promoting more peaceful, just and inclusive societies, Ethiopia needs to invest both politically and financially to strengthen national

and local capacities to undertake more fruitful activities towards stability. The effort of the government to ensure peace, and sustaining peace should be broadly understood as a goal and a process to build a common vision of a society taking the needs of all segments of the population into account.

Hence, supporting the effort of the government is an incomparable move and apt step, indeed! The government is exerting utmost effort to improve governance, peace and security that should be given due emphases. Peace capacities are in institutions, groups, traditions, events, rituals, processes/ mechanisms and people that are positioned and equipped to address conflict constructively and build peace. No doubt, there is growing evidence that both peace building and sustaining peace require a local approach as the peace garnered by the intervention of foreign elements could by no means be long-lasting.

As the effort to ensure peace and security here and there should not be left only to the government, partners, line ministries, among others, every citizen has to be duty bound in this regard. Plainly, all citizens are elements working towards advancing the common good and they are bridges that link the general population with the state as well as the government. This assertion is grounded on the assumption that civil society groups and/or citizens in the nation are believed to be weapons to fruitfully overcome a range of socio-economic and institutional constraints as well as does away with peace barriers.

The process for making a transition from war to peace provides an opportunity to agree with new political, constitutional and economic arrangements that can deal with the root causes of a conflict, turmoil and disagreement. The bold move of the government depicts how opportunities for participation have succeeded in, particularly, widening the range of issues addressed via producing broadly legitimate peace agreements and strengthening the capacity for inclusive political participation in future.

Yes, keeping the public informed is just one small but critical part of effectively engaging civil society in peace processes. This in turn enables peace negotiators to fashion a peace that serves the greater good and earns the public's support. Since many individuals are out of control, and they are not willing to forgive, to love, to show compassion, for a number of pulling or pushing factors perhaps, doable, practical, inclusive and heartiest close talks have to be well entertained.

By its very nature, peace building process is complex and requires creating changes

across multiple areas of society. So, it is highly witnessed that resolving any kind of conflict or disagreement through dialog and negotiation has to be underlined. One way of looking at the breadth of activity which could contribute to creating more peaceful societies is consulting the general public in one way or another and living up to oaths and public promises. It is this time the bedrock of lasting peace can be well laid.

Here the Ethiopian government has to maintain exerting effort to reduce violence, in the nation via particularly focusing on preventing violence towards some of the most vulnerable groups such as women and children. For example, community peace structures are worth citing as they help the nation resolve local conflicts and get deviating elements convinced to turn their face towards peace, development and real growth triumphing over lack of peace and poverty—arc enemy of the nation.

However, building peace could never be only done within communities. Political level engagement is also needed with clear connection between the government and the society to create real change and concrete peace.

In sum, it is quite important to notice and give due emphasis to a few concerns, to ensure peace, such as avoiding understanding of the frames of mind that promote conflict and violence against others; the perception that another group threatens their well-being; a **sense of uncertainty** about own safety and security; the belief that their own group is superior to another group; develop understanding of the strong emotions that underpin divergence and hostility; anger about a provoking event and aggressive orientation towards others; paying attention to the distorted narrations; public rhetoric and media reports that reduce public moral concern and adding fuel to fire.

Furthermore, the country has to work on maintaining a critical perspective toward the beliefs and actions of citizens so as to appreciate experiences of shared humanity across diverse groups, joining groups that have a peace or social justice mission in order to reap the benefits of mutual support and collective action as well as finding ways to nourish hope, commitment, and energy for peace and find role models to inspire people of all walks of life and like-minded others for support, amicable fashion and fraternity. This is how Ethiopia is doing to ensure lasting peace.

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

Editorial

Savvy diplomats needed to perpetuate diplomatic clout

As the world moves increasingly into a multipolar system and global actors become too many, countries have to come up with a refined foreign policy and smart diplomacy. Effective diplomacy does not only need smart policies but also requires dub-handed diplomats and experts with savvy knowledge and expertise. The dynamism of global politics and the constant change of alliances is mounting pressure on countries to constantly review their foreign policies and capabilities of their diplomats.

Being among the leading diplomatic hubs, Ethiopia remains to be a decisive actor in African and global diplomacy. In fact, the country's position on the international stage has never diminished. It has been household names of global diplomacy and torchbearer of African freedom and black people's independence.

The country's diplomatic clout is gaining momentum with the countries showing keenness to cement partnership. With the number of countries having embassies in Addis exceeding 134, Ethiopia's diplomatic might stands shoulder high. And, the country's noninterference policy and long standing amiability with other countries have not only been the factors ascribable to the virtue. The contribution of its diplomats and foreign relation experts is also worth-noting.

In the past few years, the country has been carrying out various reforms including policy revision. The foreign policy is revised in a way that would strike a balance in the country's relations with other nations. To effectuate its policies and strategies, the country is taking measures to bring the right individual at the right posts. It is properly deploying and assigning diplomats to effectively execute its priorities and ultimately safeguard its interests. The country chooses to have diplomats who have the integrity and stamina to protect the national interests of their country through the thick and thin.

It takes experience and determination from diplomats to navigate the country through tough times as witnessed during the conflict in the northern part of the country. There have been reshufflings and redeployments of diplomats at different times.

Diplomacy is a strong weapon to secure national interests at the global frontiers. And, the international system is in a state of flux accompanied by opportunities and marred by multitude of predicaments. So, the country's foreign policy must give greater attention to its policies and manpower.

President Sahle-Work Zewde appointed 24 ambassadors on Wednesday, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said. Accordingly, out of the 24 appointed ambassadors, 10 of them are Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Ambassadors and the other 14 were appointed with the title of Ambassador.

According to the Ministry, the appointment of the ambassadors was made pursuant to article 71 sub-articles 3 of the constitution of the country. Young and seasoned career diplomats are assigned to handle the diplomatic works of the country. This would surely be a bonus to the country's diplomatic clout and give a boost to its global influence.

Appointment of diplomats ought to be carried out on the basis of merits. The main duties include strengthening all-rounded cooperation with countries they are responsible for, scaling up citizens' protection here and abroad.

Multi-polar and geopolitical order is shaping foreign relations. Ethiopia's foreign policy should play into these by continuing to appoint efficient diplomats. Of course, the mainstream diplomacy needs to complement with the new diplomacy using the digital tools.



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Office of the CEO

Tel. 011-126-42-22
Fax. 251-011-156-98-62
email- epa@press.et

Advertisement and Dist. Department

email: etpresspromotion@gmail.com
Tel. 011-156-98-73/011-811-13-15
Telegram :- 0976084707 - press

Editor-in-Chief: Worku Belachew

email- workubelachew@press.et

Address- Nifas Silk Lafto Sub-city

Woreda - 05, House No----

Tel- +251 111 26 41 98

Managing Editor: Wakuman Kudama

Email: wakuma220@gmail.com

Deputy Editors-in-Chief:

Alem Hailu
Elizabeth Mengistu
Zekarias Woldemariam
Desta Geberehiwot
Daniel Beyene

Website: www.press.et
email: ethiopianherald@press.et
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Opinion

Promoting conference tourism in Ethiopia can yield several dividends

BY SOLOMON DIBABA

Hosting conferences attracts delegates, speakers, and exhibitors from around the world, generating revenue for hotels, restaurants, transportation services, and other businesses in the hospitality and tourism sectors. Conference attendees typically spend money on accommodation, dining, shopping, and leisure activities, contributing to local economic growth and job creation.

Conference tourism brings in foreign visitors who spend money in the local economy, leading to increased foreign exchange earnings for Ethiopia. This helps strengthen the country's balance of payments, support the stability of the local currency, and reduce dependence on external financing sources.

Hosting conferences often requires investments in infrastructure, including conference venues, hotels, transportation networks, and telecommunications facilities. These infrastructure developments not only support the successful hosting of conferences but also contribute to long-term economic development and urban regeneration in host cities.

Conferences provide opportunities for knowledge exchange, networking, and collaboration among experts, researchers, and professionals from diverse fields. Hosting conferences in Ethiopia can facilitate the transfer of expertise, best practices, and cutting-edge research, promoting innovation, skills development, and capacity-building in various sectors of the economy.

Hosting international conferences raises the profile of Ethiopia as a destination for business, tourism, and investment. Positive experiences and word-of-mouth recommendations from conference attendees can enhance Ethiopia's reputation as a preferred destination for future conferences, trade shows, and events, attracting more visitors and investments over time.

Conferences provide platforms for cultural exchange, intercultural dialogue, and diplomatic engagement among participants from different countries and regions. By hosting conferences, Ethiopia can showcase its rich cultural heritage, traditions, and hospitality to the international community, fostering goodwill, understanding, and collaboration on global issues.

Hosting conferences can enhance the skills, knowledge, and capabilities of local professionals, event organizers, and service providers involved in the conference industry. Exposure to international standards, best practices, and event management techniques can strengthen Ethiopia's capacity to host future conferences and events successfully.

Overall, promoting conference tourism in Ethiopia offers a range of economic, social, and cultural benefits, contributing to sustainable development, global engagement, and inclusive growth in the country. By leveraging its unique attractions, resources, and strengths, Ethiopia can position itself as a leading destination for conferences and events in Africa and beyond.

The hospitality industry in Ethiopia is surprisingly thriving but there are still challenges that need to be addressed over time.

Limited availability of modern conference facilities, including convention centers and meeting venues, previously hampered the hosting of large-scale international conferences

but with the construction of eco-tourism sites equipped with modern facilities are built keeping conference tourism in mind.

Inadequate transportation infrastructure, including airports, roads, and public transportation, may hinder the accessibility of conference destinations, especially in remote or rural areas. However, the public-private partnership schemes are doing their best to resolve such bottlenecks.

Insufficient accommodation options, particularly high-quality hotels and lodging facilities, may pose challenges for accommodating large numbers of conference attendees, leading to capacity constraints and higher costs.

Limited access to reliable internet connectivity and modern technology infrastructure in some remote tourist attraction spots may affect the ability to host tech-reliant conferences and events.

Perceptions of security risks, including political instability, civil unrest, and safety concerns, may deter international conference organizers and attendees from choosing Ethiopia as a destination. Even then, with relatively improving peaceful situation tourism is still flourishing in previously unsafe historical destinations.

Inadequate marketing and promotional efforts to showcase Ethiopia's conference tourism offerings and attract international conferences and events may limit awareness and visibility on the global stage.

Complex bureaucratic procedures, regulatory hurdles, and visa requirements for international attendees may discourage conference organizers from selecting Ethiopia as a host destination. However, over the last several years, the situation is rapidly improving making Ethiopia a hub of international conferences.

Limited expertise and capacity in event management, conference planning, and hospitality services may affect the quality of conference experiences and services offered to delegates.

Addressing these obstacles requires coordinated efforts from the government, private sector, and relevant stakeholders to invest in infrastructure development, improve service quality and standards, streamline regulatory processes, enhance marketing and promotion strategies, and strengthen skills and capacity in the conference tourism sector. By overcoming these challenges, Ethiopia can unlock the full potential of its conference tourism industry and contribute to economic growth, job creation, and international collaboration.

Ethiopia has already been recognized as a third center of global conference centers like New York and Geneva. With improved security challenges the nation can tap global financial resources via conference tourism.

In order to contribute to the development of Tourism in Ethiopia, universities and institutes of higher learning in the country need to make further researches on potential tourist destinations in the country and also produce qualified professionals who can effectively manage tourism as an important pillar of Ethiopia's economic development.

Although there are ongoing efforts, marketing and promoting Ethiopia's conference tourism has not developed to the desired level and needs proper attention.

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

Business & Economy

Realizing Ethiopia's largest agriculture insurance program

BY BACHA ZEWDIE

Ethiopia's agricultural development witnessed a significant milestone today as key stakeholders of a recent public-private partnership (PPP) came together to witness the historic payout ceremony of the country's largest ever crop insurance initiative. This initiative reached 122,000 smallholder farmers in Meher 2023 protecting them against various climate risks, including drought, excessive rainfall, hailstorms, pests, and diseases and provided compensation totaling ETB 39 million to those who suffered losses, according to a press release from Pula advisors.

In response to the pressing need for climate risk solutions in Ethiopia's agricultural sector, this effort was initiated by the Agricultural Transformation Institute (ATI), World Food Programme (WFP), and Pula Advisors, and funded by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) through KfW Development Bank. The initiative aims to offer a comprehensive climate risk solution to farmers which is affordable, protects farmers against many risks and was executed by key Ethiopian stakeholders with support from international experts.

Following extensive research and a benchmarking visit, the first phase of the Area Yield Index Insurance was designed and executed by Pula Advisors, a global insurtech firm that provides agriculture insurance design and execution services across several markets in Africa and Asia. This endeavor aimed to bundle crop insurance with the established Input Voucher System (IVS) - the formal input distribution channel in Ethiopia to provide comprehensive and affordable insurance coverage for smallholder farmers.

The initiative primarily insured inputs, particularly fertilizers for smallholder farmers in the Amhara Region, with prospects to extend its reach to 7.5 million farmers across various regions utilizing the IVS infrastructure. The innovative approach resulted in the largest-ever crop insurance program in Ethiopia with a straightforward process, where farmers access crop insurance when they buy their inputs.

Pula's approach centered around farmer sensitization to ensure program sustainability, which was possible through the support of Mercy Corps AgriFin. Road shows and training sessions led by Development Agents (DAs) established trust and encouraged farmers to enroll in the insurance program. Radio ads, posters and flyers, and enhanced the visibility of the program. Additionally, capacity-building programs for key federal and regional stakeholders have facilitated better understanding of agricultural insurance, aiding scaling up of such climate risk solutions in Oromia, Amhara, Sidama, Tigray and other regions.

In an exclusive interview with *The Ethiopian Herald*, Dagmawi Haileyesus, Pula Advisors' Country Manager in Ethiopia said that Pula is a systems enabler that bridges the gap of agriculture insurance. They present in 18/19 markets globally in



A farmer benefited crop insurance



Dagmawi Haileyesus Assefa

Africa and Asia and have insured over 16 million smallholder farmers of which about 40% are women and they have insured close to 2.4 billion Dollar of their investment.

As to Dagmawi, the need for companies like Pula is a result of the huge supply and demand side gap in agriculture insurance. "If we take Africa alone, in a year, over 10 billion USD worth agricultural loss is caused partly five billion comes from crop loss and the remaining five billion comes from livestock."

At the moment, only 3% of African farmers have access to agricultural insurance. This is among the reasons why companies like Pula need to be in the market to support the supply side of agriculture with local insurance companies. There are over 17 insurance companies in Ethiopia but only four or five of them are engaged in agriculture because of the sector is not lucrative business for them compared to other portfolios. The insurer parties those engaged in the sector take part of the risks.

From the demand aspect, government usually needs agriculture insurance and want to include smallholder farmers given climate related risks are increasing and farmers are facing a lot of challenges but not fully aware how to do that. Companies like Pula support government and development partners that want to fund such initiatives, Dagmawi said.

Apart from being non lucrative business, according to Dagmawi, the agriculture insurance cost insurance companies more when compared to others like motor

insurance, for example, so that many insurance companies prefer to stay at the bay. He further elaborated comparing motor accident and crop loss that motor accident does not happen to all vehicles on the same day and the damage might be very different.

Regarding the crop insurance, however, there is great possibility for gross loss to happen in one or many areas like what happened to Tigray and Amhara farmers when there was desert locust attack three years back. In this case, pay out comes in the same day on the end of the season; it's not distributed across the year. That will literally bankrupt the companies because it is a hefty amount. This is not the Ethiopian case alone; rather it is the global reality, Dagmawi underlined.

Regardless of the risk, there are countries and insurance companies committed to work with Pula that introduces reinsurers which take part of the risk, he noted.

Noting the driving force initiated them to come to the market, Dagmawi recalled the meeting held with the Ministry of Agriculture two years back in November 2022. From that meeting they learned government's interest to support smallholder farmers build climate risk resilience because farmers are getting affected by multiple things of drought, excessive rainfall, hailstorms and many others. Agricultural Transformation Institute was tasked by Ministry of Agriculture to study the gaps of the insurance sector.

Though there are many insurance companies in the country, none of them are interested in the field because of unique character of agriculture insurance that needs bundle of protection like drought, locust attack, disease and flood among others. Farmers lose interest toward insurance companies provide coverage for only a single damage and will not come to buy insurance. Besides, unless the number of farmers those buy insurance is not larger, the premium is not affordable for smallholder farmers.

Among the measures taken to relieve this problem based on experiences gained from an African country, Zambia, was enrolling large number of farmers that makes premium affordable for the smallholder farmers. In so

doing, they used bundling mechanism which means providing insurance premium with Input Voucher System and when the farmer comes to buy agricultural inputs, he/she buys the premium. This can be undertaken at the kebele level where there is the access of agricultural inputs.

Pula mostly operates in Africa and Asia because the global north, the Americas and Europeans, are entertaining developed agriculture. Most African farmers need support and Pula is registering success in this regard working hand in glove with many governments. Contribution of credible partners is also commendable because they trusted the companies' business model and invested in them.

In the case of Ethiopia, as to Dagmawi, their success lies under creating a successful public private partnership (PPP). They have brought together local insurance companies as a private sector and distribution partners such as Tsedey Bank who are distributing the insurance on the kebele level. Employing this mechanism, they are able to reach 7.5 million farmers throughout the country hoping more to go.

They also brought together government institutions like MoA, ATI and regional agricultural bureaus as the part of their effort. Development partners like German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) through KfW which avails premium as subsidies for the smallholder farmers and Mercy Corps which helps design farmer engagement and sensitization content so that they can create awareness because farmers' awareness is critical.

The company is working hard to bring different programs that incorporate livestock into the insurance service for the reason that the pastoralist communities in Ethiopia face risks that cause animals' loss during natural disaster like drought. They have designed a highbred cover that serves farmers and pastoralists, Dagmawi said.

For the fruitfulness and success of agriculture insurance, awareness creation both from the farmers' side and the government side at all levels is essential, Dagmawi underscored.

Art & Culture



City Mayor visiting a relocated, turned around family members at their new home



Kind-hearted City Mayor with children of a relocated family at their new home provided by government

Addis from eyesore to eye candy (Development projects thoughtful of cultural settings)

BY NAOL GIRMA

The on-going Addis Ababa City and corridor development projects were feared to have put the curtain down on the long-lived and deeply-entrenched cultural values such as resident's harmonious societal structures. The city has long been known for being a socioeconomic, cultural and political hub of various ethnic groups hailing from all corners of the country. Residents of Addis are comprised of not only local ethnicities but also several international communities. When the ball of City and Corridor Development Project plans began rolling, complaints were aired as if they targeted the destitute and would mar the harmonious lifestyles of the residents.

Such anxieties and harsh criticisms could have been drawn from a long-gone system of city development projects which had impacted the extended and harmonious lifestyle owing to their relocation procedures. In tightly bonded traditional societies, development projects that could do away with long-lived harmonious cultures, by scattering the displaced to several separate locations, the impact could be severe. The development projects before Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, have been condemned for relocating communities in several separate areas and affecting their long-lived sociocultural and even economic integration. People were psychologically affected and it was witnessed that a significant number of residents suffered from mental illness, while others died because of the relocation impacts.

Addis Ababa has communities with strong socioeconomic and cultural bonds and several traditions have passed from generation to generation. Some of the typical traditions include large families and relatives living in one neighbourhood. Different ethnicities have their own large family living in the same neighbourhoods. Despite daily economic activities, there are occasions such as the daily coffee ceremonies to bring these large families together every day.

There are also other cultural institutions like *Equb*, a traditional-rotatory-fund-generating-and -saving mechanism entailing institution, *Edir*, another traditional institution of social support or a form of insurance, *Deboo*, a collective farming method, which is close to the current cluster approach, *Tsiwa Mahbers*,



Mayor's Office

religious institutions, via which people feed poor people in memorials of Saints and the holy spirits.

Most of all people in the same neighbourhoods have long-standing traditions to go door to door and celebrate indoor holidays as the adults sit on one, youths on another, and children on their separate tables to dine on the finest traditional meals together.

These cultural values once have been annihilated by the irresponsible relocation process of developmental projects in the EPDRF-led regime. As a result, it does not come as a surprise to witness the fears and to hear the grumbles coming from all directions while the current city and corridor development projects are afoot. "We may hear harsh criticisms and cacophony, but if we fail to proceed aggressively and boldly, the promise we made to make Addis Ababa a flower as depicted by its name will never be realized. And that will reduce as to failures", said the Prime Minister recently while discussing the progress of the corridor development project with the task force in charge.

Despite the fears and complaints in the rumour's mill, the new city development projects have been wisely thought through and are resilient, the officials in charge repeatedly announced. Recently, the Mayor of Addis Ababa Adanech Abiebie delivered

a report concerning the city and corridor development projects' progress. In the report, the mayor said that residents whose homes were demolished have been relocated with planned and cautious procedures. Residents have been warranted that they inhabit in same neighbourhood in a way that they never lose their traditions and cultural values.

That means not only individuals but also communities were relocated in new neighbourhoods that enabled them to live together and practice their traditions once more. Some residents prove so emotional when they describe how the well-thought-out relocation kept the communities together.

"I was from the heart of the City Piasa. My neighbourhood was called *Doro Manekia*. It was a noisy place and am so happy to be at my new residence!" said a child who is living in a new neighbourhood as her family was relocated because of the corridor development project. A mother by the name of Fantu, could not help crying while she compared and contrasted the difference between life in the old neighbourhood, '*Doro Manekia*' and the new one. People from the same neighbourhood, *Doro Manekia*' are brought together to new blocks of four-storied buildings and happily the old social interaction is still going.

"If you visited the capital of our countries, the projects are beautifying the city," said Tsige

Haile a resident at Arat Kilo.

Meticulously bringing the relocated neighbourhood to one same area has maintained the cultural values. It has also saved the harmonious traditional integrities of the people, said Adanech Abiebie, the prominent figure who always stood on the front lines of the execution of such ambitious projects not only in the city but also throughout the country. The mayor has also affirmed that the city's development is not confined to building green areas and corridors. It also aims at building enthused generations and a new working culture.

She recently posted an article on her Facebook's social platform that the City Administration, over the past nine months now, has been dedicating its energy and time to turning Addis Ababa eye candy or new flower, as its name indicates and a wonderful tourist attraction site. She said that her administration succeeded in bringing into play and inaugurating several state-of-the-art projects, which are built creatively, resiliently, and society-focused. A great deal of new working culture is one of the achievements that the projects made possible. On the other hand, the inclusive projects have made sure that women's empowerment is the focal point. In this case recently "the Future Women Rehabilitation, Centre of Excellency Training Centre" was officially inaugurated.

On the other hand, preserving the architectural and historical heritages is the other issue of concern. Of course, a city development has to go in line with the standards that keep heritages protected. Meanwhile, some buildings were demolished while the dilapidated renovated. Many deep-throated complaints have been on the air. The main figure of the City Development projects, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, and the Authority for Research and Conservation of Cultural Heritage said most of the buildings around Piasa, based on the new standard, do not qualify as historical heritages.

According to the mayor, the projects have continued at a fabulous pace and added efforts to turn Addis Ababa a flower true to its name will be exerted rendering its residents beneficiaries of the perks of prosperity and making sure the relocated people gain the appropriate land, as well as compensation to rebuild their new homes.

Science & Technology

Fostering innovation, research, technology and digitalization (STRIDE Ethiopia 2024 Expo to kick-off tomorrow)

BY DARGIE KAHSAY

Science, technology, and innovation sectors have become among the key focus areas of Ethiopia's national reform. Thanks to the reform measures, the innovation and technology sector has been showing significant progress and sustainable development for the past five years now. In addition to the infrastructural investments and creating a conducive ecosystem for the development of the sector, the Ethiopian government has given due priority to promoting private investments and startups in the sector in recent years.

Efforts and investments are continuing and widening to develop the status and economic contribution of the science and technology sector in Ethiopia. By creating a conducive ecosystem for the science, technology, and innovation sectors, Ethiopia is striving to enhance the development of the sector. In addition to investments to develop infrastructures and reforming the policies, proclamations, and strategies, Ethiopia gives due focus to promoting and supporting local innovations and startups in the field.

Similarly, to develop cooperation, enhance research and innovations; to create strong linkages, and build competitiveness among local innovators and researchers, the Ethiopian Government gives due focus on promoting these initiatives. Among the initiatives is organizing national exhibitions and expos targeting science, innovation, technology, research, and digitalization sectors.

Ethiopia continues undertaking meaningful initiatives to stimulate and promote the science, technology and innovation sectors. Promoting the development of local technology helps to reduce the technological dependency of the country. Considering the sector's role in fostering



Dr. Yushurun Alemayehu (center) with other MInT officials briefing the media about STRIDE Ethiopia Expo 2024

economic development endeavors and realizing prosperity, Ethiopia is working to create sound science and technology foundations.

In this regard, in April a national exhibition attended by nearly 900 startup businesses in different sectors was organized at the Science Museum here in Addis Ababa. The expo, which lasted for 20 days brought different innovators and startup businesses from different fields and helped them to share experiences, promote their products, and to create market linkages. These initiatives and exhibitions promote youth innovators and stimulate the sector in addition to the market linkages and related opportunities for the innovators and researchers.

Increasing its efforts to promote the sector, Ministry of Innovation and Technology (MInT) organized a national expo, STRIDE Ethiopia Expo 2024, which will start tomorrow at the Science Museum. The STRIDE (Science, Technology, Research, Innovation, Digitalization and Entrepreneurship) Ethiopia Expo will stay from May 18-26 and will kick off tomorrow, according to MInT. During a press briefing

on the expo, MInT stated that STRIDE Ethiopia expo aims to foster collaborations and innovations in science, technology, research, innovation, digitalization, and entrepreneurship.

Initiating by MInT, STRIDE Ethiopia Expo 2024 is a pioneering annual event aimed at fostering collaboration and innovations in the STRIDE areas, MInT stated. "The expo focusing on Science, Technology, and Innovation sectors will be held from May 18 to 26, 2024, at Ethiopian Science Museum" a press release from MInT disclosed. Accordingly, the minister announced that more than 30 governmental institutions, more than 40 banks and e-commerce organizations, more than 30 companies, and more than 50 private sector actors will participate in the STRIDE Ethiopia expo 2024.

According to the Ministry, organized under the theme Science Unlocks, Technology Connects, Innovation Drives," STRIDE Ethiopia Expo 2024 will serve as a conference and an expo. It brings together stakeholders from government institutions, startups and innovators, ecosystem builders,

corporations, academia, and development partners.

During a briefing to the media, State Minister of MInT, Yeshurun Alemayehu (PhD) stated that the expo will be officially launched on May 18, 2024 at the ICT Park, here in Addis Ababa in the presence of government officials and other invited guests. He added that the expo will be opened on the next day, on May 19 at the Science Museum for the public.

In addition to promoting the activities in the science, technology, digitalization, and research areas, the expo aims at strengthening the linkage between the actors of the sector and creating awareness about the services and new products in the sectors, according to MInT. In the expo, more than 150 companies and institutions both from the government and private sectors engaged in electronic services, technology companies, banks, E-commerce, and ICT companies are projected to participate. Innovational products in various areas such as information technology, education, industry, agriculture, health, and other areas will be displayed at the exhibition, according to the minister.

Serving both as a conference and expo, the STRIDE Ethiopia 2024 brings stakeholders from diverse fields. "Through exhibitions, forums, and networking opportunities, STRIDE Ethiopia facilitates engagement, promotes digital government services, supports startups, and showcases disruptive technologies," MInT disclosed adding the event will provide a platform to shape Ethiopia's digital economy landscape by discussing national and international policies. The expo will facilitate engagements, promote digital government services, support startups, and showcase disruptive technologies. MInT calls everyone to visit the expo at the Science Museum.

Promoting Endogenous knowledge in the Global South

BY DARGIE KAHSAY

Endogenous knowledge is an integration of indigenous and exogenous knowledge. It promotes a social construction based on the interaction of shared world views. The development of endogenous knowledge helps to use both indigenous and exogenous knowledge for development. Promoting endogenous knowledge is crucial to accelerate development and to customize science, new innovations and external inputs to harmonize with local values.

Promoting the development of endogenous knowledge can help developing countries to promote their values, to capitalize local knowledge and innovations. At the same time, it promotes endorsing and customizing imported ideas and inputs for the socio-economic development. Hence, it promotes the development of both indigenous and exogenous knowledge in the developing world. It focuses on local strategies, knowledge, institutions and resources.

By promoting the development of

endogenous knowledge, it helps countries to accelerate their development by using both local and external knowledge. Recently, the Organization of Southern Cooperation (OCS) has organized a panel discussion focusing on effective implementation of endogenous knowledge in the Global South. The panel organized at the 5th International Network for Governmental Science Advice (INGSA24) Conference in Kigali focused on harnessing and bridging the gap between Endogenous knowledge and science within the Global South.

According to a press release sent to The Ethiopian Herald by the OSC, the panel discussion held under the theme 'Bridging Worlds of Knowledge – Promoting Endogenous Knowledge Development,' shared insights about harnessing diverse information and trans disciplinary research. Similarly, it focuses on promoting and integrating home-grown information into science advice, policy making, and information in the Global South.

More than 300 delegates from 65 countries,



international organizations and NGOs attended the session. Addressing the session, OSC Secretary-General, Manssour Bin Mussallam presented three key principles of inequalities that impact the gap- knowledge between and among countries of the Greater South, and other parts of the developed world.

He mentioned the three key principles of inequalities as "The nature of knowledge and what consists legitimate knowledge; the inequities of economies of knowledge, and the geopolitics of knowledge." The Secretary-General urged for the effective

implementation of endogenous knowledge in the Global South to bridge the knowledge gap.

According to the press release, developing and harnessing knowledge, addressing academic and non-academic education and other sectors, were fundamental points raised by the panelists during the session. Accordingly, the panelists stressed on the need for increased dialogue and opportunities to harmonize divergent approaches to endogenous and non-endogenous knowledge for the good of the Greater South.

Society

Ethiopian Diasporas support in nation building, national dialogue vital

BY TEWODROS KASSA

In today's interconnected world, the Ethiopian Diaspora community plays a crucial role in shaping the future of their homeland. As they spread across the globe, they bring with them diverse perspectives, experiences, and resources that can significantly impact nation-building efforts and foster constructive national dialogue.

Mainly, as Ethiopia is a country rich in ethnic, linguistic, cultural and religious diversity, the Diaspora community can bring diverse perspectives and solution which can contribute meaningfully to navigate challenges related to reconciliation and peace-building.

For the reason Ethiopian Diasporas possess a unique blend of cultural heritage and global experiences that can serve as a valuable asset in advancing the development of their homeland by leveraging their skills, knowledge, and connections, they can contribute to various sectors such as education, healthcare, infrastructure, and technology, thereby accelerating progress and fostering sustainable growth. By actively participating in nation-building initiatives, Ethiopian Diasporas can help shape a brighter future for their country and create opportunities for future generations to thrive. They can play a vital role in promoting understanding, tolerance, and healing. By supporting initiatives that aim to bridge divides, foster dialogue, and promote reconciliation, Ethiopian diasporas can contribute to building a more peaceful and cohesive society that values diversity and unity.

Thus, it is essential for Ethiopian Diasporas to actively engage in supporting their country's development and promoting open, inclusive conversations that benefit all citizens and solve challenges that the country is facing.

Gezahegn Wordofa (MD) was born and raised in the rural part of Ethiopia in Welenchiti Town, Oromia State. Currently, he is living in Canada, where he actively participates in supporting ongoing nation building efforts through coordinating the Ethiopian Diasporas community in various ways. He provides various scholarships and other opportunities to Ethiopian youths in the homeland. Moreover, he is known for his successive contributions not only at home; but also abroad through promoting strong societal cohesion and enhancing their active participation in various national affairs.

During his stay with *The Ethiopian Herald*, Gezahegn said that he has paid sacrifice to reach his current position. His life journey could be a great lesson for other Ethiopian Diasporas who dream to leave a better legacy in life that is worth better recognition.

He constructed various infrastructural facilities that provide free health and education services to the community in the homeland.

Recently, he organized a traditional arbitration event at Dukem Town to facilitate



Traditional arbitration system in Oromia State

traditional conflict resolution mechanisms in his hometown with the participation of every member of the community.

According to him, the Ethiopian Diaspora community across the world should unite to build Ethiopia and improve the lives of the people through participating in various constructive initiatives.

“No doubt, the Ethiopian Diaspora community has a great potential to brighten the future of our country if united together. Thus, we have to come to our country and contribute our part through actively working with the community at the grassroots level. Cultivating peace and creating a better future for the young people at home should be the priority of the Ethiopian Diaspora community living all over the world,” he said.

As to him, the Diaspora community abroad should promote peace rather than disseminating fake news regarding the ongoing conflict in some parts of the country. No one profits from the wars fought between brothers except causing greater human, economic and social costs on a certain country, and weakening its whole systems. Thus, everyone at home and abroad should give priority to transmit messages of peace and togetherness.

One of the residents of the Town and co-organizer of the traditional arbitration event, Worku Robi said that the residents of the area held successive peace conferences so as to cultivate peace, nurture the culture of togetherness, and head to sustainable socio-economic development.

“To realize this, the contribution of our children residing overseas is unlimited. For instance, Gezahegn plays an indispensable role in integrating the community where he was born and raised; by engaging in the construction of infrastructure facilities at our doorsteps. In addition, he voluntarily supports the community to

It is essential for Ethiopian Diasporas to actively engage in supporting their country's development and promoting open, inclusive conversations that benefit all citizens and solve challenges that the country is facing

solve disagreements through the traditional arbitration system thoroughly by providing financial assistance to host the peace conference,” he said.

According to him, the Ethiopian Diaspora community should second Gezahegn's efforts in improving the lives of Ethiopians in the homeland through availing better

opportunities to the youths and the society in general.

On his part, resident of Dukem Town and Leader of Bishoftu, Dukem Town Aba Geda System, Ayu Ketema Wordofa said that elders of the community are actively working with the society to ensure peace through solving problems with thorough discussions.

As to him, leaders of the community advise residents of the area to work closely and cooperate in facilitating discussions and organizing local arbitration platforms.

More importantly, several members of the Ethiopian Diaspora community are showing a greater partnership with the community in their homeland to implement forefathers' strong way of community-based conflict resolution mechanisms.

“Peace cannot be realized through guns; but peaceful dialogue. The society should also actively participate in reconciliation and national dialogue. *Idirs* are also playing a fundamental role in resolving problems at the grassroots level,” he added.

Accordingly, every Ethiopian at home and abroad should preach peace and inherit a better Ethiopia to the future generations.

In sum, engaging the Ethiopian Diaspora community in various national affairs helps to have their say in nation-building. It is also essential for fostering understanding, unity, and progress in Ethiopia. In this respect, the Ethiopian Diaspora community can contribute to meaningful conversations by supporting initiatives that promote inclusivity, diversity, and respect for differing viewpoints. By organizing events, forums, and initiatives that bring together individuals from diverse backgrounds, Ethiopian Diasporas can create spaces for constructive dialogue and collaboration, leading to innovative solutions for pressing challenges facing the country.



This is Ethiopia

Ethiopia embraces wide tourism investment potentials

BY TEWODROS KASSA

Ethiopia's rich cultural heritage, vibrant traditions, diverse landscapes, and historical significance have positioned the country as a burgeoning destination for tourism investment. With a growing focus on developing its tourism industry, Ethiopia offers a wealth of opportunities for investors seeking to capitalize on its untapped potential. From the ancient Rock-hewn churches of Lalibela to the simmering volcanic lakes of the Great Rift Valley, there is something for every type of adventurer.

By setting out clear strategies, policies, and incentives, the government is paving the way for a brighter future for tourism in Ethiopia. These include construction of state-of-the-art resorts across the country. The Dine for Ethiopia projects like the Gorgora, Koysa, and Wonchi eco-tourism projects have shown a remarkable achievement in the country's tourism sector development.

The government's national tourism strategy lays out a roadmap for sustainable growth and development in the sector, outlining key priorities and action plans to ensure that Ethiopia's tourism industry thrives in the long run. By focusing on areas like infrastructure development, marketing, and capacity building, the country is gearing up to become a top player in the global tourism arena.

Moreover, Ethiopia is a living museum of ancient wonders and archaeological marvels that will whisk one away on a journey through time. Explore the mystical rock-hewn churches of Lalibela, marvel at the towering stelae of Aksum, and wander the ancient ruins of Gondar to uncover the secrets of Ethiopia's storied past. With numerous UNESCO World Heritage sites scattered across the country, every corner of Ethiopia has a tale to tell and a legacy to share with curious travelers.

Thus, internationally famed tourist destinations diversify the country's potential of expanding tourism investments and generate more from the sector.

Recently, the Ethiopian Investment Commission announced that Ethiopia has become a promising investment choice for investors in the tourism sector.

Ethiopia offers investment opportunities in building tourism infrastructure including hotels and resorts, convention centers, duty-free centers, cultural villages and centers, and developing selected destinations, the Commission stated.

The country is home to nine UNESCO World Heritage sites, the most in Africa, which offers mesmerizing landscapes, diverse cultures, vast national parks, fascinating museums and beautiful lakes.

From the largest mountains in Africa to the



Dallol, Danakil Depression, Afar State



Danakil Depression (the third-lowest place in the world) to Ertale (a live volcano), Ethiopia has diverse and breathtaking options for tourists.

The Ethiopian Investment Commission stated that the unique Ethiopian Rift Valley (part of East African Rift Valley) is a remarkable region of volcanic lakes, with its famous collections of birdlife, great escarpments, and stunning vistas.

"We are the birthplace of mankind, coffee, and the Blue Nile, making us a fascinating destination for holidaymakers. Over 800,000 tourists arrive in Ethiopia every year to experience the best of the world, which provides a growing opportunity to establish tourism projects in the country," the Commission added.

Moreover, it indicated that Addis Ababa is home to the head offices of the African Union, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, and the embassies from numerous countries adding to the growing number of diplomats and visitors. Brands catering to the growing tourism sector include Sheraton Addis, Radisson Blu, Hilton, Golden Tulip, and several other hospitality brands.

Ethiopian Airlines connects tourists from all over the world, creating possibilities for adventurers to come and taste what Ethiopia presents.

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed has recently launched tourism development projects in Gorgora, Wonchi and Koysa, and investors are welcome to take part in one of the country's biggest tourism projects.

Accordingly, Ethiopia's diverse landscapes offer a treasure trove of natural wonders waiting to be explored by adventurous travelers. From the majestic Simien Mountains to the otherworldly Danakil Depression, the country is a playground for nature enthusiasts. National parks and wildlife reserves such as the Bale Mountains National Park and the Omo National Park provide habitats for unique wildlife species, making Ethiopia a hotspot for eco-tourism.

Currently, eco-lodges are on the rise in Ethiopia, offering sustainable accommodation options that minimize environmental impact. Embracing sustainable tourism practices, these lodges provide opportunity for visitors to experience the country's natural beauty without harming the environment. By

prioritizing conservation and community engagement, Ethiopia is paving the way for a more eco-conscious approach to tourism.

Airport expansion projects and connectivity improvements are also making it easier for travelers to access the country's various destinations.

More importantly, the government's commitment to develop tourist destinations across the country is evident in its investment in infrastructure projects aimed at enhancing the overall experiences of visitors. Ranging from modernizing transportation networks to upgrading accommodation options, Ethiopia is laying the groundwork to thrive in the tourism sector that can cater to a growing number of international visitors.

Tourism experts also emphasized that the country's wide tourism investment potentials make it an attractive destination for investors looking to capitalize on its growing popularity as a tourist destination. With its unique attractions, supportive government policies, and opportunities for growth, Ethiopia has the potential to become a key player in the global tourism industry.

There are a wide range of investment opportunities available in Ethiopia's tourism sector, from hotels and resorts to tour operators and transportation services. The country's booming tourism industry has created a demand for high-quality accommodation and services, presenting an excellent opportunity for investors to capitalize on this growing market.

In sum, Ethiopia's embrace of its wide tourism investment potentials signify a promising future for the country's tourism sector and for economic development. With a blend of cultural richness, natural beauty, and ambitious development initiatives, Ethiopia stands poised to become a premier destination for travelers and investors alike.

As the nation continues to unlock its tourism treasures and address challenges, the prospects for sustainable growth and mutual benefit between stakeholders and the local communities remain bright.