



The Ethiopian Herald

Vol. LXXX No 202 3 May 2024 - Miazia 25, 2016

Friday

Price Birr 10.00



Corridor dev't heralds Addis Ababa's rebirth: Premier

BY YESUF ENDRIS

ADDIS ABABA- The ongoing corridor development project is synonymous with the rebirth of Addis Ababa, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) said, adding that project makes

the metropolis the right place to live and work.

The Premier made the above remark while evaluating the one-month performance of the corridor development with the project leaders.

Prime Minister Abiy also expressed his belief

that the project makes the diplomatic city more attractive to the international and continental organizations and it is a major departure in making great urban infrastructural

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Pastor Tsadiku Abdo

Church express vehement support to Nat'l Dialogue

• Wages active participation

BY MISGANAWASNAKE

ADDIS ABABA-The Evangelical Churches Fellowship of Ethiopia (ECFE) expressed readiness to support the implementation of the National Dialogue Commission that

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Tarekegn Bululta

Ministry foresees 3 bln Birr market linkage in 'Let Ethiopia Produce' Expo

BY ASHENAFI ANIMUT

ADDIS ABABA-The Ministry of Industry revealed a plan to create a three billion Birr worth market linkage in the Let Ethiopia Produce Expo and Bazaar scheduled for five consecutive days from May 9.

In a press briefing he gave here yesterday, Industry State Minister Tarekegn Bululta stated that 200 companies engaged in leath

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Ethiopia pushes for inclusive dev't in new world order

BY BETELHEM BEDLU

ADDIS ABABA- Global development is a collective pursuit of humanity that needs global cooperation which is important to address collective challenges that the world is facing today, so said Ethiopia's Finance Minister.

BRICS is an important platform of cooperation globally that is going to complement the already existing cooperation as well as address rising global challenges.

In his stay at the World Economic Forum under the topic 'Rising Powers for a Multipolar World', Finance Minister Ahmed Shide stated that countries under BRICS are rising in their economic power, global influence, innovation, technology, and leverage for investment.

Thus, increasing these types of cooperation is very important and Ethiopia can leverage its capability in terms of attracting Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and leveraging technologies cooperation, he



Ahmed Shide

said.

"There is a lot we can do together in terms of trade, infrastructure, technology transfer, and capacity building. BRICS also partly

advocates for enhanced cooperation between developing countries. So, these serve as an additional platform of regional impor

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Ethiopian Diaspora remits 3 bln USD in nine-month: EDS

BY ASHENAFI ANIMUT

ADDIS ABABA – Ethiopia has obtained 3 billion USD from the Diaspora community in the past nine months of the current fiscal year, the Ethiopian Diaspora Service (EDS) disclosed.

The above remark was made via zoom meeting while EDS was conducting its nine-month evaluation performance with Ethiopian missions.

According to the information obtained from the service, EDS has been extending the necessary support and monitoring activities to heighten the Diaspora community’s engagement and participation thereby managing to secure over 3 billion USD in the aforesaid period.

It has also indicated that over 197,000 members of Diaspora communities have participated in 730 zoom and face-to-face meetings in connection with current and

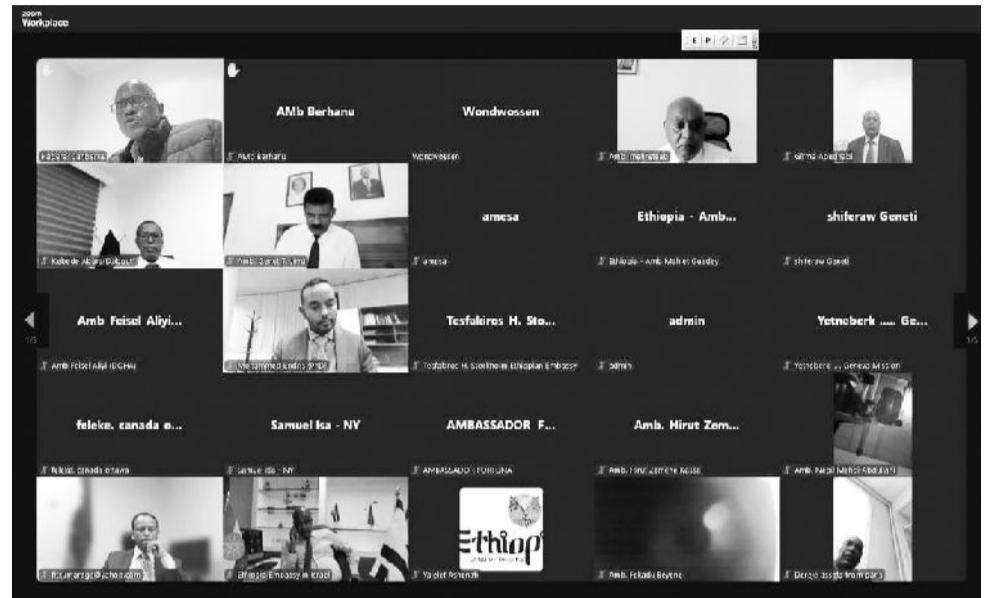
national development issues during the same period.

Reminding the call made to second generation young Ethiopians residing outside, over 75,000 second generation Ethiopian origin Diasporas came merely in the first round, it stated.

Among the development activities that are put in place to involve the Diaspora in trade and investment areas, 1,166 Diaspora members have participated and managed to create over 1,000 jobs. Likewise, facilitating technological, health, security, pharmaceutical manufacturing, knowledge transfer activities were held.

It has also been added that some 1,745 members of the Diaspora have opened hard currency accounts and deposited over 2.2 million USD during the last eight-month.

Furthermore, they have also raised over 410,000 USD for the construction of Abbay



Dam, 1.1 million USD for ‘Gebeta Lehager’ project, and other various volunteer activities in cash and in kind accounted for about 17 million USD.

According to the report, the total amount of support collected from the Diaspora hit over 18 million USD in the last nine-month, it was learnt.



Hibret Bank, MasterCard launch prepaid Hibr-MasterCard services

BY STAFF REPORTER

ADDIS ABABA - Hibret Bank in collaboration with MasterCard yesterday launched prepaid Hibr-MasterCard services.

The launch of the service said to bring a significant milestone in the journey towards financial digitization in Ethiopia.

During the launching ceremony, Hibret Bank Chief Executive Officer Melaku Kebede said that launching the Hibr-MasterCard prepaid service is a testament to the bank’s commitment to meet its mission of digital financial inclusion.

“We owe our success to trusted partners like Premier Switch Solution (PSS), whose support for the prepaid Hibr-MasterCard launch is noteworthy. PSS’s integrated electronic payment platform has allowed us to pioneer card banking services, ensuring Hibret Bank remains a beacon of empowerment and progress in the Ethiopian

banking sector.”

Accordingly, the launch of this service is designed to offer customers unparalleled convenience and security in international card banking experiences, enabling to access and utilize foreign currency for overseas travels and international transactions wherever MasterCard is accepted.

Moreover, the prepaid Hibr-MasterCard has a dual-interface feature supporting both contact and contactless transactions making it convenient financial tool for both ATM withdrawals and point-of-sale purchases.

On his part, MasterCard East Africa and Indian Ocean Islands Vice President and Country Manager Shehryar Ali said that the collaboration with Hibret Bank is a reflection of MasterCard’s commitment to fostering financial inclusion and digitization not just in Ethiopia but across Africa.

“It is a bridge for Ethiopians to access the global market with ease and security,” he noted.

Bureau licenses 3,747 investors with 148 bln Birr capital

BY MESERET BEHAILU

ADDIS ABABA - Oromia State Investment and Industry Bureau announced yesterday that it has given some 3,747 investment licenses who have registered a capital of over 148 billion Birr.

Briefing journalists yesterday regarding the activities of the state’s investment board, Oromia State Investment and Industry Bureau Head Ahmed Indris disclosed that some 3,747 foreign and domestic investors have gained investment licenses having met the full criteria.

As to the Head, some 35,000 hectares of land is prepared to deliver investors whilst it will create over 509,000 jobs. Some 53 unions and potential farmers are being involved in the investment sector. Of course, 53,000 hectares of total land were identified for investment practice, it will provide for investors sooner than later.

“Oromia State has immense potential for investment due to adequate land, suitable climate, and infrastructure. To ensure the state benefit, the bureau has repaired the stagnant factories to help them get fully operational and encourage the producers’ factories to improve production and productivity,” he added.

He also noted that the bureau has been carrying out various activities in



Ahmed Indris

promoting investment particularly since the commencement of ‘Let Ethiopia Produce.’ Besides, the bureau hosted discussion with different bodies such as investors and stakeholders to identify the challenges of investment and direct the relevant solution with joint hands.

Likewise, the bureau promoted manufacturing, agriculture, and service sectors in order to increase the livelihoods of the society and developed the state with effective and proper utilization of resources, he cited.

The Head underlined that investors with license should gain the land within 45 days whilst they should commence their work with four months and the bureau will carry out the necessary supervision as well.

Photo: Gebabo Geberie

News

USAID announces 35 mln USD health, nutrition project

BY STAFF REPORTER

ADDIS ABABA - The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) announced a 35 million USD project to improve health and nutrition of mothers and children in the pastoralist states.

USAID Deputy Mission Director Eleanor Tan Piengco and Health Minister Mekdes Daba (MD) inaugurated the USAID Lowlands Health Activity, a five-year, 35 USD million initiatives yesterday. It aimed at improving health and nutrition outcomes for mothers and children in the pastoral states of Ethiopia. This project, to be implemented by Engender Health Inc., along with a consortium of international and local partners, will span 35 districts across the Somali, Afar, Southern Ethiopia, and Oromia states.

Since 2017, USAID has supported maternal and child health in pastoralist states through the Transform Health in Developing Regions project, which has advanced key health



indicators, such as skilled birth attendance and immunization coverage.

The Lowlands Health Activity will offer services to marginalized populations such as primary healthcare, access to quality services,

the adoption of healthy behaviors, and health facilities that provide essential reproductive, maternal, newborn, child, adolescent, and nutrition services. The project directly supports the achievements of USAID's and Ethiopia's Health Sector Transformation goal, aimed

to prevent maternal and child morbidity and mortality.

At the launch event, Deputy Mission Director Eleanor TanPiengco stated, "The Lowlands Health Activity will enhance access to skilled birth care and comprehensive pre- and post-natal services for mothers, as well as improved healthcare and nutritional services for their children. Additionally, it will aid in the restoration of conflict-affected health facilities in Afar."

USAID currently invests over 200 million USD annually in Ethiopia's health sector. The new project symbolizes the ongoing partnership between the American and Ethiopian people.

The 2024 marks an important milestone in the relationship between the people of the United States and the people of Ethiopia.

It was 120 years ago that the two countries established formal diplomatic ties and 60 years later that USAID was established in Ethiopia, it was learnt.

Corridor dev't heralds...

development. "Smart infrastructures are being integrated in the project."

The current government is changing the habit on urban development, which was largely neglected for the past many years and it is registering new achievements that have been unseen for long. Pilot projects that were executed during the past few years are testifying this, he emphasized.

"As Addis Ababa is a big city, we cannot reach every corner. However, we could beautify and reconstruct the metropolis with determined efforts and due to corridor development; the city will be one of the renewed tourist destinations."

He added, "If we succeed in corridor development, then we could replicate the project in other cities. Moreover, it could help many other countries in our continent."

The Premier; however, mentioned some challenges that the project has been

encountering including some individuals' refusals which, according to him, could emanate from their low awareness. "Those who witnessed pilot projects are now challenging the corridor development. Therefore, this is not only a construction... It will approve our efficiency to build and plan cities with our own capability."

Addis Ababa Mayor Adanech Abiebie also presented the overall progresses of the corridor development to the Prime Minister and mentioned that the high-profile project is a human centered.

Despite some challenges, resident relocation and compensation are being carried out in a meticulous manner to residents and businesses who were evacuated from their places, the Mayor elaborated.

The corridor development project is being underway in several parts of the city, covering about 47.8 km long roads, The Ethiopian Herald learned.

Ministry foresees 3 bln Birr market...

er and leather products, textiles and clothing, wood products, construction, automobile and machinery, electronics and electrical industries will participate in the event that set take place at the Millennium Hall.

The state minister also noted that the government has been formulating viable policies and strategies to facilitate the manufacturing industries' competitiveness and promoting the emerging small and medium industries.

The expo will also be an ideal mechanism to display and promote the manufacturing industries' productivity and create market linkages with both domestic and international actors. Out of the 200 firms that are expected to take part in the event, about 120 are high-level industries and the remaining are small and medium scale businesses.

Tareegn further highlighted that 50,000 people are expected to visit the event whereby embassies, foreign nationals, technical and vocational trainees, students of higher education institutions and others will take part.

In this program, a photo exhibition will be presented that explores the history of the

manufacturing industry from the traditional production method to the current stage. At the sidelines of the expo, discussions focused on issues related to finance, strategy and infrastructure will be held on all five days.

"The prime objective of this expo is to suggest viable solutions for the manufacturing sector's major setbacks that are related with industrial inputs, financial and infrastructural constraints."

According to him, the goal of the Let Ethiopian Produce movement is to create a leading industry by building sustainable, competitive and capable producers.

The implementation of the movement is focused on substituting imported products and increasing production costs. The movement is also being implemented with a focus on creating market linkages and coordination by showing and promoting the potential of the manufacturing industry, the state minister remarked.

It was learned that at the completion of the program, there would be an award and recognition program for those who have made great contributions in the import substitution and export market.

Church express vehement...

is believed to address the long-held and contentious issues.

ECFE President Pastor Tsadiku Abdo told journalists yesterday that the church has been contributing its share in the reconciliation process and supporting efforts that have been made to resolve contentious issues through actively participating in the National Dialogue process.

"We have been supporting the National Dialogue since its inception and we have been actively taking part in the preliminary discussions. We encourage what the Ethiopian National Dialogue Commission is doing everywhere in the country, that is to bring sustainable peace and reconciliation."

Pastor Tsadiku further highlighted that the commission's inclusion of all religions is the instrument to ensure the dialogue's inclusivity and to advance its importance to lasting peace. "If the religious institutions properly implement our homework, the

commission will get fruitful results in its endeavors. Even if there is different thinking, behavior and attitude in one family, the people of Ethiopia need to reach a consensus on issues of national importance."

He added, "The way we interpret the past should be realistic and unbiased since the connotation we give for the past affects today's Ethiopia unless reconciliation, justice and conflict resolution is achieved. Conflict should stop here not to destroy the nation's image and to start a new journey by forgetting all bad things that happened in the past."

Beyond the National Dialogue, the coming into force of transitional justice is also a viable measure at this time but these two should not be utilized for propaganda purposes and they should stand for truth and reconciliation and to be translated into tangible results. "We have to learn a lot from history since it helps us to omit the bad and sustain the good," the president emphasized.

Ethiopia pushes for...

tance at global scale."

Mentioning that Ethiopia has been at the forefront on global cooperation and was part of the founding members of most of international institutions both UN, he stressed that the nation remained supporting global leadership and global solidarity.

Ahmed also highlighted Ethiopia's role in terms of peacekeeping, regional stability, regional economic integration particularly with the leadership of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) .

Most countries which Ethiopia neighbors in the Horn of Africa are playing an important role he stressed, adding that regional neighborhood and more investment in economic infrastructure is essential in this regard.

The Finance Minister further indicated that the global rising challenges requires additional cooperation both in terms of South-South, new forms of cooperation which is going to complement already existing cooperation.

"Ethiopia has been the leading in Africa in terms of regional connectivity as well the Ethiopian Airlines is

playing a major role in bringing Africa to the rest of the world. It is the backbone of cooperation between the Horn of Africa (HoA) and Arabia which is also rising partnership which is very important since Arabia and Horn of Africa are intertwined geographies."

Thus, he emphasized the need to leverage both capacities to advance collective challenges in the region.

On the other hand, he also emphasized the need to move in to an inclusive global order which addresses the collective challenge of humanity through development and reform of institutions where the voices of all in the world matters in terms of nation building.

Moreover, global development is a collective public good to the world since every part of the world has to grow in technology, production, trading, and innovation. It is essential to move towards inclusive world order where global development is at the center. To this end, Ethiopia stands for solidarity, regional integration, addressing trade barriers and shared learning, Ahmed stressed.

Opinion

Disinformation, fake news: The need for media regulation

BY ADDISALEM MULAT

Following the rise of social media, misinformation and disinformation are turning out to be a threat to the entire world and a source of unrest, chaos, and conflict. In many instances, the world has over the years seen cooked-up stories pushing the world into uncharted territory.

It is common knowledge that fake news and misinformation have the potential of taking one's country into bottomless pit. In the present climate, from advanced to developing nations, the world is grappling with the rise of misinformation.

As a case in point, some international media outlets have kept spewing negative propaganda despite the successful implementation of the Pretoria peace accord reversing the two years of grime situations in the northern part of the country. These media outlets have been consistent in their lopsided position in spite of Ethiopia's positive development.

The discredited media organizations have been making a supreme effort to drag through the mud the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement signed between the federal government and the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF). As the federal government has been striving for turning promises into actions in accordance with the procedure laid in the agreement, the whole thing has been pointing forward in a way that can take Ethiopia to a whole other level.

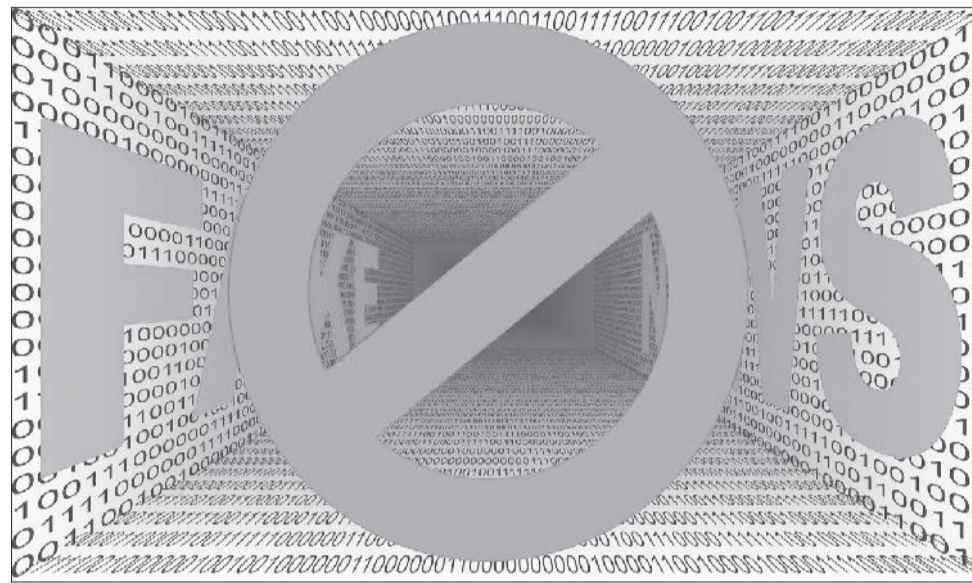
Notwithstanding the fact that the delivery of humanitarian assistance and restoration of social infrastructure has been sprouting, the low-rated international media outlets have sustained getting off track by breaching journalism ethics and standards. It is abundantly clear that on the heels of the signing of the cessation of hostilities agreement, peace and tranquility have been accomplished in the length and breadth of the northern part of the country in the shortest possible time.

Owing to the good gesture of the federal government, the northern part of the county has embarked on breathing a sigh of relief. Furthermore, this positive move has been winning the hearts and minds of the global community and receiving a pat on the back.

As opposed to bringing the international community into the light with the gospel truth blossoming in Northern Ethiopia, the low-rated media outlets have been sparing no effort to twist Ethiopia's arm and interfere in the internal affairs of the country.

It is important to highlight that the media outlets have bewildered the global community with fictitious stories working in tandem with Ethiopia's rivals to bring into being their concealed motives going behind the scenes.

In an interview Anteneh Tsegaye (PhD), School of Journalism and Communication, Addis Ababa University, gave in recent times to the Ethiopian Press Agency said the fact



Avoid disinformation and fake news

that the majority of false information is well planned and targeted and the negative effect it has on the public is devastating.

False information is widely shared due to the nature of the platforms regardless of Ethiopia's limited internet penetration. An overwhelming majority of social media content, specifically over 85%, is centered on political topics. This highlights the concerning prevalence of politically motivated narratives in the virtual sphere.

Anteneh highlighted the issue of ineffective regulation regarding social media platforms and how this lack of accountability has exacerbated the problem.

The detrimental consequences of manipulative and inflammatory social media content in fueling unrest in various regions. The destructive impact of such content has come at a great cost to Ethiopia, as it has unnecessarily burdened the nation with additional challenges and repercussions.

The absence of strict measures that hold violators accountable for their actions allows individuals to act with impunity on social media. This has led to a significant increase in hate speech and disinformation being spread on these platforms.

Apart from doctoring facts and mystifying every Tom, Dick, and Harry all over the world with spurious stories, they have been going to the ends of the earth to place the country between the hammer and the anvil. In the general run of things, they have been coming up with quite a lot of unfounded accusations concerning the predominant developments on the ground.

As if their past mistakes are not enough, some media outlets have rather intensified spreading fake news while turning a blind eye to the positive events happening in the country. The media organizations either omitted or wrongfully twisted the implementation of the Pretoria peace deal.

The Ethiopian Media Authority (EMA) said it has been working relentlessly to halt the ever-intensified hate speech and disinformation practices and ensure ethical and professional media in the country.

EMA Communication Affairs Director Dessie Kefale in the recent past told *The Ethiopian Herald* that the authority set Proclamation 1185/12 to control hate speech and disinformation and curtail media malpractices that have caused socioeconomic stability, national interest, diversity, and equality of the people.

The proclamation guides every stakeholder to contribute to curbing and eschewing hate speech and disinformation campaigns and also encourages ethical media practice. It also makes media actors involved in the dissemination of fake news accountable by law.

The EMA is also working to enhance the public's awareness of the impact of hate speech and disinformation and conducted studies on the effects of media manipulation. Accordingly, the research that was conducted by the authority helped to identify the severity of hate speech and disinformation at the national level.

The director further stated that the authority is partnered with various stakeholders to enhance the public's media literacy and support the latter's awareness to eschew manipulative content. Due attention has been given to extending training and other programs that help control the dissemination of false information in media.

Besides, the authority is utilizing various platforms including its social media page and mass media and other outlets to enhance the public's awareness of media lies. "We introduced a 9192 hotline number free of charge to receive complaints and suggestions from the public regarding the dissemination of fake news and hate speech by both mass and alternate media and we have made corrective measures based on the findings."

Mentioning the media's indispensable role in ensuring national interest, Dessie indicated consolidated efforts are underway to help the outlets to sustain lasting peace and galvanize social bonds.

"Controlling fake news and other media lies should not be left to a single entity and the public and other stakeholders

should contribute share in the formation of professional and ethical media that effectively promote and defend Ethiopia's national interest."

In an exclusive interview with The Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA), Council Executive Committee Vice Chairperson Tamirat Hailu recently said that cooperation among media members and enhancing the capacities of journalists are the major contributing factors to creating free and vibrant media outlets.

"The council along with the journalists' professional association has managed to scale up its members to 82 media outlets," he said.

As to him, the council has been regularly offering reporting training that is believed to support journalists in various fields such as conflict resolution reporting, conflict-sensitive reporting, and peace journalism to bridge the loopholes that are witnessed about security-related problems.

Moreover, he elucidated that they are undertaking unreserved commitments to establish monitoring units that verify and document news and other articles. Also, it has applied digital media code of ethics to follow up reporting and the way they are shared.

Tamirat also said that they are in progress of signing an MoU with the Ethiopian National Dialogue Commission to support and follow up on the community's views, and speech to help ensure trust and mutual benefit. And, it has planned to offer training to over 1,900 journalists drawn from across the country in the year to come.

Mentioning the agreement reached with the Ethiopian Media Authority (EMA), Tamirat emphasized that the council is also readying to join the East African Media Council membership which would be viable to facilitate information exchange and sustaining press freedom.

"Soaring prices of printing products, financial and security problems are the dragging factors for the development of competent and qualified media," he noted.

EMA Deputy Director General Gizaw Tesfaye on his part stated that organized media houses contribute a lot to the nation's image-building as well as holistic economic development.

As to Gizaw, the council is also striving to ensure fair competition in the sector, promote media utilization culture, and provide technical support and In this digital era, it is highly crucial to unite forces to help promote the role of the council towards tackling fake reporting and sustain a reliable media landscape.

They called on the government and other stakeholders to join forces to protect and promote the freedom and independence of the media.

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

Editorial

Incumbent ought to uphold essence of Good Friday

“Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing,” these words were among Jesus’s last words according to Luke 23:34 in the New Testament.

According to Christian teachings, Good Friday stands as a poignant reminder of the sacrificial love demonstrated by Jesus Christ through his crucifixion. It is a day of solemn reflection, spiritual renewal, and deep gratitude for the gift of salvation made possible through His ultimate sacrifice. As Christians around the world observe Good Friday, they are invited to contemplate the profound significance of Jesus’s death and to embrace the hope and redemption it offers to all who believe. He didn’t just preach forgiveness; He lived it, even in His final moments.

The day is significant because it encompasses universal themes of suffering, redemption, and hope that cut across historical and religious boundaries. Jesus’s willingness to put up with unbearable bodily and mental suffering shows the extent of God’s compassion and the lengths he would go to make peace with humanity.

Jesus’s forgiveness on the cross shows us that if he could forgive those causing him the greatest pain imaginable, we, too, can find the strength to forgive those who have wronged us. This is also true in nation-building. It is through forgiveness and love that reconciliation at individual and national levels would be possible. National reconciliation will only be achieved when we uphold the values of Good Friday.

To facilitate reconciliation in the country, since coming to power, the incumbent has been taking various measures to transform the country into peace and prosperity. It is to be recalled that in the early days of the reform, the government released thousands of political prisoners and allowed exiled political parties to come back home besides lifting anti-terrorism laws and amending draconian proclamations. The government was also credited with paving the way for the reconciliation of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church’s synods. However, the reform period has also been marred by conflicts in some parts of the country. The war that broke out in the northern part of the country was disastrous and large. There has been also violence in Oromia and Amhara states.

To peacefully conclude the conflict in Tigray, the government sealed a peace initiative with the Tigray People’s Liberation Front (TPLF) in Pretoria, South Africa. The Pretoria peace deal silenced the gun, facilitated reconciliation, and most importantly stopped the bloodshed. This courageous decision by both parties to the agreement restored peace and brought the severe war-impacted Tigray and other neighboring areas into normalcy. To this very day, the government has reaffirmed its resolve to negotiate with armed groups time and time again. It is worth recalling that the government sat down with the Shane group in Tanzania for negotiation in Darussalam Tanzania. To ensure lasting peace in the country, the country has embarked on various steps. The planned national dialogue and the ongoing transitional justice and rehabilitation efforts are mammoth tasks to pave the way for lasting peace and resolve contentious years of divisive national matters.

And, to tackle long lingering problems, the country has been working on national dialogue. In so doing, the National Dialogue Commission has been conducting a series of activities aimed at bringing together different ethnic groups and political factions to discuss key issues facing the country.

To redress human rights violations, the country is also working on a transitional justice system while it is also trying to rehabilitate and integrate militants into society. These toll orders are expected to expedite national reconciliation and unity. And, when we commemorate Good Friday and celebrate Christ’s resurrection, we need to bear in mind that reconciliation will be possible when we forgive and compromise. And, this is the right time to make concessions and display compassion to foster national reconciliation and build a nation. In this regard, Ethiopians and the international community should exert their utmost effort to realize this mammoth work.



The Ethiopian Herald

Established in 1943

Published daily except Mondays
By The Ethiopian Press Agency

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The Ethiopian Herald

Opinion

Ethiopia can secure potential benefits from joining New Development Bank (NDB)

BY SOLOMON DIBABA

The New International Economic Order (NIEO) is an economic movement after the Second World War with the aim of reforming the governance of international financial institutions, redistributing wealth between developing and developed nations, ensuring economic sovereignty of developing nations, and enhancing south-south collaboration.

However, the objectives of the NIEO are not fulfilled and have become one of the global debatable issues. The failure of the NIEO is believed to be the principal reason for the formation of new economic blocs that could realize the development objectives of nations. The BRICS is one of such economic blocs with new ambitions. The BRICS formed in 2010 with the membership of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa invited six more countries to join the bloc. These are Ethiopia, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Iran, United Arab Emirates, and Argentina which latter decided not to join. This contribution attempts to throw some light on the benefits Ethiopia is likely to get from joining the BRICS and the costs it is likely to incur.

The failure of the NIEO to realize its four global objectives has been evidenced. The two IFIs (WBG and IMF) were not reformed and developing nations were not able to get equitable access to development finance. Governance of these financial institutions is controlled by a few member states. The governance problem in both the WBG and the IMF is nearly similar. Top five and top 20 countries control 37 and 69.3 percent of the voting power (capital stock) in the WBG.

On the other hand, other 62 member states have only 30 percent of the total voting power (average of 0.19 each). The two international financial institutions, namely WBG and IMF, were not reformed and developing nations were not able to get equitable voice and access to development finance. Governance of these financial institutions is controlled by a few member states.

The BRICS aims to achieve regional development, to act as a bridge between developed and developing countries, contribute to development of humanity, establish a more equitable and fairer world, boost intra-BRICS trade in local currencies, and promote the technological information exchange among the member states; and to enhance inclusive economic growth. BRICS has expressed its desire to abandon the USD by 2026.

There are high chances that the BRICS with 10 nations will minimize paying in the greenback to strengthen their local currencies (Dsouza, 2023). If BRICS cuts ties with the USD, however, the domestic economies of these countries are expected to face the risk of losing investors’ confidence. Investors may not have confidence in the stability of “BRICS currency”.

On the other hand, since the USD has proven to be a stable and reliable currency, its abandonment might lead to foreign investors refraining from investing in BRICS markets. This development could lead to a dry in foreign cash flow making their native economies face severe challenges. The USD is the most widely used currency and ending reliance on the greenback could prove BRICS costly.

In addition, BRICS countries will also have limited access to the dollar markets. Generally, BRICS countries could suffer losses if they completely abandon the USD for global trade. It could potentially affect their trade balances, investment flows, and the overall economic stability of their respective countries. Ethiopia’s participation in the BRICS is expected to generate financial and technical assistance from the NDB including soft loans without the more stringent conditions typically imposed by the IMF (Bonesh, 2023). However, there are diverse views on the reasons

behind, and the costs and benefits arising from joining the BRICS.

Membership in the NDB could provide Ethiopia with access to additional funding for infrastructure projects, development initiatives, and economic reforms. The bank offers loans and financial assistance to member countries for various development purposes, which could help address Ethiopia’s infrastructure deficit and support its development agenda.

Why is Ethiopia working hard to join the NDB of BRICS countries? There could be several reasons but the author would like to mention only few of these reasons.

Over the past several years, Ethiopia has been suffering from unjustifiable economic sanction by some western powers which are politically motivated. On the other hand Ethiopia is an emerging economy that has been showing an average of 10% growth over the past several decades and wishes to make such growth more sustainable.

Moreover, the geopolitical situation on the Horn of Africa and geostrategic challenges the country is facing would certainly force the present government to opt for other expanded alternatives that would help to help fulfil the national economic plan the country is striving to fulfil. Internal and external socio-economic and political pressures from within and without coupled with the growing socio-economic demands from citizens would compel the country to solicit for better and country tailored economic development. Ethiopia is being forced to comply to stringent requirements from the IMF and the WB some of which includes periodic devaluation of the Birr which could trigger further hyperinflation in her economy

By joining the NDB, Ethiopia could diversify its sources of financing beyond traditional lenders such as multilateral development banks and bilateral donors. This could reduce dependency on a single source of funding and provide greater flexibility in financing options for development projects.

The NDB may offer favorable terms on loans compared to commercial lenders, including lower interest rates, longer repayment periods, and flexible terms. This could make borrowing more affordable for Ethiopia and help mitigate the financial burden of infrastructure investments and development projects.

In addition to financial assistance, the NDB provides technical assistance and capacity-building support to member countries. This could benefit Ethiopia by strengthening its institutional capacity, improving project management capabilities, and enhancing governance and transparency in the use of development funds.

Membership in the BRICS Bank could facilitate greater regional integration and cooperation with other African countries and emerging economies. Ethiopia could leverage its membership to collaborate on regional infrastructure projects, trade initiatives, and economic partnerships that promote regional development and prosperity.

Joining the BRICS Bank could enhance Ethiopia’s international standing and diplomatic relations with BRICS member countries, including Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa. This could open up opportunities for greater economic cooperation, investment, and trade relations with these influential emerging economies.

The NDB focuses on financing sustainable development projects that promote economic growth, social inclusion, and environmental sustainability. Ethiopia’s membership in the bank could align with its development goals and priorities, supporting efforts to achieve poverty reduction, infrastructure development, and inclusive growth.

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

Business & Economy

Mining sector performance in Oromia State bright hope for Ethiopia

BY LAKACHEW ATINAFU

The mining sector plays a crucial role in the economic development of nations around the world. In the case of Oromia State in Ethiopia, the mining industry has emerged as a significant contributor to the region's growth and development. This article aims to provide an overview of the mining sector in the country and Oromia State, highlighting its performance, opportunities, challenges, and potential for future growth.

Oromia State, located in the central part of Ethiopia, is rich in diverse mineral resources. The state is known for its vast deposits of minerals such as gold, tantalum, nickel, gemstones, marble, limestone, and other industrial minerals. These resources offer immense potential for economic growth and attracting investments in the mining sector.

The Ethiopian government has recognized the importance of the mining sector in driving economic growth and has implemented several initiatives to promote responsible and sustainable mining practices in Oromia State. The government has introduced investment-friendly policies, streamlined licensing procedures, and established regulatory frameworks to attract domestic and foreign investments in the sector. As a result, 163.74 million USD was gained during the past nine months of this fiscal year.

Over the past decade, the mining sector in Oromia State has witnessed significant growth. The extraction and processing of gold and tantalum, in particular, have contributed to the region's economic development. Several large-scale mining projects have been established, creating employment opportunities and generating revenue for the state.

The growth of the mining sector in Oromia State has had a positive impact on the local economy. The industry has created job opportunities for thousands of people, both directly and indirectly. It has also stimulated the growth of supporting industries, such as transportation, construction, and services, leading to improved livelihoods and increased income for the local population.

Despite its positive contributions, the mining sector in Oromia State faces certain challenges and concerns. One of the primary challenges is the need to ensure responsible and sustainable mining practices to minimize the environmental impact of mining operations. Proper management of waste, water resources, and land reclamation are essential to mitigate the potential negative effects on ecosystems and local communities.

Another crucial aspect of the mining sector in Oromia State is community engagement and benefit sharing. It is essential to establish effective mechanisms for involving local communities in decision-making processes and ensuring that they receive a fair share of the benefits derived from mining activities. This can include infrastructure development, education, healthcare, and other social welfare initiatives.

The mining sector in Oromia State holds



Gold mining in Ethiopia is promising

tremendous potential for further growth and development. As technology advances and exploration techniques improve, new mineral deposits may be discovered, expanding the resource base and attracting additional investments. Moreover, the government's commitment to promoting the mining sector and improving the investment climate bodes well for the future prospects of the industry.

The mining sector in Oromia State, Ethiopia, has experienced significant growth and has become an important driver of economic development. The region's rich mineral resources, coupled with government initiatives and policies, have attracted investments and created employment opportunities. However, it is crucial to address environmental concerns and ensure community engagement and benefit sharing to sustain the sector's growth. With responsible mining practices and continued government support, the mining sector in Oromia State has the potential to contribute significantly to the region's prosperity and development in the years to come.

The Ministry of Mines revealed that 287.28 million USD was secured from minerals export during the last nine months of the current fiscal year.

Mines State Minister Million Mathewos told The Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) that a plan was set to earn 387.28 million USD from minerals export for the reported period while the performance achieved 74.11 % of the target

According to him, 3,023 tons of gold, 69.79 tons of tantalum, 11,176 tons of lithium ore, 100,563 tons of ornamental minerals and 32,141 tons of industrial minerals were exported to the foreign market during the last nine months. The income was made by supplying over 43,491 tons of minerals to the foreign market. This current revenue surpassed that of the past year same period by 114.19 million USD.

The State Minister also noted that apart from the mining expenses business, 173.18 million Birr income was obtained from royalty, community development fund and licensing in the reported period. "The aim is to increase the international market networks by attracting those who have the capacity and experience to participate in the mining industry."

Efforts have been made to promote Ethiopia's

mineral potentials in two rounds of the Mining and Technology Expo, as well as in the international mining conference in Australia and South Africa.

Due attention has been given to enable Ethiopia to utilize its potential in the mining sector. Accordingly, the Mining Council has been formed and put into action to ensure that projects started in the sector are completed on time.

To increase import substitution, monitoring and support activities have been done for companies engaged in coal washing, ceramic, marble, granite and terrazzo products and increase their performance, Million remarked.

According to scholars and experts on the sector, Ethiopian government should establish a clear legal and regulatory framework for mineral extraction in Oromia, ensuring that it is aligned with national laws and international best practices. This framework should cover areas such as licensing, environmental protection, labor rights, revenue sharing, and community consultation.

The government needs to actively engage with local communities, including the Oromo people, to understand their concerns, address grievances, and ensure that the benefits of mineral extraction are shared equitably. Meaningful participation and consultation can help build trust and mitigate potential conflicts.

The Ethiopian government must prioritize environmental sustainability by implementing measures to minimize the impact of mining activities on ecosystems, water sources, and biodiversity. This may involve conducting comprehensive environmental assessments, enforcing strict regulations, and promoting responsible mining practices.

To effectively exploit mineral resources, the government should invest in essential infrastructure such as roads, railways, power supply, and telecommunications. Developing infrastructure will facilitate transportation, reduce costs, and attract private investment in the sector.

The government should focus on building the technical and managerial capacity of its institutions responsible for mineral extraction. This includes training personnel in

geology, mining engineering, environmental management, and regulatory oversight, which will enhance the sector's efficiency and effectiveness.

The government will be advised to opt to create an attractive investment climate by streamlining bureaucratic procedures, ensuring transparency, and offering incentives to domestic and foreign investors interested in the mineral sector. This can help attract capital, technology, and expertise to support sustainable and responsible mining operations.

The Ethiopian government should establish robust systems for revenue collection, management, and distribution to ensure that the benefits from mineral extraction are shared fairly. Transparent mechanisms for tax collection and revenue allocation can contribute to economic development, infrastructure investment, and social programs.

The government should encourage local economic development by promoting linkages between the mineral sector and other industries. This can be achieved through initiatives such as local procurement requirements, job creation, skills development, and the development of downstream industries that utilize mineral resources.

The government should require mining companies to fulfill their social responsibilities by investing in community development projects, such as education, healthcare, infrastructure, and livelihood diversification. This can help alleviate poverty, improve living conditions, and foster sustainable development in the region.

The government should establish effective monitoring and enforcement mechanisms to ensure compliance with mining regulations, environmental standards, and social obligations. Regular inspections, audits, and penalties for non-compliance can promote responsible mining practices and safeguard the interests of local communities.

These considerations provide a starting point for the Ethiopian government to maximize the benefits of mineral extraction in Oromia. It is crucial to adapt these suggestions to the specific context, taking into account local dynamics, stakeholder input, and evolving industry practices.

Art & Culture



CHRIST MY MASTER IS AT MY DOOR

BY GEDION CECIL

He whispered to me in his still soft voice
 Whispers from eternity in my broken heart.
 He directs my thoughts by the Holy Spirit
 Conquering my mind to do His will.
 He walked on the seas in the vision of my eyes
 Placing his nailed scared hands upon my head,
 I bow to him as if I am dead,
 Praying in my heart in the voice of my mind.
 O Christ my master you died to save us all!
 In this sinful world where sinners rise and fall.
 You came to my soul and gave me a call
 To preach your eternal words to one and all.
 Help my weak soul to comprehend

Thee Where I live in a world of misery.
 Open my eyes to see you when I pray
 For my sinful soul to live to see another day.
 You captivate my heart for me to fall in love with you
 To write profound philosophy to heal this world.
 O Christ my master your Spirit lives in the voice of the wind,
 The sea exists in the palm of your hands.
 The earth stood still by the blink of your eyes
 You are my beginning and ending
 Living in my breath as my blessed savior.
 I see you coming and going like the waves
 In the seas Stealing my dreams in this world of vanity.
 O steal me away O Lord in your mansion far above!
 Guide my soul to Thee for me to fall in love.

From “The Everlasting Mercy”



BY JOHN MASEFIELD

O Christ who holds the open gate,
 O Christ who drives the furrow straight,
 O Christ, the plough, O Christ, the laughter
 Of holy white birds flying after,
 Lo, all my heart's field red and torn,
 And Thou wilt bring the young green corn
 The young green corn divinely springing,
 The young green corn forever singing;
 And when the field is fresh and fair
 Thy blessed feet shall glitter there,
 And we will walk the weeded field,
 And tell the golden harvest's yield,
 The corn that makes the holy bread
 By which the soul of man is fed,
 The holy bread, the food unpriced,
 Thy everlasting mercy, Christ.

Science & Technology

Desta the Robot is encouraging youths to participate in AI industry

BY DARGIE KAHSAY

During the opening ceremony of the Startup Ethiopia Exhibition, launched on 08 April 2024 at the Science Museum, an Amharic speaking Robot, named Desta, attended the event. During the event, a lot of youths and students attended the ceremony and Desta the Robot made a speech to the youth generation about robot and AI technology.

Since then, Desta the Robot grabs the attention of the local media and the youth generation and children as well. The Amharic speaking robot, Desta the Robot, initiate the youth and school children to give attention for Artificial Intelligence (AI) and other emerging technologies of these era.

Following its display at the Science Museum during the Startup exhibition, Robot Desta performed a music show with the Ethiopian Jazz King, Mulatu Astatke, at Skylight Hotel. All these events made Desta the Robot more popular during the past weeks in Ethiopia. Following these events, Seifu Show producer Seifu Fantahun invited Desta the Robot for interview at his show and asked the robot in Amharic “it is my first time to make an interview with a robot...what is your feeling as you are the first robot presented in my show?”

Desta the Robot responded, “It is a popular show where figures come for interview, it is good opportunity to me to promote myself. I am excited to be here.” Then she warned him, “Please Seifu, don’t ask me my age and the questions like ‘are you married?’”. He asked the robot about her creator and the robot answered that it is a product of human beings. “I am a robot; in short I am manmade product”.

“iCog Labs and Ride bring me to Ethiopia. After I came here, Ethiopian Artificial Intelligence Institute helped me to speak Amharic language and while Ethio Telecom’s 5G networks make me active,” Desta the Robot stated during the interview. “Professionals in the technology industry especially AI professionals who are striving to create a better world created and helped me to perform like this. I speak Amharic with the help of computerized machines and I am the result of AI.”

AI is a programmed machine, computer program or robot performing different tasks based on installed programs. These days, the development of AI is transforming the technology industry. Using the installed programs and data, AI can learn whatever language within short period and is performing various tasks.

Bethelhem Dessie, Chief Advisor at iCog Labs Enterprise, said, ‘Desta the Robot’ comes to Ethiopia to promote technological developments and to initiate youths innovators engaged in the technology sector especially in the AI



Desta the Robot, wearing a traditional Ethiopian dress in display at the Science Museum during the Startup Ethiopia Exhibition

industry. As to her, iCog Labs is a research and development company based in Ethiopia collaborating with international AI research groups and serving customers around the world. It engaged in a variety of projects, specifically in artificial intelligence, mechanical learning based data analysis, computational linguistics, computer vision, mobile robots and cognitive robotics, cognitive architectures and artificial general intelligence.

According to Bethelhem, Desta the Robot came to Ethiopia in collaboration with Ethiopian Artificial Intelligence Institute (EAI), iCog Labs and Ride Transport service. iCog Labs has participated in developing the software part of ‘Desta the Robot’ and the EAI helped the robot to speak Amharic using its own applications installed language data.

During the display of Robot Desta at the Science Museum at the Startup Ethiopia Exhibition, children, youths and various sections of the society visited the robot. During the event, Finance State Minister Eyob Tekalign (PhD) stated that Ethiopia is investing its maximum efforts in developing and expanding emerging technologies like AI. Considering the development of the global technological advancements, the Ethiopian government is promoting technological advancements including AI and other emerging technologies.

The State Minister further noted that Robot Desta was made to speak Amharic language which shows Ethiopia’s unwavering commitment to come to closer to the technological age of AI and other

emerging technologies. As to him, Ethiopia is striving to realize Digital Ethiopia Strategy 2025 and working to realize prosperity. To realize the ambitious plans, Ethiopia makes technology among the top pillars of the national strategy. Considering the role of AI in the technology sector, by establishing AI institute, the country gives due attention for the development of AI and other emerging technologies.

For his part, Deputy Prime Minister Temesgen Tiruneh said that Ethiopia gives high priority for technology transfer and for the development of Artificial Intelligence. As to the Deputy Prime Minister, Ethiopia has been extensively working on the development of AI and technology transfer during the past five years extensively.

Temesgen further noted that the extensive investment of Ethiopia in developing AI and other technological developments is bringing promising results. Ethiopia understands the importance of AI early in the current technology age and strives to develop it locally. As to him, AI is important to address the challenges of African countries including Ethiopia. Considering its importance, Ethiopia is working to develop the emerging technology.

According to DPM Temesgen, developing AI technologies like Robot Desta will be intensified in realizing digital transformation of Ethiopia. Government is committed to support AI products and startups in the technology sector and to achieve digital transformation. Efforts are continued to create conducive ecosystem for the technology sector and to achieve

digital transformation by supporting and promoting innovators and startups.

To accelerate the efforts for the growth of the AI sector and other digital alternatives, in addition to infrastructural developments, creating institutions and adopting appropriate policies and strategies, Ethiopia establishes Digital Transformation Council (DTC). Combing the efforts and exploiting the opportunities, Ethiopia’s digital transformation will be intensified and accelerating the development of AI is crucial in this regard.

Worku Gachena, Director General of Ethiopia’s Artificial Intelligence Institute, noted for his part that AI is significant in supporting the digital transformation process in Ethiopia. He added that efforts are underway to use AI in the development of various sectors such as education, industry, health agriculture and other sectors. As to the Director General, the institute is striving for the development of AI and other emerging technologies.

In addition to its regular activities in developing AI infrastructure, professionals in the sector are creating conducive ecosystem for the emerging technology. EAI is investing in cultivating talented youths by organizing summer camps. Through its summer camp program, the institute in collaboration with other institutions is investing in cultivating the talent of youths in the sector so as to create future AI professionals. In supporting the local efforts in the AI sector, the initiatives like bringing Desta the Robot to promote and sensitize local efforts are crucial especially for the young generation.

Society

Easter is all about humility, meekness, forgiveness!!

BY LEULSEGED WORKU

The Passion Week that occurs before Easter Festival has a special value among the Christians. The week, also known as Holy Week, is exceptional among followers of the Ethiopian Orthodox Christian who spend the whole week praying, confessing their sins, kneeling down determinedly until they get exhausted and experiencing the power of forgiving. The death and resurrection of Jesus Christ is all about love, mercy and forgiveness. Through His death, He has conquered death and received all our punishment for sin. Through His resurrection, He gave life to our sinful nature.

While Ethiopians are preparing to mark the Easter Holiday, religious fathers are conveying their benediction to the faithful ones and instructing all Ethiopian Christians to mirror the life of Jesus Christ who is the center of Easter Holiday.

In an exclusive interview with *The Ethiopian Herald*, Evangelical Churches Fellowship of Ethiopia President Pastor Tsadiku Abdo said “We Ethiopians, people with centuries of harmonious relations and religious tolerance, should mark the festival with gratitude and humility in a manner adhering to the values of the religion.” While Jesus was in this world, He displayed what humbleness means to all human kinds through His action. He has also taught the meaning of meekness through His action to His disciples. This meekness and servant personality was not only displayed when He washed His disciples’ feet; but, when He abandoned all the glory and He decided to live among us.

Jesus’s life is a real manifestation of what kindness, humbleness or forgiveness means. All His teachings were centering on to love one another and to forgive enemies. Jesus Christ showed His humbleness when He rode a colt. In those times, kings and leaders used to ride horses which were the symbol of authority, and greatness. However, Jesus, while He was the Son of the living God, preferred to ride the Colt. This truly shows His meekness.

“We can learn a lot from Jesus’s humbleness. We are here in this world to love one another and show compassion to others. As human beings, we need to show meekness at the expense of pride; we should practice loving others at the expense of hatred.”

According to him, the other lesson



Pastor Tsadiku Abdo

we learn from the life of Jesus Christ is forgiveness. Despite all the cruelty he experienced in the hands of humankind while He had not done anything wrong or did not commit any crime, He was accused and brought before Pontius Pilate (Roman governor who presided at the final trial of Jesus Christ and gave the order for His crucifixion.) However, none of human beings’ cruelty affected Christ’s vision for salvation. He kept on loving people and his enemies. This is another great lesson to all of us. “We may have several causes that may lead us to hate people or to take revenge; unfortunately, none of them will bring a real solution or peace. We must learn the secret behind the power of forgiveness, loving our enemies so as to lead a stable life and keep harmonious relationships with others.”

One of the attributes of Jesus Christ is His love for His enemies. “This is what we should practice from his life. It is not difficult to love those individuals who love us or do something good to us. But the questions are, to what extent are we ready and have the gut to love our enemies? That is what Jesus did; and that is what we should practice.”

According to Tsadiku, hope is the other thing we Christians have got with the resurrection of Jesus Christ. With

discouraged when Jesus, whom they were expecting to free Israel from Roman’s rule, was crucified. They expected him to deliver Israel from Roman’s hand. However, this hope faded away immediately he was crucified. However, His resurrection witnessed the promise.

There are some individuals in Ethiopia who still see the dark cloud without considering the hope that lie ahead of the country.

There are still some people who are waiting for favorable opportunities to take revenge against their enemies. “But, this is not what Jesus taught human beings. He is our hope and a symbol of forgiveness.”

In his message to all Ethiopian Christians, Tsadiku said that Ethiopians have an age-old culture of living in tolerance and harmony. This culture is still intact. While marking Easter, we should consider all the forgiveness we have received from Jesus and the new life He gave to all humankind. This is what we should practice when we think of Easter. We must embrace the values of hope against hopelessness. His resurrection has reversed human meanness. Jesus even showed His unwavering love while He was in cross. This should be the quality of every faithful Christian. Indeed, Easter is a time of renewal and reflection for many people in Ethiopia and the whole world. It is a time to celebrate forgiveness, love and humility. Forgiveness is a central theme of Easter. As Christians commemorate the crucifixion of Jesus Christ and His resurrection, they are reminded of the ultimate act of forgiveness. Jesus died on the cross to atone for the sins of humanity, offering a path to redemption and forgiveness for all who believe in him.

Love is another important aspect of Easter. The crucifixion of Jesus is a good example of selfless love. This love is not just limited to the sacrifice that Jesus paid, but also extends to the love that Christians are called to show to others. It is a reminder that love is a powerful force that can overcome hatred and division. Humility is also a key virtue associated with Easter. Jesus’s willingness to suffer and die on the cross is seen as a demonstration of humility and selflessness. Christians are reminded to emulate this humility by putting the needs of others before their own and by recognizing their own shortcoming and weakness.

Easter is a time of renewal and reflection for many people in Ethiopia and the whole world. It is a time to celebrate forgiveness, love and humility

His birth, we Christians have received a gift of hope while we were hopeless. This hope is also manifested following Jesus’s crucifixion and resurrection.

Most of Jesus’s followers were



This is Ethiopia

Happy Ethiopian Easter!

BY TEWODROS KASSA

Ethiopian Easter, also known as *Fasika*, holds great significance in the Orthodox Christian community in Ethiopia. It is a time of deep spiritual reflection, fasting, and prayer leading up to the grand celebration on Easter Sunday. The holiday commemorates the resurrection of Jesus Christ and is one of the most important religious festivals in the country.

In Ethiopia, Easter (Fasika) is a joyous and vibrant celebration that holds a special place in the hearts of the people. The Ethiopian Easter celebration process is a unique and culturally rich experience that encompasses a blend of religious traditions, cultural practices, and community gatherings. From the preparation of special meals to the colorful rituals and ceremonies, Ethiopian Easter is a time of spiritual reflection, renewal, and unity.

Ethiopian Easter holds a deep religious significance for the Orthodox Christian community in Ethiopia. It commemorates the resurrection of Jesus Christ and is one of the most important holidays on the Ethiopian calendar. The celebration of Easter is a time for spiritual renewal, forgiveness, and gratitude for the sacrifices made by Jesus.

According to the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Church (EOTC), the Ethiopian Easter celebration process begins with the Lenten season, a period of fasting, prayer, and reflection. During Lent, believers abstain from meat and dairy products, as well as engage in acts of charity and self-discipline. The 55 days of fasting symbolize the 40 days Jesus spent in the desert and the 15 days the apostles spent mourning his death.

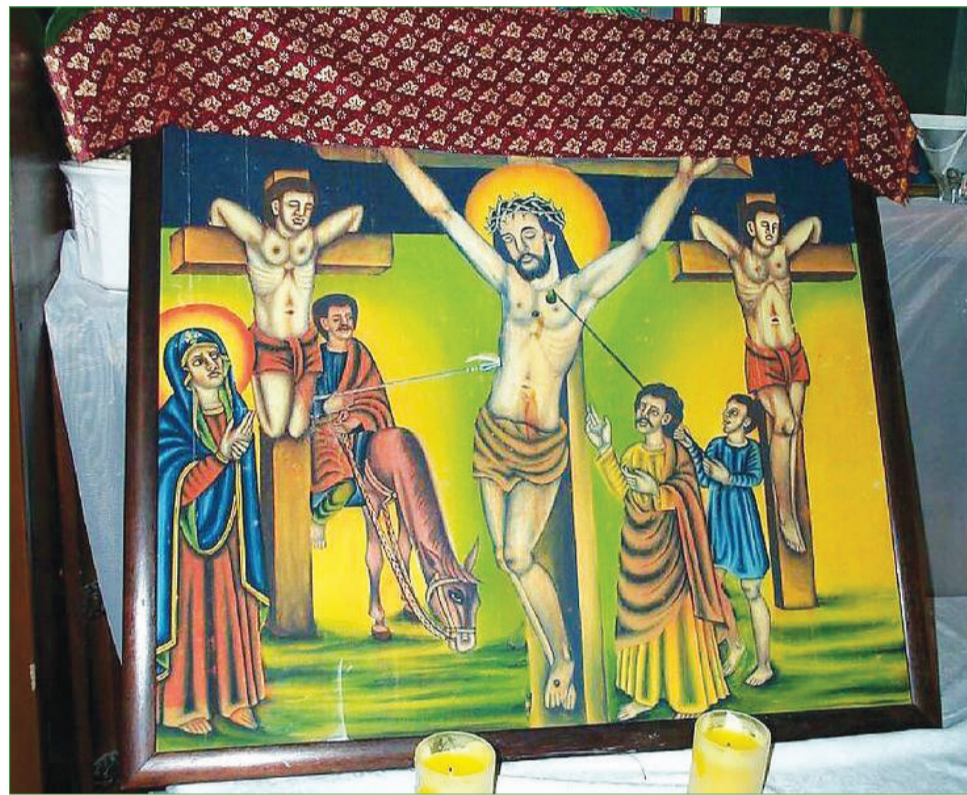
A week earlier the actual holiday, Fasika, Ethiopian Christians observe a week long special solemnities known as Passion Week/ Holy Week, as a time of devotion to the Passion of Jesus.

This Passion Week begins on Sunday (Palm Sunday) and continues until Easter Sunday.

During the week important religious activities that commemorate the passion and death of our Lord, Jesus Christ, and his victorious resurrection, his triumph over sin and death and his glorification by his Father will be carried out.

Palm Sunday: Hosaena

Palm Sunday marks the beginning of Holy Week and commemorates Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem. In Ethiopia, believers carry palm leaves and flowers to church as a symbol of victory and joy.



Special processions and prayers are held to honor Jesus' arrival in Jerusalem. The Palm Sunday commemoration will be celebrated a week before the resurrection.

Good Friday: Siklet

Good Friday is a day of mourning and reflection on the crucifixion of Jesus. In Ethiopia, believers attend church services and participate in processions that reenact the crucifixion. The day is marked by fasting, prayer, and contemplation of the sacrifice made by Jesus for humanity.

Easter Sunday: Tinsae

Easter Sunday is the culmination of the Ethiopian Easter celebration process and is a day of great rejoicing and festivity. Believers attend early morning church services, where the resurrection of Jesus is celebrated with hymns, prayers, and sermons. Following the service, families gather for a special Easter feast and ex-

change gifts of food and drink.

On Easter Sunday, Ethiopians participate in colorful and vibrant processions that are unlike any other. The faithful dress in their best traditional attire and carry intricately woven palm leaves as they walk to church for the Easter service. The streets are filled with singing, dancing, and jubilation as the community comes together to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

One of the most unique customs of Ethiopian Easter is the baking of special traditional foods and preparation of local beverages like Tej, Areki, Tela, among others.

The Blessing of the Tabots

More importantly, during the Easter service, the priests bless the Tabots, or replica of the Ark of the Covenant, which symbolizes the presence of God among

the people. The Tabots are beautifully decorated and carried in a procession around the church, followed by the faithful who bow down in reverence. This ritual is a powerful and moving experience that highlights the deep spiritual significance of Ethiopian Easter.

In addition, Ethiopian Easter is not only a religious holiday but also a time to celebrate Ethiopian culture and traditions. Many Ethiopians wear traditional clothing, participate in traditional dances, and exchange gifts with loved ones. On Easter morning, Ethiopians attend church services that last throughout the night and into the early hours of the morning. The church is filled with worshippers dressed in white traditional clothing, with women wearing beautiful white dresses and head coverings.

Easter in Ethiopia is a time of renewal, forgiveness, and hope. It symbolizes the triumph of life over death and serves as a reminder of the importance of faith and community. The rich symbolism of the holiday is reflected in the intricate rituals and customs observed by the Ethiopian Orthodox Christian community.

In sum, Ethiopian Easter is a unique and deeply meaningful celebration that combines centuries-old traditions with profound religious significance. The fasting, processions and blessing of the Tabots all contribute to the rich tapestry of Ethiopian Easter customs. It is a time of joy, reflection, and community, and it is a celebration that truly captures the spirit of the Ethiopian people. The Ethiopian Easter celebration process is a time of spiritual renewal, community bonding, and cultural heritage.

From the solemn days of Lent to the joyous celebrations of Easter Sunday, the Ethiopian Orthodox Christian community comes together to commemorate the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. The rich tapestry of traditions, rituals, and customs that make up the Ethiopian Easter celebration process reflects the deep spiritual devotion and cultural pride of the Ethiopian people. As believers gather to worship, fellowship, and feast during this special holiday, the true essence of Easter shines brightly in the heart of Ethiopia. Helping others is also the major message of the holiday and the faithful provide financial and in-kind supports to those in need to mark the day happily.

If you are curious to learn about the fascinating traditions and customs that make Ethiopian Easter celebration stand out you can explore the rich cultural heritage and unique practices that make this holiday so special in the hearts of Ethiopians.