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Photo: Hadush Abreha



Alemu Sime (PhD)

Continental approaches reliable for aviation excellence: MoTL

- Ethiopia holds 12th Aviation Stakeholders Convention

BY ASHENAFI ANIMUT

ADDIS ABABA- Strengthening continental collaborative approach and enhancing aviation facilities are crucial to ensuring standardized, safe and secured aviation industry, the Ministry of Transport and Logistics (MoTL) said.

The 12th African Aviation Stakeholder's Convention, hosted by the Ethiopian Airlines is being held under the theme 'Beyond connecting African aviation.'

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Heritage preservation, dev't augur for economic growth

- Annual heritage research conference kicks off

BY TSEGAYE TILAHUN

ADDIS ABABA – Ethiopia has given proper emphasis on heritage preservation and development to drive economic growth, the Ministry of Tourism (MoT) said.

Speaking at the first Ethiopian Annual Heritage Research Conference that was kicked off yesterday, Tourism Minister Ambassador Nasise Chali stated that following the national reform, the country has been focusing on heritage preservation and development in

order to bring economic growth thereby benefit the general public.

Although Ethiopia holds immense tourism potential to drive several local and foreign

See Heritage preservation, ... page 3



Temesgen Tiruneh

Made in Ethiopia improves import substitution, market linkages: Deputy PM

BY TSEGAYE TILAHUN

ADDIS ABABA- Made in Ethiopia movement has been improving import substitution and creating market linkages among businesses, the Deputy Prime Minister said.

The Made in Ethiopia Expo closing

See Made in Ethiopia ... page 3

Political commitment imperative to mitigate climate change impact

BY YESUF ENDRIS

In Africa, where early warning systems of climate and weather are undeveloped, with 60 % of the population not covered by any early warning systems, the World Metrological Organization (WMO) is asking for political commitment of each countries to enhance infrastructural development.

The regional agent of the World Metrological Organization, WMO Association I - Africa is also playing supportive roles in shaping Africa's metrological data administration, influencing sectors ranging from agriculture to infrastructure development and disaster management, the President of the Association told to *The Ethiopian Herald*.

The Association, during its recent nineteenth session, discussed critical metrological and climatic issues including infrastructural development, financial support, and equitable data distribution among major points of the session as climate-driven problems surge across the continent.

According to the WMO latest report,



the continent is still facing significant challenges in both accessing and ensuring the reliability of meteorological data, extreme weather events such as floods, droughts, heat waves, tropical cyclones and severe storms, heavy rains, and forest fires are causing huge damages.

The Regional Association I - Africa President who is also Director of the

Ethiopian Meteorological Institute, Fetene Teshome said that African countries need to promote collective decisions to mitigate the impact of climate change, particularly focusing on the El-Niño phenomenon.

The significance of member countries' collaboration in tackling major climate

See Political commitment ... page 3

News

Bahir Dar University unveils undertakings to improve health tourism

- Builds academic, research center of health

BY MISGANAW ASNAKE

ADDIS ABABA – Bahir Dar University announced the move towards achieving medical tourism through providing advanced treatment at home.

Bahir Dar University College of Medicine and Health Science –Tibebe Ghion Specialized Hospital is working with the federal government to provide full health related tourism services by treating diseases including cancer, kidney, and heart treatment here to reduce the number of patients who travel abroad to receive medical care with a high cost.

The College Chief Executive Director Prof. Yeshigeta Gelaw told *The Ethiopian Herald* that his college is moving in compliance with the mission of the Ministries of Education and Health to accomplish health related activities.

Yeshigeta who is also Chief Executive Director of Tibebe Ghion Specialized Hospital said that the hospital that opened five years back is teaching and recruiting physicians to mitigate lack of medical care in the country.

“Beyond this, we have planned to open mother and children medical treatment center, and rehabilitation treatment as well as implemented blue economy program in health sector, which is launched by the government recently,” he said.

Yeshigeta is also professor of Ophthalmology and he said Tibebe Ghion Specialized Hospital is providing 90 % medical treatment by specialist doctors for patients at this time for local and catchment areas.

Bahir Dar University College of Medicine and Health Science have been operating for 15 years now, he mentioned.

Prof. Yeshigeta further noted that university has built great academic and research center which serve as input or policy for health sector named Tana Research and Diagnostic Center which will commence services shortly.

He said the research center is one of the major role players in health research in the nation.

“Medical equipment is almost full in the hospital. Community based health education is being practiced by students to solve the local community’s problems.”

About 2300 students including undergraduate and post graduate are undertaking development training program and also a university has been opened aimed at management training for leaders in the university to improve their life skills in health and education sectors, he noted.

“We are changing trouble into opportunity and the level of creativity that helps to reach at this stage and providing medical services free of charge to the community. As a new teaching hospital, we are also preparing a roadmap to do further towards improving medical treatment,” Yeshigeta expressed.

He believed that utilizing Tana Research and Diagnostic Center helps to develop many inventions in the health sector.

MinT to host ‘STRIDE Ethiopia 2024’ expo

BY BETELHEM BEDLU

ADDIS ABABA- Ministry of Innovation and Technology (MinT) has finalized preparations to host Science, Technology, Research, Innovation, Digitalization and Entrepreneurship (‘STRIDE’) Ethiopia 2024’ annual expo at the National Science Museum.

The expo is slated to be held from May 18-26, 2024.

Briefing Media, MinT State Minister Yisherun Alemayehu mentioned that the national expo which will be held under the theme “Science Unlocks, Technology Connects, Innovation Drives”, would be officially launched on May 17, 2024 at ICT park in the presence of senior government officials.

He said that science, technology and innovation have remained at the heart of many developed countries economic growth. Cognizant to this fact, Ethiopia has also given due emphasis to the sector and undertaken several steps towards that.

One of such efforts is organizing such events which are instrumental not only to showcase the activities that have been done but also to create awareness and conducive environment for the future, as to him.

The State Minister said that the expo would showcase the activities that have



Photo: Gebre Gebrie

been undertaken in science, technology, research, innovation, digitalization and entrepreneurship (STRIDE) and would be open for public from May 18-26 at national science museum, he noted.

Over 30 public institutions would introduce e-services and technology based services, 40 banks and e-commerce companies, 50 ICT companies from the private sector and over 30 actors on innovation are expected to take part.

He further indicated that ongoing innovative works in IT, health, education, agriculture, industry and tourism would be exhibited; while institutions newly installed technologies and IT works will be introduced.

Moreover, youth and children Hackathon contest, panel discussion and experience sharing are said to be part of the programs.

Mentioning that the Ministry has been recognizing and rewarding innovators, experts and researchers, he stated that recognition would be given to those actors who have made immense contribution in the science, technology and innovation sector at the expo.

MinT Senior Advisor Abiyot Bayu (PhD) on his part noted that the nation is executing several activities with regard to enhancing science, technology and innovation sector.

Thus, the expo would showcase what has been achieved so far while introducing various startups, innovation works and technologies at one place.

He mentioned that panel discussion, experience sharing, and presentations on digital economy, among others, are part of the program.

Ethiopian pledges proper management of delegated lodges, resorts

BY ESSEYE MENGISTE

ADDIS ABABA- Ethiopian Airlines Group will properly manage the delegated Halala Kela Resort and Chebera Elephant Paw Lodge and enable the facilities to provide quality services, the CEO said.

It is to be recalled that the management of lodges and resorts that were built under the Dine for Nation initiative were transferred to the Ethiopian Airlines and various states. Per the agreement, the airliner will manage the lodges and resorts under the auspices of its flagship Ethiopian Skylight Hotel.

Yesterday, Ethiopian Airlines Group CEO Mesefin Tasew and Southwest Ethiopian People’s State Chief Administrator Negash Wagesho (PhD-Eng.) signed a contract to manage the Elephant Paw Lodge and Halala Kela Resort in Chebera Churchura.

Speaking at the occasion, Mesfin stated that the airlines will do everything in its capacity to enable the facilities to provide world-class services to become a major source of attraction to both domestic and international tourists.

Since its establishment, Ethiopian has been playing a leading role in promoting



the country’s tourist attractions and its transformation to the management of lodges and resorts will give great impetus to the airliner’s formidable contribution in the tourism industry,

The fact that Ethiopian is allowed to manage lodges and resorts built in the Dine for Nation initiative under Skylight Hotel has created a favorable environment to the expansion of hotels across tourist attraction sites, he added.

“It is a great opportunity to sign a contract to manage the Elephant Paw Lodge and Halala Kela Resort under the Ethiopian Skylight Hotel at the expected quality level.”

The CEO further affirmed the group’s commitment to repeat the success and reputation it has enjoyed for long in the aviation industry, in the hospitality sector and supplement the flow of tourists.

Negash (PhD) for his part said that the Ethiopian Skylight Hotel’s experience and expertise in the field reassuring the airliner’s capability to manage resorts and lodges efficiently.

Beyond providing standard hotel services to visitors in the area, the contract is of great significance to grow Ethiopia’s tourism sector, the state chief remarked.

State inaugurates car assembly plant in Jigjiga

ADDIS ABABA (FBC) – The Chief Administrator of the Somali State, Mustafe M. Omer, inaugurated a groundbreaking car assembly plant in Jigjiga city yesterday, marking a significant milestone in the region’s industrial development.

The plant, constructed at a cost of 250 million Birr, is the first of its kind in the Somali state and has the capacity to assemble 10 cars per day.

During the inauguration ceremony, Mustafe highlighted the importance of such investment projects in not only reducing the demand for foreign currency but also in creating jobs for local citizens.

He commended the private investors for their contributions to the state’s economic growth, stating that nearly 300 industries, ranging from small to large enterprises, have been instrumental in generating employment over

the past six years.

Affirming the government’s commitment to supporting the private sector, the regional administrator expressed optimism about the future prospects of the plant.

It was learnt that the plant has already created jobs for 100 workers, with plans underway for further expansions that are expected to lead to the creation of more employment opportunities in the state.

News



Photo: Gebabo Gebrie

Prof. Berhanu Nega

MoE, institutions to address industry challenges

• Establish Nat'l linkage council

BY MESERET BEHAILU

ADDIS ABABA – Ministry of Education (MoE), Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET), Research Institutions, and Industry agreed to address various challenges whilst established National Linkage Council.

The agreement held yesterday to improve the industry sector, increase import substitution products, bridge skilled human power gap, showcase practical operation, and advance the industry sector and human power. The establishment of the National Linkage Council will help to solve national problems.

Education Minister Prof. Berhanu Nega said that developing the understanding of entrepreneurship, conducting problem solving research, building capacity, advancing externship (industry to academia and academia to industry ties), transferring technology, and consulting service are the main focus areas of the tripartite sectors agreement.

He further stated that all stakeholders should work responsibly so as get the industry grow as required. He also stated that it is necessary to build a competitive industrial sector by implementing the key works of cooperation in a better and coordinated way.

Perversely, there are number of challenges such as the limitation of commitment, denying the issue as counted as a second task, weak supervision measure, and the likes were serious problems which are hindering to bring significant impact among the sectors. However, this agreement will solve such challenges through combined and research based approaches.

Speaking at the occasion, MoTL Minister Alemu Sime (PhD) stated that the Ethiopian government has been showing ardent dedication to work with African counterparts to create a favorable working environment for airlines and address pressing issues in the aviation industry.

Recognizing the complexity of these issues and the need for a collaborative approach, the government has also exerted concerted efforts to facilitate policy changes, promote infrastructure development, enhance training capacities, and support human resource development, he elaborated.

Emphasizing the ministry's encountering of challenges related to infrastructure

tourists, it has not been generating the expected revenue from the sector for poor heritage development and other challenges, she said.

To overcome these challenges, the government restructured the tourism industry as one of five economic pillars to play key role for economic development, she expressed.

Accordingly, the Minister mentioned that the ongoing heritage sites development and renovation showcases government's commitment for heritage preservation and

ceremony was held yesterday in the attendance of senior officials, exhibitors, buyers and others.

Speaking at the occasion, Deputy Premier Temesgen Tiruneh noted that the aim of the expo is to transform the manufacturing sector to support the national economy. The Made in Ethiopia movement has also been greatly contributing to boost local production and import substitution capacity.

The government institutions have the responsibility to purchase locally made products to enforce the directives and to encourage manufacturers and to expand import substitution diversity. "It is important to minimize dependency on imports and

challenges, with a specific emphasis on addressing disasters based on data needs to be enhanced. El-Niño-related crises, water shortage and some other climatic issues require higher officials' decision. Ministers representing environmental issues are convening to deliberate on political strategies essential for effective meteorological service delivery, so, the WMO is expecting more political support in this endeavor, according to the President.

Ethiopian government, for example, is expanding infrastructural development; four satellite data receiving centers are on construction. The WMO would support countries with such commitment to make metrological data accessible, he highlighted.

Amidst the challenge, key decisions

development, traffic rights restrictions, shortage of training facilities and human resource development in its entire journey, Alemu (PhD) affirmed the commitment to promote the aviation operation efficiency via cutting-edge digital technologies.

In his remark, the Minister also revealed the government's position on the ongoing consideration of the UN Model Bilateral Tax Agreement that allows source taxation on international airline operations and how it would affect the growth of Africa's aviation sector.

He urged stakeholders in the aviation industry to collaborate wholeheartedly to ensure the highest standards of safety,

Heritage preservation, dev't augur ...

development.

Moreover, the efforts require facilitating heritage research centers with skilled manpower, she added.

As to the Minister, tourism sector has a huge potential to catalyze job creation, economic growth as well as addressing key challenges in the sector.

The current generation has a responsibility to protect, conserve and develop heritages to transfer them for the next generation.

For his part, Ethiopian Heritage Authority

Director General Abebaw Ayalew said that the authority has been working to support heritage preservation and protection activities through research.

Therefore, he noted that the first Ethiopian Annual Heritage Research Conference that was launched last Tuesday is part of this task.

Papers conducted on various issues especially regarding the 80 years of research and conservation journey of the Authority will be presented on the two-day long conference, it was learnt.

Made in Ethiopia improves import substitution, ...

increase the culture of using local products."

According to Temesegen, the movement requires a boost in local production and productivity and the ease of the manufacturing sector's challenges.

For his part, Industry Minister Melaku Albel highlighted the Expo's contribution to create 5,188 market linkages while the trade exchange hit over three billion Birr in its five-day operation.

The expo has been visited by over 100,000 local and foreign visitors and companies drawn from 57 countries partook in the five-day event. Also, some seven countries agreed to buy Ethiopia's locally made products.

Expos have been contributing to stimulating the manufacturing sector, creating market linkages, enabling competitiveness in the global market and bringing other benefits. Among this and other interventions, local production has been significantly improving in kind and amount, Melaku elaborated.

In the closing ceremony, recognition medal and certificate awards bestowed to companies that achieved success in import substitution and other initiatives.

It is to be recalled that Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) inaugurated the 2024 "Made in Ethiopia" expo that showcased locally produced goods and fosters sustainable market connections.

Political commitment ...

revolve around enhancing early warning systems for meteorological emergencies and fostering stronger partnerships with organizations working in climate-related initiatives. "Addressing the unequal access to meteorological data across different regions emerges as a priority, prompting initiatives to bolster data distribution mechanisms," he stated.

Director of the WMO Regional Office for Africa, Agnes Kijazi on her part stressed the imperative of improving the accessibility of meteorological data, affirming WMO's commitment to supporting member countries based on collective decisions. The focus remains on empowering countries to independently generate and disseminate meteorological data, with WMO serving as a

facilitator rather than an interventionist entity.

The center of WMO's agenda is the reinforcement of countries' observation networks to address challenges associated with data distribution. Efforts are underway to ensure that each country has equitable access to technology for generating reliable forecasts, thereby promoting uniformity in meteorological services across the continent, she described.

Africa, classified under WMO's Association I, stands as a critical region in the global meteorological landscape. Despite the virtual nature of the current session, discussions are expected to yield actionable strategies to enhance meteorological capabilities and resilience across the continent.

Continental approaches reliable ...

security, and sustainability in air travel.

The Ethiopian Airlines Group CEO Mesfin Tasew on his part said that the airliner has made substantial progress in expanding domestic operations by constructing six terminals and enhancing two airfields thereby promoting air travel efficiency. "In line with our commitment to upgrading aviation infrastructure, the Airlines is currently constructing a general maintenance hangar, a modern aircraft part warehouse, and a component maintenance complex."

The CEO reiterated that Africa requires policy changes and a comprehensive transformation to elevate its aviation industry and expedite the overall economy.

Accordingly, Ethiopian Airlines has order some 126 brand new aircrafts to help realize its growth plan and achieve a fleet size of 275 by 2035.

To address the pressing shortage of qualified aviation professionals, Ethiopian Aviation University has made remarkable progress as well as over double the number of aircraft maintenance technicians, Mesfin remarked.

The 12th Aviation Stakeholders Convention is graced by the presence of prominent delegates drawn from all corners of the globe, aviation industry experts and professionals. The participants are exchanging views on ways of promoting the African aviation industry's thriving future.

Opinion

Transatlantic influences on Africa, Ethiopia

BY GETACHEW MINAS

Africa had been subjected to multifaceted transatlantic influences. It had been persuaded or manipulated by colonialists and neocolonialists that had shaped various aspects of its history, culture, and socio-political landscape. In this regard, there were several issues to consider. One historic event had been slave trade, which had been managed and manipulated by the transatlantic slave traders.

Slave trade had profound effects on Africa, including Ethiopia. While Ethiopia was not a major source of slaves for the transatlantic trade compared to West Africa, it was still affected indirectly. The slave trade disrupted societies, contributed to the depopulation of certain regions, and led to the loss of valuable human resources.

Ethiopia had been able to strongly resist European colonization. It had resisted the scramble for colonial domination conducted elsewhere in the continent. Yet, Ethiopia had been indirectly affected by the colonial adventure. The presence of colonial powers in African countries and their attempts to assert control over the continent had implications. Its influence in strategic regions of the continent had repercussions for the political and territorial integrity of Ethiopia.

The transatlantic slave trade contributed to the spread of Christianity and Islam in Africa. In Ethiopia, Christianity dated back to the fourth century AD, but its contact and relations with colonial powers led to its exposure to different Christian sects and denominations. Moreover, Ethiopia used to have historical contacts with Islamic countries. These exposures have influenced its religious background and settings.

Studies reveal that the slave trade had also facilitated cultural exchanges between Africa, Europe, and the Americas. African cultural settings, such as music, cuisine, spirituality and dance have swayed and influenced numerous cultures in the Americas, particularly on those with African origin. Likewise, Ethiopian culture had factors that were reflected in the Diaspora communities. These groups of people had been identified with music and religious practices that originated from their countries of birth.

The Ethiopian Diaspora communities have played decisive and influential roles in shaping relations with those in the US and Europe. They have been crucial factors in determining transatlantic influences with respect to Ethiopian culture and history. They have also contributed to cultural exchange, economic ties, and political activism.

In so doing, they have influenced positive developments in both Ethiopia and their adopted countries. They also laid the ground for modern diplomatic relations. They shaped the contemporary transatlantic influences on Ethiopia which included

diplomatic relations. These relationships pave the way for trade partnerships, and development cooperation with the Western countries. These developments had impacts on the Ethiopian economy, paving the way for trade and investment. They also contributed to the shaping of foreign policy and socio-cultural developments.

Generally, transatlantic influences on Africa, including Ethiopia, have been complex and multifaceted. They encompassed historical, cultural, economic, and political factors and dimensions. Grasping these developments and influences has been essential for understanding the wider and broader elements that have been shaping the socioeconomic history of the region and that of Ethiopia.

Like many developing countries, Ethiopia may benefit from a variety of economic support strategies to enhance growth and development. There are some strategies that are often devised for supporting the economic advancement of the country. One strategy is designing relevant and appropriate foreign aid. This aid flows from donor governments, international organizations, and NGOs. These entities may provide crucial financial assistance for various socio-economic development projects. These cover important sectors including infrastructure, healthcare, education, and agriculture.

Infrastructure development is a critical factor for constructing roads, bridges, railways, ports, which are critical inputs for sector development. The agricultural sector needs internal communication links for its inputs, outputs, farm machineries, stores for marketable surplus and other productive factors. Similarly, the social sector that comprises health and education facilities presupposed the existence of efficient infrastructure for the delivery of services to both the rural and urban families and students. These social and economic sectors need investment for further expansion with the goal of reaching all members of the Ethiopian society.

Encouraging foreign direct investment (FDI) in these sectors can bring in capital, technology, and expertise. These factors are crucial for stimulating economic growth and development. Ethiopia has been actively seeking foreign investment in other sectors such as manufacturing for the production of goods and services for domestic and external markets. Production for exports is a major source of foreign exchange for Ethiopia with which it would import basic necessities and inputs for production.

Facilitating external trade agreements and partnerships can help Ethiopia access global markets for its exports. These mechanisms promote economic diversification and revenue generation in the major sectors of the economy. External assistance is a necessary mechanism for building trading efficiency, capacity and infrastructure that may strengthen the competitiveness of the country. In this process, donors and lenders would be in a position to design

debt relief programs. They would push for debt restructuring initiatives which may lighten the debt burden of Ethiopia. These measures release resources for investment in social and economic services and infrastructure development.

Donors may also provide technical assistance and capacity building programs and projects in the country. The provision of technical expertise and capacity-building assistance in areas including governance and public administration is very critical. As mentioned earlier, financing of social sectors such as education and health may strengthen institutions for human development and poverty alleviation in the country.

Implementing social safety net programs have helped alleviate poverty and food insecurity in Ethiopia. This has been done through providing vulnerable populations with access to basic services and resources. These groups of people benefit from infrastructure development projects such as roads, ports, energy, and telecommunications. They may also benefit from connectivity through facilitating trade and attracting investment. Particularly, investing in education and skills training programs may empower the Ethiopian labor force by enhancing its productivity and income.

Labor productivity may rise through innovations and competitiveness in the global economy. In this regard, Ethiopia may benefit in acquiring foreign exchange through exporting its agricultural and manufactured goods and services. Using export earnings, the country may also import technologies that are used in improving productivity and income in different sectors of the economy.

Supporting sustainable development programs and projects may help address environmental challenges. These challenges arise in the process of promoting economic development and growth. These include investments in renewable energy, conservation, and climate resilience. The responsibility for such investments lies with the government and NGOs in all regions.

Conservation of natural resources is vital for future development of the country. In this endeavor, it is crucial to encourage partnerships between the public and private sectors to mobilize resources. It is also necessary to apply expertise for service delivery. This helps to balance and leverage the strengths of both the private and public sectors.

Generally, a combination of these approaches which are tailored to the specific needs of Ethiopia and its circumstances may contribute to its economic development and poverty reduction endeavors. However, these efforts have to be supported by the transatlantic and external donor and international financial institutions in line with their conditions.

Transatlantic donors often attach conditions to their aid or support. These conditions

may vary depending on the nature of the aid and the priorities of the donor. The specific circumstances of the recipient country are also taken into account. Some of these conditions are policy reforms, good governance, economic conditions, human rights and democracy and gender equality and security and stability.

Donors may require policy reforms in the recipient countries for receiving aid. These reforms could relate to governance, economic policies, human rights, or other areas. Donors require good governance as a condition for aid. This includes transparency, accountability, anti-corruption measures, and adherence to the rule of law. The economic conditions relate to assistance that may be contingent upon countries adopting specific economic policies. These countries may undertake structural reforms to improve their economic performance, including privatization, fiscal discipline, or trade liberalization. The donors may also require recipient countries to respect human rights, and democratic principles, including respect for freedom of speech, assembly, and the rule of law.

Some donors may require recipients of aid to adhere to environmental standards. They also promote sustainability in their development policies, programs and projects. The transatlantic donors require anti-corruption measures to ensure that aid money is used effectively and efficiently. These donors also require that recipient countries promote gender equality and empowerment of women as part of their development efforts. In conflict-affected regions, donors may tie aid to the promotion of security and stability. These measures include disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration programs and projects. Underlying these requirements is capacity building in the recipient country, including Ethiopia.

The transatlantic donors may require recipient countries to invest in capacity building to strengthen their institutions, systems, and human resources. These donors often demand rigorous and serious monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of aid programs to ensure accountability and effectiveness of aid donated to developing countries. These requirements are designed to ensure that aid is used efficiently and effectively for the desired goals of development in Ethiopia. The priorities and values of the transatlantic donors promote sustainable development and positive outcomes in recipient countries, including Ethiopia. This is believed to be done in line with the national development program of recipient countries for the alleviation of poverty.

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

Editorial

Coordinated actions to harvest from industrialization

Ethiopia is exercising a multi-sectoral growth approach to build a more stable path for growth, promote inclusive and sustainable development and support the economy by unlocking the untapped potential of various sectors, diversifying sources of economic growth and enhancing cross functional cooperation across different sectors.

To this end, the country has established well-thought-out plans and policy reforms across the different sectors to set an environment vital to drive it forward - to improve productivity and competitiveness, to grow and thrive thereby ensure sustainable and broad-based economic growth.

As ways to attain the goals, in the nation's 10-year economic plan, (2021-2030), special attention has been given to some areas; that are the agriculture, manufacturing, mineral, tourism and the ICT sectors; as the result they are crucial to drive economic transformation and sustained prosperity.

Currently, the manufacturing sector is exhibiting promising results and driving growth by generating jobs, enhancing production capacity, fostering innovation, diversifying export-oriented products, promoting import substitutes and generating foreign currency. As it was stated by the Ministry of Industry recently, the manufacturing sector has created employment opportunities for about 256,000 citizens.

The 2024 "Made in Ethiopia" Expo, which was organized recently and met up with a total of 210 manufacturing industries, was a remarkable platform showcasing Ethiopia's prowess in various areas, such as agro-industry, leather and leather products, textile and garment, food and drinks, woods and wood products automobile, machinery, electronics, in this regard.

The event has demonstrated Ethiopia's potential in the manufacturing sector. Ethiopians' entrepreneurial spirit and the promising progress registered in increasing production and productivity have been promoting import substitution and contributing to encouraging export, besides being a platform in promoting locally produced goods and energizing the manufacturing sector for the foreign market.

At the Expo, ran for five consecutive days, it was made possible to carry out 8,188 types of transactions and more than three billion birr transactions were done.

Unarguably, Ethiopia is a country blessed with abundant natural resources ranging from water to mineral resources including gold, tantalum, phosphorus, iron, potash, as well as various industrial and construction materials. It is also a nation endowed with untapped fertile soil and favorable climatic conditions that is suitable to produce varied crops. The Abay Hydroelectric Dam, which is nearing completion, has additional potential to ward off challenges related to energy and accelerate the nation's path to development.

These blessings, coupled with its energetic youth population, can drive sustainable growth, accelerate industrialization and place Ethiopia at the center in Africa's industrialization agenda.

However, to attain this, all the bottlenecks that the sector may face need to be addressed expressively. In this regard, undertaking consistent and persistent actions is critical to advance Ethiopia's move to industrialization. Designing work-friendly strategies, improving policies and laws, providing the desired resources for industries such as land, finance, human capital and energy, will not only be necessary but also compulsory to attain Ethiopia's ambition to industrialization. Accomplishing all these with diligence surely makes the country a beacon of prosperity in the years to come.



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Office of the CEO

Tel. 011-126-42-22

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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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The Ethiopian Herald

Opinion

The global significance of Ethiopia's Green Legacy Initiative

BY SOLOMON DIBABA

So far Ethiopia has managed to plant 32.5 billion seedlings exceeding the targets set for the year. This year, the government is already coordinating the planting of more than 6 billion seedlings.

Ethiopia's National Green Legacy Initiative holds significant global importance for several reasons:

The initiative aims to combat climate change by restoring degraded landscapes, increasing forest cover, and sequestering carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. This contributes to global efforts to mitigate climate change and achieve targets set under international agreements such as the Paris Agreement.

Moreover, Restoring and expanding forest ecosystems through tree planting efforts enhance biodiversity conservation by providing habitats for wildlife, protecting endangered species, and preserving ecosystem services crucial for ecological balance and human well-being. This aligns with global conservation goals set by organizations like the Convention on Biological Diversity.

The National Green Legacy Initiative promotes sustainable development by addressing environmental degradation, enhancing ecosystem resilience, and fostering socio-economic benefits for local communities. These efforts support the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly those related to environmental sustainability (SDG 13-15) and poverty alleviation (SDG 1).

In addition, trees play a crucial role in regulating water cycles, reducing soil erosion, and replenishing groundwater reserves. By planting trees and restoring watersheds, the initiative helps improve water resource management, ensuring water availability for agriculture, drinking water supply, and ecosystem health, which is essential for achieving SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation).

Ethiopia's ambitious tree planting campaign has garnered international attention and inspired similar initiatives in other countries. By demonstrating the feasibility and impact of large-scale reforestation efforts, the initiative serves as a model for global action on climate change adaptation and mitigation.

The Green Legacy Initiative involves widespread participation from close to 30 million community, students, government agencies, and civil society organizations, fostering a sense of ownership, pride, and environmental stewardship among citizens. This grassroots engagement model can be replicated in other countries to mobilize collective action for environmental conservation and sustainable development.

Overall, Ethiopia's National Green Legacy Initiative exemplifies the country's commitment to environmental sustainability, climate resilience, and inclusive development, making a significant contribution to global efforts to address climate change, conserve biodiversity, and achieve sustainable development goals.

Although Ethiopia is conducting the National Green Legacy in Ethiopia, the contribution that the programs provide has global dimensions. Why is this so?

The issue of climate change is not only global but also requires urgent action by all nations across the world. This has nothing to do with politics or political differences and ideologies among the nations of the world. Although the most developed countries contribute to global warming and other disasters related to excessive use of coal and fossil fuels, they are not doing enough to roll back this urgent situation that has become a threat to human

civilization and survival.

Ethiopia has been actively engaged in various practical initiatives to mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change. Some of its key contributions include:

Ethiopia has launched ambitious tree planting campaigns, such as the Green Legacy Initiative, aiming to plant billions of trees across the country. To date, 32.5 billion trees have been planted. These efforts contribute to carbon sequestration, soil conservation, and biodiversity conservation, helping to mitigate climate change and enhance ecosystem resilience.

The country promotes sustainable agricultural practices, including agro-forestry, conservation agriculture, and organic farming, to increase food security while minimizing environmental degradation. These practices enhance soil health, water conservation, and carbon sequestration, contributing to climate change mitigation and adaptation.

Ethiopia has invested in renewable energy sources, particularly hydroelectric power, to reduce reliance on fossil fuels and mitigate greenhouse gas emissions. Large-scale hydropower projects, such as the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD), aim to harness the country's abundant water resources for clean energy generation.

Ethiopia incorporates climate resilience considerations into infrastructure planning and development, including roads, bridges, and irrigation systems. Climate-proofing infrastructure helps minimize the vulnerability of communities to climate-related hazards such as floods, droughts, and extreme weather events.

The country implements integrated water resource management strategies to enhance water security, improve water quality, and mitigate the impacts of climate variability on water availability. This includes watershed management, groundwater recharge, and water harvesting initiatives to support sustainable water use and ecosystem health.

Ethiopia invests in climate information services and early warning systems to provide timely and accurate weather forecasts, climate projections, and disaster alerts to communities and decision-makers. Access to climate information helps communities prepare for and respond to climate-related risks and emergencies.

Moreover, the nation adopts community-based approaches to climate change adaptation, empowering local communities to identify, prioritize, and implement adaptation measures tailored to their specific needs and vulnerabilities. This includes measures such as soil and water conservation, drought-resistant crop cultivation, and livelihood diversification.

Ethiopia actively participates in international climate change negotiations, agreements, and partnerships to advocate for the interests of developing countries and mobilize support for climate action. Ethiopia's contributions to global climate initiatives demonstrate its commitment to addressing the shared challenge of climate change on the global stage.

These practical contributions demonstrate Ethiopia's proactive stance in tackling climate change and its commitment to building climate-resilient and sustainable development pathways for the future producing a positive global impact.

Ethiopia's National Green Legacy Initiative is also contributing to global health improvement against health hazards across the world. What are these climate changes induced global health hazards that Ethiopia helps to curtail through NGLI?

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

Business & Economy

Water resources for economic development

BY MENGESHA AMARE

Ethiopia's economic prosperity has been heavily driven by rainfall and water availability. Recent periods of GDP growth and poverty reduction also coincided with periods of more reliable rainfall and greater public investment in agriculture. Here the role of water resources, whether they are directed to plots of lands using system of irrigation and another means so as to produce a range of crops, have been contributing a lot to the economic development.

Cognizant of the fact that water resources peculiarly rivers have been immensely contributing to the economic growth of the country, *The Ethiopian Herald* interviewed Tadesse Teshome, a hydrologist working for a private consultancy, to have professional information about water resources' role in boosting economic advancement.

He said, "The escalating pace, intensity and scale of Ethiopia's economic growth and urbanization have burdened the country's natural resources, including water. Such inequalities in geographical distribution of water resources have been subjected to slow growth and abject poverty unless apt measures are taken to heighten the development of the economy."

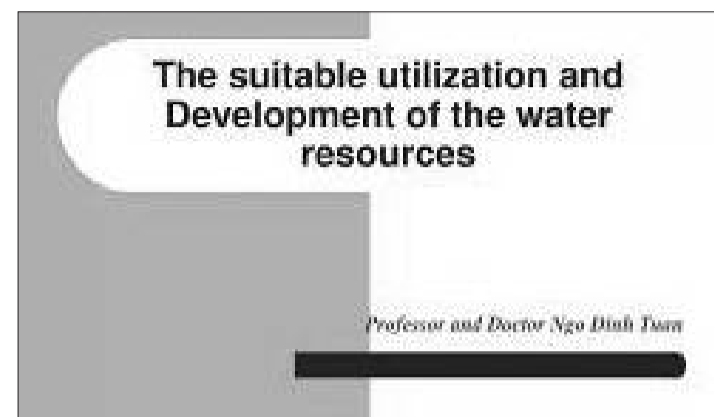
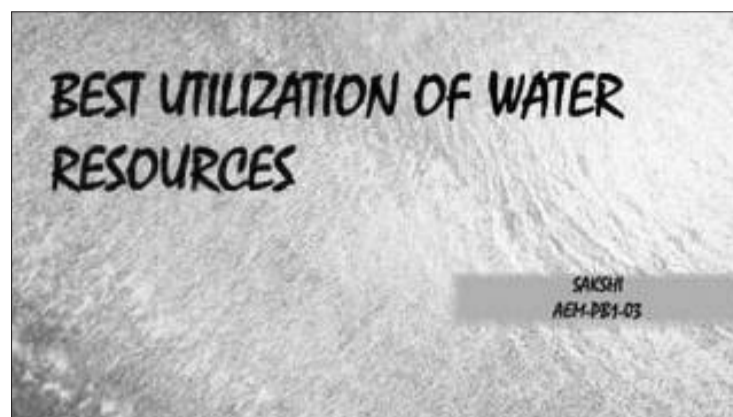
As to him, moving forward, the remarkable economic development that has made the country a model for wheat export, for instance, has risen indeed! The country's economic growth has relied on water and the resource has been consumed with little-to-no regard for potential demand.

He said, "Over the years, wastewater and sewage from industrial, domestic and agricultural discharges have gradually increased, causing many rivers and lakes to have water quality that is unsuitable for any use. Despite efforts by the Ethiopian government to improve water quality standards in recent years, pollution on some of the major rivers and lakes has continued, and the quality of these water resources is still at stake."

According to Tadesse, geographically, Ethiopia does have many river basins. The varied landscape design and general topography of the nation also brings about the country's climate and uneven water dynamics. Precipitation and climatic differences are thus seen to spread across the country's warm tropical and cold temperate parts of the nation.

Although Ethiopia as a whole has significant amount of water resources, the issue of uneven distribution, both temporally and spatially, mystifies national averages that indicate relative water abundance. Water availability varies significantly across the country due to differences in climate and topography, he opined.

Climate change is partly responsible for the changing and uneven distribution of water



resources across the nation. With changes in precipitation and increasing extreme weather events, major rivers in Ethiopia have gradually receded over the last few decades, he added.

Industrial and domestic water consumption has increased progressively, with the highest levels of use in both sectors being recorded high. This has largely been contingent on the explosion in the number of urban dwellers, increased affluence and disposable income, as well as water-intensive urban lifestyles, he underscored.

"Ethiopia has been the African continent's powerhouse of development, but the many decades of rapid development and economic growth have not taken place without a toll on the country's natural resources, especially water. The concern now is that the reliance on water for growth far outweighs the resilience of the resource, and this pattern of over-exploitation, if continued, could lead to a severe water crisis that threatens the entire development of the country and the continent, too," he said.

It could be argued that, Ethiopia's unrestrained development and rapid population growth have contributed to undermining the integrity of its water systems and the pollution of its major rivers. The need for the country to augment its water supplies now threatens the ecological sustainability of the network of river systems linked to Egypt and Sudan, given that, the country has an enormous need for water and energy, as to Tadesse.

With agriculture accounting for over half of Ethiopia's water usage, the sector becomes the most vulnerable to threats of water scarcity. Given that climate change will bring variations in weather patterns, precipitation and drought events, there will be significant changes across river basins and productive agricultural areas.

He further stated that the adoption of efficient ways to use water resources in the country has resulted in a gradual reduction in Ethiopia's water consumption patterns, particularly in the agricultural sector. Hence, it needs a great care to handle water resources. Essentially, these gradual reductions have been achieved through wastewater recycling, championing water-saving technologies and increasing the efficiency of water use.

The country's determination to see water efficiency reforms could reduce water wastages, increase the quantity of water and eventually ease the tension between demand and supply. Yes, water rights allow the equitable distribution and good management of limited water resources.

"In order to promote the sustainable development of water resources in Ethiopia, the government has developed a new system to encourage the management and conservation of the country's major water supplies. The government has thus extended this coordination to include major lakes and other water bodies through coordination system to establish the river and lake projects," he underlined.

Water resource conservation has also been shown to have tremendous impacts on the production and consumption of Ethiopia's water resources. Besides, the country's rapid socio-economic growth has put tremendous pressure on the country in ensuring a reliable supply of water for household, industrial and agricultural use, as to him.

In order to ensure a more sustainable and efficient consumption of scarce water resources he said the country has better taken many lucrative measures. Typically, strategic measures such as water conservancy, water drawing permits, among others, are of paramount importance in bolstering water resource utilization.

"Despite all these significant efforts aimed at improving the sustainable development of water resources, the complex set of issues pertaining to water adequacy and quality still persist. On this basis, the government, policymakers and all related stakeholders in the water sector must carefully establish reforms and policies that incorporate the social, economic, environmental, technical and scientific dimensions of sustainable development and water resource use in the country," he opined.

This could ensure sustainability in socio-economic development while ensuring sound and efficient management and use of the country's water resources. Water, often described as the human race and planet's lifeblood, once perceived as limitless, this invaluable resource is now understood to be finite and increasingly scarce, he added.

As to Tadesse, the challenges are further compounded by climate change, which

introduces greater unpredictability in water availability, evidenced by an increase in both droughts and floods.

Water resources, central to sustainable socioeconomic development, support a wide range of economic activities and are vital for human survival. The availability and management of these resources often dictate a nation's prosperity and societal wellbeing, he added.

Agriculture, which constitutes about 85% of the Ethiopian population, epitomizes the economic dependence on water. It also forms the economic mainstay of Ethiopia, where a significant proportion of the population relies on farming. Here the use of resources like water has not yet been well utilized, he said.

He said, "Conversely, effective water management can enhance agricultural output, improve food security, and stimulate economic growth. Beyond agriculture, water is integral to various industrial processes, emphasizing the economic consequences of water resource management."

As to him, it is well recognized that water resources significantly contribute to societal wellbeing by supporting a range of essential services. One of the most vital is sanitation, where water is used to maintain cleanliness and prevent disease spread. Access to clean water and sanitation facilities is a fundamental human right and a crucial indicator of societal progress, no doubt.

"Water resources also enhance recreational activities and mental health, offering spaces for relaxation, exercise, and connection with nature. They play a pivotal role in maintaining environmental sustainability, supporting biodiversity and regulating climate," he stated.

Unequivocally, human activities on water resources; water management strategies; and technological applications for water resource management have a great role to play. The government of Ethiopia, scientists, water-related researchers and the farming community delve into the application of various technological solutions for managing water resources. Plus to that, strategizing water management, and utilizing technology in water resource management have to be focused on with a view to helping the nation benefit much out of the resource.

Art & Culture

The thug (chapter 1)

BY SHAMA

This happened in a Country far, far away from the Kundla continent called Dundla, some long time ago, when phones and social platforms were released at a pilot level, only for some rich and gangster people.

His name was Dumas. He was born in a small countryside town, Drundlu of Dundla, from a very poor family and raised in a very dire situation. He went to school barefooted, like most of the kids in town. He got used to the once-in-a-day meal, that his mother reserved for him from the leftover food, which the rich people, she worked for, gave her for lunch. He knew his mother didn't eat much because she had to spare more than half of the food for him, even though her job at the rich people's house was exhaustive and she was diabetic.

"Why are wealthy people so greedy and ungrateful?" he would ask himself as he knew all the rich people in town. "They are sucking the blood and energy out of my mother, and they still look down on her like she is a burden to their luxurious life." The life of rich people in, leave alone Drundlu, but the whole Dundla is affording a 52 iron sheet roof house with, one bedroom for mom and dad, another one for all the ten children, and one kitchen where the house servants sleep—oh, and one grass roof shade for the cattle.

Bad thoughts about rich people had been revolving in his brain and blasted when his mother died helplessly diabetic and hungry. "...and they say diabetes is a rich men's disease in this town. Rich men my elbow! What about my mother? Was she a rich woman? Nope, no no... she was just diabetic and poor. She was so ill and hungry that her service wouldn't satisfy the rich people a little bit like the old days. So they did not just dismiss her from her exploitive job but they also stopped giving her their leftover food! And then, we both went hungry.

Yet, she tried to hide her illness and tricked me in to continuing my education. I never knew how she managed to get some leftover food and tried to fill my stomach until I was seventeen. That was ten years of struggle with diabetes and a gluttonous stomach of a teenager kid. My stomach was never full though; like I have had a hyena tied inside it. My mother had that monster called diabetes in her but she never complained about hunger...And I should have known better. Instead of the army, I should have joined the Shkulu Mululu, after quitting high school. I would have had prolonged my mother's life."

He spoke such thing during his inaugural ceremony when he became head of the Shkulu Mululu! Shkulu Mululu is the Nation's most feared and ruthlessly organized gang in town.

In his brain, joining the army had been the

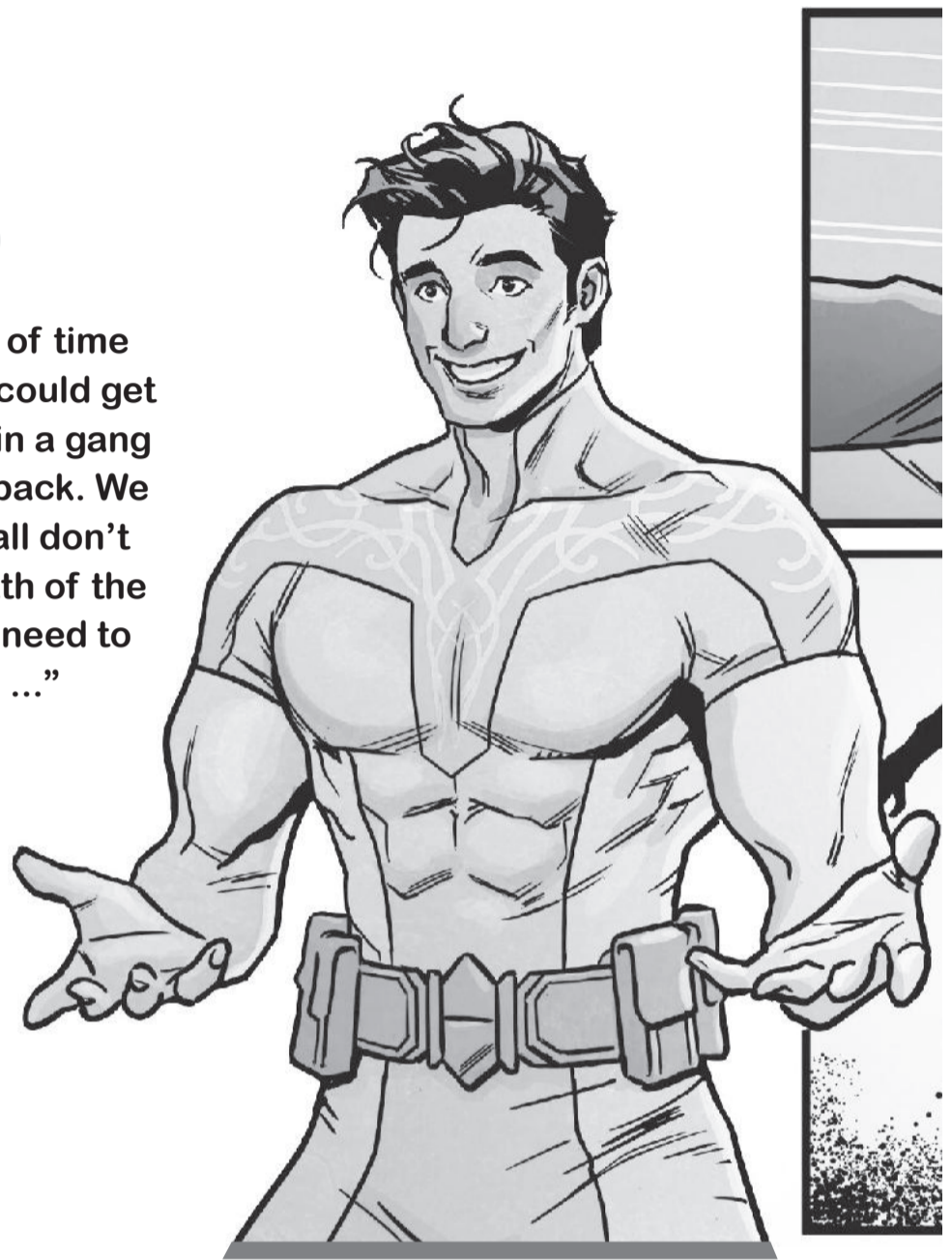
right thing. At least he transferred some six months salary of his and covered his mother's medications. A soldier's payment in Dundla is cigarette money. It never lasts a day of an extravagant vacation. That's why the soldiers get a half-night vacation in a nearby town to enjoy the tarts, after a bloody campaign. Even though he fought in three bloody battles, he never dared to have a half night vacation. He sent his entire payment home to support his mother's medical cost. His mother would buy the medicines by the money her son sent. But she wouldn't have something to eat. Whenever he thought of the passing of his mother, he would say to himself, "Army my elbow. I should have been Shkulu Mululu."

Well, his sorrow wouldn't bring his mother back. But luck brought the Shkulu Mululu to him when he was almost drinking and smoking his life away in a local liquor store. His good reputation in the army, which he left following his mother's death, was overheard and made him a perfect candidate for the gang. His gang membership didn't last long. He just became the leader. And what shocked the small town? All of a sudden he claimed that he was going to build a machine gun factory in Drundlu.

How is that going to happen? Nobody knows. People were so confused about the shortest way he came to power. They even questioned whether the gang lost its genius brains; most of the time by killing one another, or this Dumas really is a genius with a capability of building a sophisticated machinegun factory?

In a public announcement, which was usually made by loyal whistle-blowers of the gang, for whistle-blowing is the only medium of mass communication in town,

“... It may be a matter of time but the only thing you could get from loyalty and trust in a gang group is a stab in the back. We may be poor but we all don't have to choose the path of the gangs to be rich. We need to build our morals. ...”



he told officials not to worry about grabbing land by force to build the factory. They don't have to worry about bank robbery either. He said "I will just build it!"

What does that mean anyway? Is he going to build a factory on the moon or else? This was everybody's question in town. Such kinds of announcements were always whistle-blown. Society was always puzzled! The result would be chaos or silence most of the times. This time there was no chaos or silence, only confusion.

Some people who were already affiliated to the gang activities said the building of the machinegun factory would bring difference to the town's history. They said the killing will transform. "It makes gang groups transform from axes and daggers to machine guns! Whoa, they will wipe-out each other real quick! And the administration would have its relief!" they uttered such things to one another.

One could describe his expertise as "But in terms of money machineguns could be costly! You know the fool in power won't sell anything with cheap price! Daggers are the best in this case! You just stick it in your enemy's neck and pull it out, brush the blood on his coat, and walk away. Cheap as that."

The confusion on the other walks of life is not even about the factory but how

come this crinkle-faced Dumas got to the leadership of Shkulu Mululu in such a short time? Simple, he stabbed every one of the old leaders of the gang in the back. Every time something wrong went between gang groups, it was from too much trust or too much mistrust. They just vow on a very strong law of trust and one day some greedy gangster would break it and then no one would trust his own shadow. There should never be such thing as being a blood spilling gangster bound with the laws of trust and loyalty.

"Some foolish young men only believe the gang's fairy tales about a strict code of trust and loyalty between themselves", said a wise Towner called Dobe Kumsi ones. "They would tell you that you could be a millionaire in one night if you smuggle one kilogram of cocaine by stashing it in your stomach. A fool who believed them died his intestine shredded like a toilet paper! It may be a matter of time but the only thing you could get from loyalty and trust in a gang group is a stab in the back. We may be poor but we all don't have to choose the path of the gangs to be rich. We need to build our morals. If our morals are dominated by vengeance and grief, there is no doubt all the forests in this country will be full of gang groups", he would say these words when the Shkulu Mululu was out of town fighting with some rival gang somewhere.

Global Affairs

Biodiversity masterplan:

Negotiations on crucial science, technology for implementation underway

The triple planetary crises of climate change, biodiversity loss, pollution, and waste are escalating. At the current pace, the world is on track to lose one quarter of all plant and animal species by 2030, with one species already dying out every 10 minutes. One million species face extinction. Human activity has already altered three-quarters of the land on Earth and two-thirds of the ocean.

Against this backdrop, the 26th session of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) opened today in Nairobi, Kenya.

Hector Alan Valdes Suarez from the Global Youth Biodiversity Network told IPS that SBSTTA “seeks to build momentum to achieve global and national ambitious goals to halt and reverse the ongoing monumental biodiversity crises.”

Multidisciplinary and open to participation by all parties to the convention, SBSTTA comprises government representatives competent in the relevant field of expertise to ensure that policies are informed by the best available science at the time. SBSTTA has met 25 times to date. The ongoing 26th meeting will acknowledge contributions to the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework—also known as the Biodiversity Plan—hashed out at meetings in Kunming, China, and Montreal, Canada, in 2022.

As an open-ended intergovernmental scientific advisory body set up to provide the Conference of the Parties (COP) and, as appropriate, its other subsidiary bodies, with timely advice relating to the implementation of the CBD, SBSTTA “provides a platform for actors outside the Convention, such as youths, women, non-government organizations, and Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs), to observe negotiations on crucial science and also assess how they are or could contribute to, the Convention on Biological Diversity. The Convention is unique as actors outside the CBD can lobby for their views to be included through a Party to the Convention,” he says.

The Convention, which entered into force in December 1993, is the first global agreement to cover all aspects of biological diversity. Senka Barudanovic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Chair of the SBSTTA Bureau, said the 26th meeting of SBSTTA is “especially important as we are at a critical moment in time to ensure that our actions are guided by a robust foundation of scientific and technical knowledge, tools, and guidelines.”

“The good news is that there is a wealth of knowledge and experience for us to use and build on as we walk this journey together for effective conservation, sustainable use, and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits



Hector Alan Valdes Suarez from the Global Youth Biodiversity Network speaks about the youth perspective being an invaluable asset in the implementation of the Biodiversity Plan. Credit: Joyce Chimbi/IPS

“
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 even as we gather to
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from the use of biodiversity.”

The six-day meeting seeks to forge agreement among delegates from 196 parties to the CBD on issues pertaining to the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, also known as The Biodiversity Plan. Hard science and a multi-disciplinary approach are high on the SBSTTA 26 agenda as pertains to the implementation of the plan, specifically how the scientific and technical needs of all parties, including the Least Developed Countries (LDCs), among other developing countries, will be met.

Suarez said as parties to the CBD resume negotiations on crucial science and technology, “It is to develop and agree on a monitoring framework to track progress and implementation of the Biodiversity Plan. There are four goals and 23 targets so the indicators are globally uniform to track whether these targets are being achieved and they should be flexible and adaptable to the national context. In my view, many of these indicators are addressing actors outside the convention, such as youths, women, and Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs), and their representation at the meeting to hear what the parties are saying is critical.”

“These actors are contributing to the goal of the Biodiversity Plan at local levels, and their contributions ought to be recognized too, so they matter, and the decisions taken by the parties affect these actors the most, especially women and young people. The process is much more than agreeing on the right science and technical skills to reverse biodiversity loss. Increased accountability and transparency are key even as we gather to agree on how to measure success towards reaching set goals and consistency

of reporting at the global level, hence the need for parties to continuously consult,” she said.

The gathering recognizes these concerns, as there are at least 80 representatives of Indigenous Peoples and local communities, as well as observer organizations, participating in the meeting. Indigenous people’s voices are key, as they suffer disproportionately from loss of biodiversity and environmental degradation. Their lives, survival, development chances, knowledge, environment, and health conditions depend on the successful implantation of the plan.

Cyri Wafula Nyongesa from the International University Network on Cultural and Biological Diversity agrees, telling IPS that even as scientists hash out hard science, technical, and technological knowledge to support the implementation of the Biodiversity Plan, there is a need to look at existing gaps in its implementation framework. These gaps include the need for capacity building and reporting frameworks that are simple and also draw connections between global and national plans.

As agreed in a landmark decision of CBD COP 15 in December 2022, the UN-driven strategy is the world’s masterplan to halt and reverse biodiversity loss by 2030, and sets out a pathway to reach the global vision of a world living in harmony with nature by 2050 using four goals and 23 targets. The goals are to protect and restore nature, to prosper with nature, to share benefits fairly, and to invest in and collaborate for nature’s benefit.

“One year and a half after the Biodiversity Plan was historically adopted, parties to the CBD must now fine-tune the important details that will take the world from agreement to action,” said David Cooper, Acting Executive Secretary of the CBD. “The subsidiary body is leveraging science and technology to help the parties to the CBD deliver on their commitment to people and nature.”

Ongoing discussions are firmly framed within the CBD overall agenda to address all threats to biodiversity and ecosystem services, including threats from climate change, through scientific assessments, the development of tools, incentives, and processes, the transfer of technologies and good practices, and the full and active involvement of relevant stakeholders.

Delegates have resolutely set the ball rolling towards reporting on the monitoring framework, the national status of implementation, and the mobilization of financial resources for the Biodiversity Plan. The ultimate goal is to fast-track the implementation of sustainable solutions to biodiversity loss, restore ecosystems, and protect indigenous rights.

(Source: Inter press service)

Law & Politics

National dialogue: An ultimate path to national reconciliation

BY DANIEL ALEMAYEHU

National dialogue and reconciliation by far is the sacred idea that Ethiopia is trying to realize in order to achieve lasting peace and mend past rifts on major national issues. With all the grievances and ill-formed narratives, the country has been suffering from those age-old hurdles and could not find a way to bring every part of the society to the table and find lasting solutions.

The incumbent has been facing a number of challenges since assuming power. In addition to the backlogs of divisive issues, recent international and local flaws made the road to stability bumpy for all Ethiopians. Both longtime and recent predicaments all have contributed to Ethiopia's current economic, political and social loopholes.

On top of that, the nation is trying to promote the essence of nationalism and patriotism in to the hearts of the people through putting the seeds of togetherness and common values as a nation. However, those marvelous ideas could be hard to practice due to the extensive acts of wrong narratives and old grievances that propagated among the people.

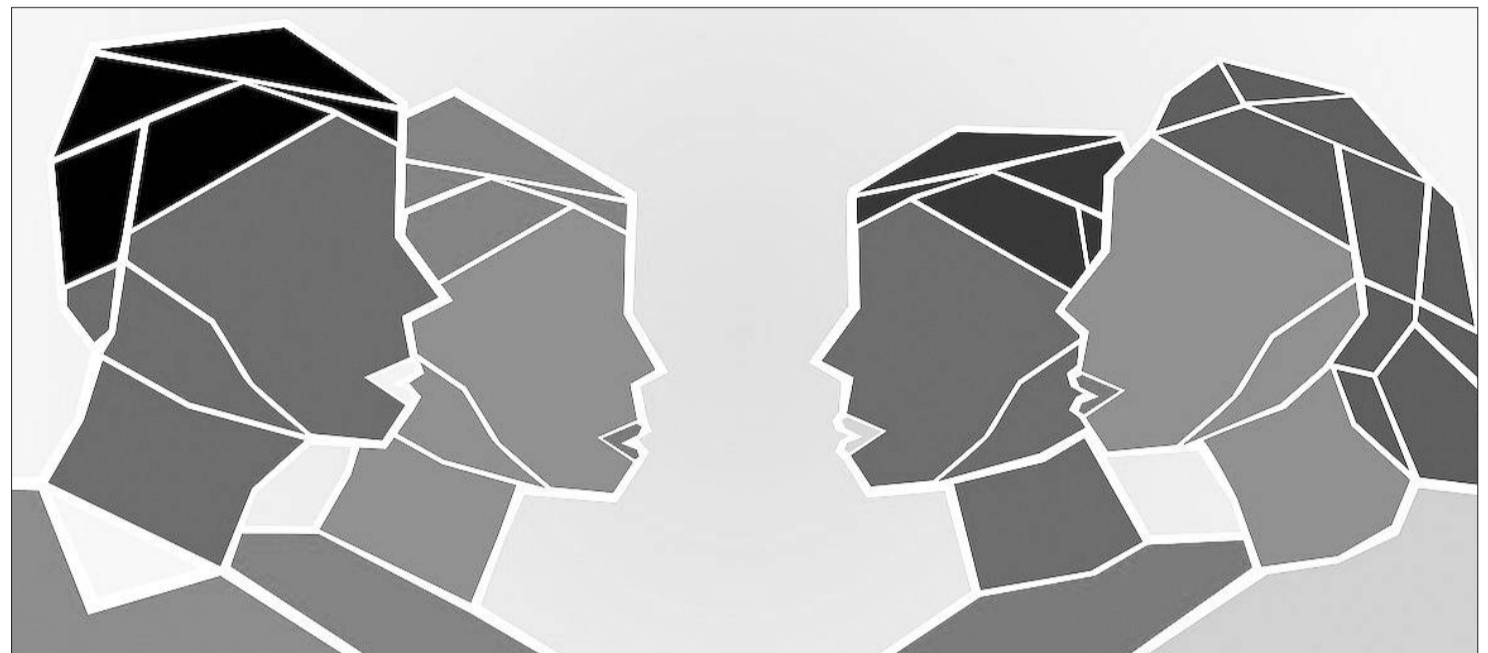
To end such division and dissemination in the country and among the people, the best idea is designing a platform that can incorporate all the parties to talk about their issues and find a common and national consensus. To this point the government, by law, has established the National Dialogue Commission. From the onset of its establishment of the commission, the people and political parties including the incumbent have put their trust in the institution to meet the sought after objectives for bringing the country together.

The National Dialogue commission, during the past few months, has been achieving some tangible and prominent actions towards its national goals. The commission has also shown its desire to work with all the entities that show their interest in getting involved in the process. Besides, the commission has also called upon all the armed groups in the country to put their ideas on the table rather than seeking power through guns and bloodshed.

Establishing an inclusive and transparent platform is believed to be the best way to solve problems and is also a way to developing common believes. This is also the goals of the National Dialogue Commission. It is the best talking platform happened in Ethiopia so far, having a gateway to national dialogue and conciliation towards a better tomorrow.

Ambassador Mohamoud Dirir, Commissioner of National Dialogue, has recently stayed with a local media for an exclusive interview discussing on the importance of the commission to solve national problems as it is the best opportunity to solve our problems and not to pass it to the next generations.

Regarding the inclusiveness of the process, the commissioner noted there have been



calls from various sectors of the society including political parties, intellectuals, and renowned personalities to establish a national dialogue because of the crisis that the country has been passing through.

Addressing the dedication to establish such platforms of inclusive dialogue, as to the commission, the current government has brought the idea and established the Ethiopian National Dialogue Commission which is an independent body and not affiliated to any political party.

The commission is working to make inclusive dialogue a reality in Ethiopia, he said, adding that the task is a very daunting and recalled the many opportunities which have been squandered in Ethiopian modern history.

“We call upon all Ethiopians to seize this opportunity and only through dialogue solve the problems that we are facing currently and not to pass them to the future generations,” he said.

The country has enormous diversity, huge resources, but there are political issues that hinder the country from moving forward. The attempt of solving political issues by some quarters through armed struggle will not lead us to a solution, Mohamoud said.

“What we are saying is this method or this style of going to fight against this government or any future government would not lead us to a solution. It would lead to more bloodshed, displacement of people, poverty and disruption of lives of people,” he underlined.

Therefore, the commissioner underscored, “The only solution that we have in Ethiopia is to sit down sanely and solve our problems through dialogue.”

The Ethiopian National Dialogue is not an elite bargain; rather, it is a dialogue that is very inclusive and includes the entire spectrum of the society to participate in the dialogue process. This has to be an inclusive and transparent process and accepted by all, as it is legitimate and democratic process.

There is a very high expectation of the

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It is the best talking platform happened in Ethiopia so far, having a gateway to national dialogue and conciliation towards a better tomorrow

people of Ethiopia given there is the conflict, disruption of livelihoods, a displacement of people here and there as well as frustrations as well, he added.

“We have seen the huge expectation of our people which emanates from their desire for peace, stability and not to pass the current turbulence and differences to next generations.”

Hence, “the Commission believes and I should say that the only way up for Ethiopia is the national dialogue. Let us sit together, solve our problems through dialogue, which will enable us to solve our problems,” he stressed.

By the same token, as the national dialogue is meant to be inclusive and all parties should be represented, Commissioner Mohamoud has also called upon the armed groups to participate sanely in the national dialogue.

“There will be a safeguard process through which the armed groups, pending upon their will to participate in the process. We, as a commission, call upon all the armed groups to accept the peaceful dialogue that is taking place in Ethiopia and be part of the process,

not against the process,” he said.

According to him, the belief in armed struggle has been tried several times in Ethiopian modern history and what we have reaped as Ethiopians from that is conflict, war, displacement of people, destruction of economies, and disruption of livelihoods. “Enough is enough. This is a time for us to sit and to face the realities of Ethiopia, through dialogue,” he underlined.

“I hope that this dialogue will succeed with the help of the entire population of Ethiopia, the political parties, the intellectuals, opinion makers, and the entire system of the government as well as the regional states.”

This is the only solution that we have, he said, stressing it is a process that should not be squandered as many opportunities of the past.

By the same token, Blen Gebremedhin, one of the 11 commissioners of the National Dialogue Commission, told the local media that the upcoming national dialogue is a huge hope for all Ethiopians to ensure sustainable peace which is a prerequisite to successfully prosperity.

Since its establishment, Blen indicated, the commission has made a lot of works that are vital for the successful conduct of the dialogue, it has so far carried out extensive activities on how the dialogue should be conducted through series of consultation with relevant stakeholders, she added.

According to Blen, identifying of participants has been conducted in 10 regional states and two city administrations and districts. Actions have been made to ensure the inclusivity of the dialogue by meticulously identifying participants with a view to bring national consensus on the most fundamental national issues among the people of Ethiopia.

The commissioner further elaborated, “We have been working communication activities not only through the mainstream media but also the digital media to reach the large population with respect to national dialogue.”

Planet Earth

Ethiopia's endeavor to harness its wetland resources

BY GIRMACHEW GASHAW

Wetlands are areas where land meets water, typically six meters or less according to the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands. These areas play a vital role in water storage, regulation, and purification, often referred to as the “kidneys of the earth.”

Despite their importance, wetlands are often misunderstood and undervalued, leading to their degradation and destruction.

In East Africa, wetlands play a crucial role in mitigating the impacts of recurrent droughts and floods. By storing and slowly releasing water, wetlands serve as lifelines for pastoralists and other communities, helping to reduce the severity of droughts and floods. However, the increasing frequency and intensity of climate change-related events pose a significant threat to wetlands and the communities that depend on them.

Wetlands International, a global NGO based in the Netherlands, is focusing on the conservation and restoration of wetlands. With years of experience in the field, it has been actively engaged in Ethiopia for the past five years, working on various programs ranging from policy issues, education, community involvement, wetland restoration, livelihood support, and facilitating consensus among stakeholders on critical wetland issues.

The Convention on Wetlands is the intergovernmental treaty that provides the framework for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and their resources. The Convention was adopted in the Iranian city of Ramsar in 1971 and came into force in 1975.

Its mission covers the wise use of wetlands for their ecosystems and also their water resources. The Convention therefore works particularly closely with the six other biodiversity-related Conventions, and with those concerned with water governance.

The Convention has devoted a great deal of effort to developing synergies with these other environment-related instrument. There are several countries who are party to this convention, including most countries in Eastern Africa, though Ethiopia is yet to become party to the Ramsar Convention. Indeed, they are still working on it.

“Through our work in East African countries, we have witnessed several best practices in wetland protection and management. Countries like Uganda have implemented robust wetland policies and management plans, emphasizing the importance of community engagement, livelihood support, and capacity building.” In response to flooding and water management challenges, East African countries must adopt proactive measures, such as early warning systems, integrated water resource management approaches, and stakeholder engagement. By incorporating scientific knowledge, policy frameworks, and community



participation, governments can better prepare for and mitigate the impacts of floods and water-related disasters.

The Ethiopian government's tree planting initiatives have the potential to contribute to wetland conservation by enhancing soil stability, reducing erosion, and providing habitat for biodiversity. However, the success of these efforts depends on careful species selection, community involvement and long-term monitoring to ensure the survival and growth of planted trees.

Raising awareness, fostering collaboration, and adopting sustainable practices are essential for safeguarding wetlands in East Africa. By recognizing the value of wetlands, integrating climate change considerations, and engaging diverse stakeholders, we can work together to protect these vital ecosystems for future generations.

These initiatives have led to tangible improvements in wetland conservation and restoration efforts, showcasing the positive impact of integrated approaches to wetland management.

Challenges in expanding our programs in East Africa include establishing partnerships, navigating diverse regulatory environments, and ensuring effective community engagement. Building trust, capacity, and awareness among stakeholders is essential for the successful implementation of wetland conservation initiatives.

Climate change poses a significant threat to wetlands, affecting water levels, biodiversity, and ecosystem functions. As temperatures rise and rainfall patterns shift, wetlands face increased pressure from floods, droughts, and habitat degradation. Addressing these challenges requires a holistic approach that integrates climate change adaptation strategies into wetland conservation and management efforts.

In response to flooding and water management challenges, East African countries must adopt proactive measures, such as early warning systems, integrated water resource management approaches, and stakeholder engagement. By incorporating scientific knowledge, policy frameworks, and community participation, governments can better prepare for and mitigate the impacts of floods and water-related disasters.

The Ethiopian government's tree planting initiatives have the potential to contribute to wetland conservation by enhancing soil stability, reducing erosion, and providing habitat for biodiversity. However, the success of these efforts depends on careful species selection, community involvement and long-term monitoring to ensure the survival and growth of planted trees.

Raising awareness, fostering collaboration, and adopting sustainable practices are essential for safeguarding wetlands in East Africa. By recognizing the value of wetlands, integrating climate change considerations, and engaging diverse stakeholders, we can work together to protect these vital ecosystems for future generations.

East African countries should give due attention for wetlands conservation and deliberate on the matter so as to mitigating impacts of recurrent droughts and floods, Wetlands International Eastern Africa CEO Julie Mulonga said. Considering wetlands significance for mitigating the impacts of recurrent droughts and floods, east African countries, which are exposed to recurrent drought and flooding, should deliberate on ways of conserving wetlands, she suggested.

The Ethiopian Environmental Protection Authority (EEPA) announced that it is developing a policy and proclamation that ensure proper protection and utilization of wetlands in Ethiopia.

Researchers in the sector have been revealing the growing concerns about the impact of farming, grazing, and other activities on the country's wetlands. Wetlands, including lakes, rivers, and springs play a crucial role in regulating water resources and maintaining the ecological balance of the environment.

Experts in the field have repeatedly called for a robust legal framework to safeguard wetlands from threats and implement sustainable management practices.

Zerihun Mengesha is currently working as Water Bodies and Wetlands Management, Monitoring, and Control Desk Head at EEPA. He noted the importance of wetlands as guarantor of water resource development and sustainability. Wetlands not only protect domestic water supplies but also play a vital role in the flow of trans-boundary rivers.

The EEPA is currently drafting a policy and decree to address the management and regulation of wetlands. The legal frameworks are expected to help prevent pollution and degradation of water bodies caused by depletion and damage of wetlands and the broader ecosystem.

Ethiopia's efforts in environmental protection and development, including the Green Legacy initiative, will play significant role in safeguarding wetlands and ensuring the sustainable flow of trans-boundary Rivers.

Furthermore, regional cooperation and support will be crucial for sustainable development of watersheds and the protection of water resources as Ethiopia is a source of water for neighboring countries. Following the rules and regulations which will be enacted soon, all the concerned bodies are expected to indulge invest on wetland conservation so as to conserve wetlands.