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Ethiopia purchases 5 aircrafts to tackle desert locust, pests

BY MESERET BEHAILU

ADDIS ABABA – Ethiopia has launched the operation of 5 AT-802 agricultural aircrafts bought to combat cross-border desert locust and pests and boost productivity, Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) announced.

MoA's Plant Protection Lead Executive Officer, Belayenh Nigussie said that the government has bought the aircrafts at a cost of 10 million USD to fight against cross border Desert locust and Pests, as well as increase agricultural productivity.

According to him, Ethiopia had encountered

desert locust and pests between 2019 and 2020 that forced the country to combat the infestation with 13 airplanes through budgeting some 11 billion USD with the support of FAO.

See Ethiopia purchases ... page 3

ICAO thumbs up Ethiopia's aviation safety

BY ASHENAFI ANIMUT

ADDIS ABABA - After a meticulous security audit, the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) has confirmed that Ethiopia's airports are free from any aviation security threats, the Ethiopian Civil Aviation security disclosed.

In a press briefing he gave yesterday, National Intelligence and Security Service (NISS) for Civil Aviation Security Main Department Director

See ICAO ... page 2



EIC extends unwavering support to domestic investment initiatives

• inks agreement with Gada Special Economic Zone

BY FIKADU BELAY

ADDIS ABABA - The Ethiopian Investment Commission (EIC) said it is extending continuous support and facilitate

See EIC extends ... page 3

U-report to make young people active agents of change: Minister

• UNICEF pledges support to youth's dev't contribution

BY BETELHEM BEDLU

ADDIS ABABA - The launching of U-report is a bold step forward in fostering a culture of civic engagement, where young citizens are not merely bystanders, but active agents of change, it was stated.

Women and Social Affairs (MoWSA) Minister Ergoge Tesfaye (PhD) made the above remark during the official launching of U-Report, UNICEF's digital engagement platform for adolescents and young people here yesterday.

“The launch of U-Report in Ethiopia is not just a technological advancement; it is a testament to our commitment to empowering young people and giving them a voice in the decisions that shape their future. It is a

See U-report to ... page 3



Professionals insist on community mental health care availability

BY TSEGAYE TILAHUN

ADDIS ABABA - Mental health services should be expanded in all healthcare institutions and at community level to reduce its economic burdens, suggested Amanuel Mental Specialized Hospital professionals.

Amanuel Mental Specialized Hospital held a panel discussion and symposium yesterday on the future of mental health rehabilitation.

Addressing a keynote speech, Hospital Medical Director Kibrom Haile (MD) said that mental health services ought to be expanded and promoted in all health institutions especially at community level to reduce its economic burdens.

There are several biological, psychological and social factors that cause and aggravate psychotic disorders, he said, adding that administering only drug therapy is not sufficient to rehabilitate disorders.

Due to lack of community level services, there is no an opportunity that help citizens to reintegrating their community. Therefore, it requires stakeholders collaboration especially interventions of communities, he said.

For his part, Mental Health Specialist Prof. Atalay Alemu said that most of the time, the remedy for people with mental health problems in low income countries is merely drug therapy, not rehabilitation.

However, he said, the combination of drug therapy with rehabilitation is effective in recovering those people affected by mental health problems.

Some countries have approved mental health rehabilitation act to treat those affected people at the community level and facilitate them access to house, job, education, recreation and other opportunities. As result, mental health rehabilitation services and others have been providing for their families, he stated.

According to him, mental health care services have been improving from time to time, but it is not sufficient according to the number of population. Services provision has been expanding in all hospitals and health institutions across the country. The number of sector experts is growing.

Currently, there are some 150 psychiatrist specialists in the country. However, still now, the due emphasis is not given for mental health by stakeholders, he noted.

Asrat Kejela said that the ICAO auditors and experts have been conducting an extensive and critical investigation on eight elements and nine audit areas thereby confirming that Ethiopia is in a good position in aviation security

Asrat, who is also the ICAO National Coordinator, further noted that the country is strictly implementing the organization's policies, standards and directives that bolster its aviation safety.

After making wide-ranges of preparations, Ethiopia has not been involved in aviation security audit for the last 12 years due to

Heifer Ethiopia debuts youths' agri-tech challenge

BY YESUF ENDRIS

ADDIS ABABA- Heifer Ethiopia has officially launched its annual Agriculture, Youth and Technology (AYuTe) challenge.

This was disclosed yesterday during a press briefing organized to announce the commencement of the challenge. Program Director Heifer-Ethiopia, Timotiwos Borsamo on the occasion said that the competition is aimed to support youth innovators, particularly working on agriculture.

"The winner of this year's AYuTe Africa challenge was Ethiopian. We believe many Ethiopian youths have great innovative ideas. So, this competition is to initiate them to realize their dreams."

Two rounds had been held during the past two years. This is the third round that Heifer is providing a chance to youths concerned

to transform agriculture through innovation, Timotiwos indicated.

Harnessing the innovative potential of youth and emerging technologies is the motive of the challenge. "By recognizing and awarding young innovators, the AYuTe Ethiopia Challenge seeks to drive impactful change and uplift smallholder farmers across the continent, providing them with additional funding, support, and business mentorship to scale their innovations," he stated.

Last year, 528 young people participated in the AYuTe Africa Challenge in Ethiopia, coming forward with creative ideas and technology-driven solutions to address key challenges in Ethiopia's agriculture sector a total of 20,000 USD was awarded to three winners, alongside technical guidance from business leaders to support the implementation of their ideas, he said.

To participate in the Challenge, all Ethio-

pians between the age of 18 and 30 with creative technology ideas on improving agricultural sector can apply online. Then, panel of experts would shortlist 30 individuals. Three winners would receive 10,000, 6,500, and 3,500 USD award respectively. Technical supports would be also provided to them to grow their ideas to business.

The application form would stay open from June 4 to June 23, 2024, it was stated.

Ministry of Innovation and Technology (MoIT) Innovation Development CEO Selamyihun Adefris also stated that the government supports such initiatives by non-governmental bodies.

MoIT is also working in collaboration with funders supporting startups and innovators, he added.

It was learnt that the competition is a national edition of Heifer International's AYuTe Africa Challenge.



Tax collection in Ethiopia lags behind sub-Saharan: AACCSA

BY EYUEL KIFLU

ADDIS ABABA - Ethiopia's share of taxes as a percentage of its GDP is lower compared to other sub-Saharan African countries, Addis Ababa Chamber of Commerce and Sectorial Association (AACCSA) disclosed.

This revelation was made during a panel discussion on "the impact of the tax system and its implementation on the private sector," held by AACCSA yesterday.

AACCSA President, Mesenbet Shenkute stated in her opening remarks that the domestic revenue collected through taxes is one of the most important activities contributing to the national economy, but its share in the GDP is

not more than 10 percent.

Mesenbet also explained that some issues with the tax system are the main obstacles to the growth of the private sector in the country.

She said that the chamber has set up an advocacy and consultation platform to receive complaints from its taxpayer members engaged in various businesses and discuss these issues with the relevant parties to find solutions.

Shibeshi Bettemariam, the Secretary General of AACCSA, emphasized that one of the chamber's tasks is to ensure that laws and policies favourable to the private sector are enacted and implemented effectively.

He pointed out that the tax issue is one of the

most challenging business concerns that the private sector has raised.

Participants in the panel discussion also highlighted the need for tax reform, strong leadership, and political commitment to make the Ethiopian tax system more efficient and business-friendly.

The discussion also emphasized the significance of tax reform in attracting foreign direct investment and enhancing Ethiopia's competitiveness. It also highlighted the importance of the government consulting with taxpayers before implementing any tax-related policies.

The event included the presentation and discussion of various papers related to taxation in Ethiopia.

ICAO thumbs up...

COVID pandemic, internal conflicts and other causes."

The government along with NISS has been making remarkable reforms in the aviation industry through streamlined support in terms of structure, facility, human capital, leadership and technology to ensure secured aviation service and to remain the pride of Africa.

Furthermore, the leadership has also undertaken viable policy reforms and facilitates technology advancement, human resource development and has taken many steps to excel the aviation industry. Such measures have brought notable

outcomes in the sector, the director elaborated.

"The aviation industry has zero tolerance for security glitches," he stated, adding that the government has given prime attention for the sector and promote the aviation industry through sustainable technology-based reforms. "The institution has also established a cybersecurity center, risk assessment and quality departments to ensure the aviation excellence."

Apart from enabling Ethiopia to expand its routes without further security clearance and checkups, this great deed would also create a profound playground for other operators to

run their businesses and activities. "The robust aviation safety would be an opportunity for Ethiopia to promote its tourism industry and ushers its socio economic development."

Commending the unwavering efforts of stakeholders, the director called on all communities, pertinent actors in the industry to create better security culture via capacity building and ensure the core mission of the national flag carrier.

Ethiopia is among the 193 ICAO member states and the leading African country which signed the Chicago Convention in 1944, it was learned.

News

UNECA pushes for expanding Africa's capital market amid foreign debt

BY ZEKARIAS WOLDEMARIAM

ADDIS ABABA - African countries need to streamline efforts to reinforce local and regional capital markets as a means to boost private sector and finance economic development in local currency, said United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA).

Capital markets are vital to the economic development of Africa as they have the ability to channel domestic financial resources towards filling financial deficit as well as bringing the private sector and small and micro enterprises to the economy.

One of the challenges to Africa's economy is foreign debt which it has to be paid in foreign currency since the continent's foreign currency earning is so meager.

Yet it has the potential to cover its financial needs via mobilizing domestic financial resources and cover its needs in local currency.



"Why we need to mobilize more resources is first of all we have to make sure that we can support our private sector, because of the difficulties of African countries to tap into International markets. It's even more challenging for the private sector or the small enterprises." UNECA Finance and Domestic Resource Mobilization Section Chief Sonia Essobmagje said.

Therefore, if a country has to borrow money it is much easier if they borrow from domestic sources and in local currency. According to

Sonia, Africa's private sector cannot afford to obtain financing from external sources and the best option is to beef up the domestic ones that avail funding in local currency.

"This is what we want to tackle because ultimately if you want to reach agenda 2063 or even the SDGs we cannot do so without a strong private sector. We cannot do so if we don't have a strong financial sector, so it's also finding the right balance between the external financial flows"

Sonia reiterated that all African countries should Target to develop the financial sector and one of the best options is to have their own domestic capital Market, regional capital market or stock exchanges.

Despite their potential to mobilize local resources to support the economy, capital markets in Africa are still adventitious and face various challenges. For instance out of 54 countries in the continent some 28 stock exchanges operational.

Sonia also noted that there are still rooms

for improvement in terms of increasing the liquidity, diversifying the product offering in terms of on boarding additional stakeholders and key Market players.

In a bid to revamp the role of capital markets in mobilizing domestic resources, the UNECA had organized a three day training workshop for National Banks and capital markets from various African states.

Organized in collaboration with The Currency Exchange (TCX), Southern and Eastern Africa Trade and Development Bank (TDB) and FSDB, the three day training which started on 12 June aims to present some of the tools they can actually use and that can also ease, the management of reserves, the management of the monetary policy and how we can actually affect, the financial markets,

Sonia indicated that the participants would also discuss on how they meet risk, which is a vital issue to make sure that they can attract foreign investments.

Ethiopia...

Thanks to the reformist government's due attention to agriculture productivity and food security, the Ethiopia is now operating 5 agricultural aircrafts, which are equipped with the require technology to fight desert locust and wildfire, and spraying herbicides, planting seedlings, and sowing seeds among others, he added.

Belayenh further stated that MoA has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with neighboring countries like Somalia to provide the air tractors for rent to fight desert locust, pests, and birds.

National Airways PLC CEO, Captain Abera Lemi said, "Our main task is controlling and administering the effective operation of the air tractors. The air tractors have multilayered significance including for healthcare, mining exploration, technological transformation technology and knowledge apart from combating Deseret locust and pests."

Although the air tractors used for various purposes, lack of infrastructure, foreign currency crunch and the likes might pose a serious problem to avail the expected result in this regard, he noted.

Manufactured by the U.S., the air tractors named AT-802, are expected to pay back their expenses in 10 years, he indicated.

U-report to make young people...

bold step forward in fostering a culture of civic engagement, where young citizens are not merely bystanders, but active agents of change."

Giving a voice to the youth is not only investing in their future, but also tapping into a wellspring of fresh ideas, innovative solutions, and civic engagement that can transform societies, the minister emphasized.

According to Ergoge (PhD), the platform promotes constructive discussions among youth and provides them the opportunity to shares their concerns, participate in surveys and chatbot training and develop their skills while maintaining anonymity. It will also provide invaluable insights to policymakers and stakeholders, allowing government to make more informed decisions that better address the needs and aspirations of the next generation.

Expressing her Ministry's commitment to make that the rollout of U-Report is a resounding success; she indicated close collaboration has been formed with

UNICEF and other partners to develop a comprehensive recruitment strategy that will reach out to youth-led organizations, schools, and communities across Ethiopia. "Our goal is to engage huge number of young people actively through working strongly with different stakeholders."

UNICEF's Representative to Ethiopia Aboubacar Kampo said for his part that the U Report would give the youth the opportunity to share ideas and concerns on decision-making issues and policies.

Mentioning the U-report is the largest platform that the UNICEF has so far, the representative congratulated Ethiopian youth for being the 100th member of the platform which is driven by young people globally.

"Young people have great potential for fostering positive development and progress within any society. By investing in education, skill development, and creating an enabling environment, along with government and other partners we can empower young Ethiopians to unlock their full potential and contribute meaningfully

to their communities and beyond."

For the Ethiopia Youth Council President Fuad Gena, the platform would not only create solidarity among the youth but it would also ensure that their ideas are valued.

Besides empowering the youth to reach their fullest potential, the platform could also be instrumental in shaping policies and other important issues. "Accordingly, concerned bodies need to ensure the voices of the youth are not just heard but acted up on."

U-Report has become powerful tool for youth that is helping to shape policies and decisions in communities and it receiving an average of 2.4million responses per month globally. The platform is partnering with 35million U-Reporters in 99 countries.

U-Report, which is launched by MoWSA in partnership with UNICEF, is available via numerous social media, Telegram, WhatsApp and Facebook and Messenger through Amharic, Affan Ormo, Somali and Tigrinya languages.

EIC extends unwavering...

conditions for the full realization of homegrown and locally-owned development initiatives including economic zones.

EIC Deputy Commissioner Zeleke Temesegen (PhD) made the above the remark yesterday when the commission signed agreement with the Geda Special Economic Zone Corporation.

Zeleke (PhD) also noted that the agreement with the Geda Special Economic Zone Corporation represents a significant milestone in propelling Ethiopia's economic revolution.

The commission has taken bold steps to create a favorable business environment, promote investment alternatives, and attract the

Foreign Direct Investment inflow and expanding industries within the country. Such measures are instrumental in elevating Ethiopia's economy to new heights through the implementation of various projects. "The agreement will further strengthen our efforts and significantly contributes to the country's economic progress," he elaborated.

In his remarks at the occasion, the Geda Special Economic Zone Corporation Director General Motuma Temesegen expressed the commitment to fully utilize the designated area and invest a total capital outlay of 120 million USD. The Geda Special Economic Zone will cover 3,114 hectares of land, with plans to expand it to 24,000 hectares in the same vicinity.

The corporation was established with the goal of building a prominent economic center in Africa. The project is expected to have a substantial economic impact, providing opportunities for enterprises, expanding industries, promoting technology transfer, sub-developers, operators, and other end-users across a range of sectors, including logistics, agro-processing, real estate, and manufacturing.

The project's implementation is expected to have far-reaching benefits for the local community and the country at large. Generally, it will facilitate the flow of foreign and local investments across various sectors, including logistics, agro-processing, real estate,

and manufacturing. This, in turn, will augment export earnings, employment opportunities, and local linkages, Motuma added.

Zeleke further reiterated the government's steadfast support and commitment to facilitate the consolidation of the Geda Special Economic Zone, which aligns with Ethiopia's national investment and growth policies.

The project is anticipated to boost foreign and local investment, enhance export earnings, create more jobs, and strengthen local linkages thereby contributing to Ethiopia's broader economic progress, the deputy commissioner remarked.

Opinion

Threat of misinformation, disinformation in the digital age

BY ADDISALEM MULAT

With 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 including Ethiopia.

For the sake of truth, fake news and misinformation have the potential of taking one's country into bottomless pit at the earliest possible time. In the present climate, from advanced to developing nations, the world is grappling with the rise of misinformation. In a sharp contradiction to the essences of journalism, even some international media outlets are either sending a tsunami of misinformation or being used as tool for disinformation.

As always for the benefit of bringing about their hidden agenda going on behind closed curtains, some media outlets have been pulling out all the stops working in close cooperation with the low-rated international media outlets with a focus on undermining positive developments surfacing in the length and breadth of the country.

The Ethiopian Media Authority disclosed that all communication structures should provide the media with proactive information in a bid to combat fake news and abolish from the face of the earth.

In recent times, Mohammed Edris, the Authority's Director General told the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) that it is high time right now to make communication structures modern and they should provide the media with relevant information without any hesitation especially in this digital era via avoiding spirit of entertaining fabricated stories in the country.

As to him, the media should establish infrastructure, information, and develop in technology to bring about significant outcome out of it. Therefore, respecting the public interest and disseminating timely information would play a paramount role in fighting fake news.

"The media has a potential of bringing social, economic, political, and other changes if it is led by true leaders following proper manner. Nowadays, there are some irresponsible Media outlets that are disseminating fake news and creating a big gap among the community," the director added.

The media by itself could play significant role in combating fake news and hate speech across the country. Therefore, it is high time to use the full potential of the Media to encourage the country and its people. In this regard, the media is also responsible to build bright tomorrow for the generation to come through cooperatively working with the government and its people.

Between truth and deception, disinformation has the ability to produce complex notions or overlap with other profound consequences. Some of these include scepticism and uncertainty, societal divisions and polarization,



and the manipulation of emotions, illustrating how disinformation paints a challenging picture.

Individuals become overly cautious and question the authenticity of information. In such an atmosphere, documentation can be a safeguard against disinformation. To counter this, critical thinking, rigorous sourcing and citing, and accurate record-keeping are all essential tools to counter doubt and provide credible, trustworthy information, according to information obtained from an article.

To everyone's dismay, nothing makes some media outlets happier than dragging through the mud the actual achievements unfolding in the left, right and center of the country.

It is common knowledge that some media outlets have been getting off journalism ethics and standards and becoming involved in a smear campaign against the positive development taking place in the country on the subject of the Pretoria peace agreement.

It should be borne in mind that through the unflinching stance of the government and the people of Ethiopia, the peace deal that has been brokered by the African Union ended up accomplishing the sought-after goal in the shortest possible time.

Though the achievement of the peace talks managed to win the hearts and minds of each and every one, some foreign entities that are not interested in the peace agreement have been engaged in dragging through the mud positive achievements of the country. Even after the peace deal has been reached, some disgraced international media outlets left no stone unturned to perplex the wider international community with a wide spectrum of cock and bull stories.

As the global community embarked on knowing the evil mission of some low-rated media outlets, they set in motion brushing aside their bogus news stories that do not reflect the existing reality on the ground.

It is highlighted that in earlier times, a lot of efforts have been made over and over again to undermine the African Union-led peace talks brushing aside the phrase African solutions to African problems. However, through the passage of time, the whole thing kick-started bearing fruits and becoming the talk of the entire world. Though some entities spared no effort to cast a damper on the efforts of the government by coming up with layers of treacheries, all

their efforts have gone for nothing.

Following the peace deal that had been held in Pretoria Ethiopians from all walks of life expressed their innermost feelings and infinite happiness. Regardless of the fact that a lot of efforts have been made by some foreign entities to foil the peace process under the guise of a number of weak reasons, they failed to achieve the desired goal.

Regardless of the fact that Ethiopia's adversaries know the hidden mischievous going on behind closed curtains, they continued weaning themselves from the unvarnished truth and perplexing the wider international community by bringing a wide spectrum of fictitious stories into play.

In a previous interview with the Ethiopian Press Agency, Anteneh Tsegaye (PhD), School of Journalism and Communication, Addis Ababa University, said that the growth and diversification of the media industry have brought about both positive and negative consequences.

"On one hand, it has provided individuals with access to a wide range of perspectives and opinions, promoting a more inclusive and democratic society. However, on the other hand, this expansion has also created opportunities for certain groups or individuals to exploit the media platforms as a means to incite unrest and discord within communities," Anteneh said.

The fact that the majority of false information is well planned and targeted and the negative effect it has on the public is devastating, he said adding that 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.

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 issue of ineffective regulation regarding social media platforms has exacerbated the problem. 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.

The absence of effective social media regulation that ensures the accountability of violators has aggravated the problem. The hate speech and disinformation law gives protection to public figures, and politicians, among others. Nonetheless, mostly these are the ones who are spreading disinformation.

The fact that the majority of false information is well planned and targeted and the negative effect it has on the public is devastating, he said adding that false information is widely shared due to the nature of the platforms regardless of Ethiopia's limited internet penetration.

Institutions, on the one hand, should introduce and promote their official social media accounts as well as must be alert in unveiling false information. Moreover, activities that could enhance the public's media literacy must be carried out through the involvement of public figures, religious institutions, and higher education institutions.

Ethiopia is undertaking quite a lot of activities to put the system in place. The government's close partnership with owners of social media platforms including Facebook and YouTube is also beneficial to hold individuals involved in disinformation and hate speech accountable.

Prior research on misinformation in social media has highlighted various characteristics of misinformation and interventions thereof in different contexts. The issue of misinformation has become dominant with the rise of social media, attracting scholarly attention, particularly after the 2016 USA Presidential election, when misinformation apparently influenced the election results, according to an article.

The word 'misinformation' was listed as one of the global risks by the World Economic Forum. A similar term that is popular and confusing along with misinformation is 'disinformation'. It is defined as the information that is fake or misleading, and unlike misinformation, spreads intentionally. Disinformation campaigns are often seen in a political context where state actors create them for political gains.

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

Editorial

'Self-reliance' on the spotlight

'A blessing and a curse' can best describe Africa's natural resources as the naturally rich continent remains poor. And, the paradox has continued to this very day despite little headways.

Although not to the extent and ill-intended old stereotyping against Africa, the continent fails to feed its burgeoning population. And millions of Africans depend on the goodwill and assistance of international donors. As much as the good things happening in the continent, natural and man-made menaces are already leaving millions of Africans in need of daily aid support. The severe ramification of climate change which has increased in frequency and intensity in Africa has resulted in droughts and famines.

In contrast to the grim reality, the continent ticks all the boxes to feed the entire world. Having 65 per cent of uncultivated land, and over 70 per cent young population, Africa indeed with the right policies and strategies, Africa has the potential to substitute dependency with self-sufficiency.

And the sharp growth in the number of global population and the ever-increasing impact of climate change and war and conflicts are expected to demand for food. Despite the long way to walk the talks, there is now increased ambition and push from the African side to encourage trade and discourage aid. Nations have begun investing aggressively in transforming the agriculture sector through innovation and technology.

Despite the same challenges facing the country over the years, Ethiopia has been doing its level best to secure self-sufficiency in food and curtail aid dependency. From the "Bounty of the Basket" (Ye Lemat Tirufat) initiative to the summer irrigated wheat project, Ethiopia has been taking a wide range of activities to scale up the performance of its agriculture sector. Encouraging results have been made and the country plans to further zoom in on the projects.

Lately, speaking after the 100-day evaluation meeting, Deputy Prime Minister Temesgen Tirunch disclosed that concerted efforts have been underway to end aid dependency in Ethiopia by developing potential natural resources.

The performance evaluation focused on the performance of the macro-economy and the major sectors, local media reported.

High yield was obtained from summer irrigation, he said, adding that rice cultivation and crop cultivation in general gave abundant harvests. In addition to implementing initiatives, numerous forums have been held with the public in regions to ensure food sovereignty, Temesgen pointed out.

Here, we are reminded that government officials conducted consultations with communities in various parts of the country over the last two weeks to realize a transformative shift in the agricultural sector. The forums were imperative to shape the collective psyche towards self-reliance.

"The government is ready to work day and night with the hardworking people of Ethiopia to increase productivity by utilizing the fertile soil and water and end the country's history of aid dependency."

In this regard, the people who participated in the forums have affirmed their determination to stop aid dependence, he said, explaining that this was one of the directions set by the 100-day performance evaluation meeting.

The country's ambition relies on the ability to accelerate adoption and scale up promising projects like the aforementioned ones.

While the Ethiopian government has recognized the importance of ending dependency and food insecurity, now it is time for all to move from words to actions.



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Opinion

Transitional justice coming closer to practical implementation

BY GIRMACHEW GASHAW

The process of acknowledging, prosecuting, compensating, and forgiving past crimes during a period of rebuilding after conflict is commonly referred to as "transitional justice." It is important to acknowledge that each post-conflict situation is unique and requires different measures to address past wrongs.

All concerned stakeholders should also make sure that the efforts that have been progressing so far would effectively bring about the desired result. Hence, after the approval of the policy document the works of transitional justice are now closer to coming to the ground as the government is preparing legal framework for the establishment of institutions for the implementation of the transitional justice.

At this moment, Ethiopia has been making preparations for major legal, procedural, and content documents to establish institutions critical for the implementation of Transitional Justice (TJ).

The 100-day Council of Ministers performance evaluation meeting in the presence of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed recently took place.

During the meeting, an evaluation report on the performance and state of affairs of legal and justice affairs was presented. According to the report, the TJ Policy document was approved following extensive studies and consultations conducted with stakeholders in an inclusive and participatory manner.

A roadmap was prepared to implement the policy and legal, procedural and content development activities are underway to establish the institutions required to effectively implement the policy. The laws and procedures have been prepared and implemented to conduct reforms in the justice system at national and regional levels.

Activities are also being carried out to implement the proclamation on the procedures of the justice administration system and to ratify and implement the criminal procedure code. A model law has been prepared concerning the use of traditional courts and dispatched to regional states.

The Ministry of justice will further focus on improving the administration of society-focused justice to ensure that citizens receive better services at the community level.

Proclamation on the management of legal administrative procedures and criminal justice procedures are several areas on which the ministry will focus in the future.

The issue of transitional justice has been raised and discussed at different times, especially since the regime change was announced in 2017/18. Various measures have been taken following the statement that the reform government led by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed was announced that it

strives for reform and democratic transition.

Scholarly consultations have been held around the concept and its implementation. It was noted that transitional justice was raised when prisoners were released to facilitate planned national consultations. The government announced that victims' injuries would be compensated through transitional justice.

Various questions have been raised about whether it is possible to ensure justice and achieve national reconciliation in such a transitional period. Transitional justice is a system that transitions from past justice that punishes a few criminals to a new, peaceful, and democratic system. It addresses how serious violations of rights are judged during this transition.

Transitional justice is applied when there are cases that cannot be tried by the regular justice system and there are hundreds or thousands of offenders. It aims to forgive those who are to be pardoned based on the level of their crimes. The issue of transitional justice resurfaces when human rights violations worsen, highlighting the need for this system.

Serious violations have occurred at various times, including the deadly war in the northern part of the country. Transitional justice goes beyond the normal judicial system to address these violations and avoid grudges and grievances. The Peace Commission was established to facilitate this process, although its role has not met expectations.

Transitional justice is essential for addressing past issues and moving towards reconciliation. It allows for questioning and transcending past injustices, leading to a new phase of development. However, some scholars doubt the effectiveness of transitional justice in Ethiopia's current situation.

While transitional justice is important, some believe it may not bring about significant change. Questions remain about achieving justice in a transitional period where conflicts are ongoing. Some fear that the demands of victims may be overshadowed, while others view transitional justice as part of conflict resolution.

It is crucial to define clear objectives in transitional justice, including investigating crimes, reporting truth, and holding serious criminals accountable. Victims should receive answers and compensations to promote reconciliation in society. Transitional justice should focus on compensating the most affected parts of society and promoting development through various social treatment methods.

For this to happen, each and every citizen should play their part as there is no way out strategy better than ensuring transitional justice in the country and rebuild our country again. Every stakeholder should be ready for reconciliation and Transitional Justice!

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

Business & Economy

Accelerating poverty reduction via cooperation

BY ABEBE WOLDEGIORGIS

Since the imperial era, for the last 70 years, Ethiopia has established good diplomatic relations with the countries across the globe. Through utilizing its diplomatic corridor, it could obtain financial, technical and consultancy supports. It enabled to establish educational institutions from the elementary level up to the tertiary levels and produced well-trained human resources used as inputs in various economic sectors. During his formative years, the Emperor laid the foundation which gears the nation towards economic growth with the support of the western countries.

In the 1950s, with the support of the US based Oklahoma University, Ethiopia was able to establish the Haromaya Agricultural College. The institute has played pivotal role in supplying trained youth to the agricultural market and supported the nation that is striving to improve farming practices through providing extension services to farmers. Similarly, Ambo and Jimma agricultural colleges were established with the financial support of the West and Scandinavian countries. Both are playing vital roles in supplying trained manpower to the market since then.

In the 1960s, the Bahir Dar Polytechnic College was established by the technical and financial support of the then Soviet Union and the institute contributed to the nation's economic growth by supplying technicians to the manufacturing sector. The Addis Ababa University, since it was established in 1950s by the support of the western countries, has produced well educated graduates both in social and natural science fields.

The country also mobilized financial resource from the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and from the western countries through bilateral relations and more or less the system witnessed economic growth.

During the Derg era, Ethiopia brought to halt its relation with the West due to ideological difference and rather established strong diplomatic ties with the socialist countries. It obtained more of military support from these countries than any other aid. The drying up of financial and economic supports from the West and the internal political instability dragged the nation's economic growth backward. The result had been a negative economic progress.

In 1991, when the defunct EPRDF regime assumed power, it reinvigorated Ethiopia's relation with the West and established good relations based on mutual benefit. Looking the political development in Ethiopia optimistically, they supported the government by providing billions of Dollars in the form of loan and grant and the regime had been able to stimulate the economy and registered substantial economic growth.

Ethiopia's economy during the EPRDF regime had achieved a growth rated 9.9% on average between the years 2007 and 2018.

The regime had also established strong economic ties with China and obtained supports particularly one that was funneled to the construction sector, infrastructure such as roads and rail ways boomed as a result. The electrified Addis Ababa Light Rail Transit and the Ethio- Djibouti rail way can be taken as good examples. Hydropower dams, wind farms and industry parks are also mushroomed. The flourishing of foreign investment was also the other benefits of the relations.

Ethiopia's relation with the Western and Eastern World has steadily continued well during the current government that is led by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) and the financial and economic support particularly from the West has continued based on the multilateral and bilateral relations until the outbreak of the war in the northern part of Ethiopia in 2021.

Ethiopia is the second most populous nation in Africa after Nigeria with about 123 million people and one of the fastest-growing economies in the region, with an estimated 7.2% growth in the FY 2022/23, according to the World Bank. However, it is also underdeveloped with a per capita income of about USD 1,020. Aiming to reverse this scenario, Ethiopia's current incumbent aspires to reach lower-middle-income status by 2030.

The consistently high economic growth over the last decade has resulted in positive trends in poverty reduction in both urban and rural areas. The share of the population living below poverty line decreased from 30% in 2019 to 24% in 2024 and human development indicators improved as well. Ethiopia's strong growth rate builds on the government's homegrown economic reform and the ten years perspective development plan. Among other factors, the growth is led by capital accumulation, intensifying agriculture, expanding manufacturing sector focusing on agro-processing and import substitution among others. Ethiopia's real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth was slowed down from the year 2019/20 to 2021/22 due to multiple shocks including COVID-19. However, agriculture, where over 70% of the population is employed, was not significantly affected by

the COVID-19 pandemic, and its contribution to the growth slightly improved compared to previous years.

In addition, because of the outbreak of war in the northern part of the country, the Western World, particularly, the US unfairly accused Ethiopia for the alleged violation of human rights, war crime, and sexual harassment and the like consequently imposed unilateral sanction.

Nevertheless, following the Pretoria Peace Agreement reached between the government of Ethiopia and the TPLF in 2022, both parties silenced the guns and halted the war and later, the West welcomed the progress and has improved its relations with Ethiopia. Currently, Ethiopia enjoys good relations both with the Western and Eastern Countries. In addition, new horizons of financial sources are also emerging.

In this regard, one can mention the BRICS bloc that Ethiopia has joined recently as a good example. It has brought better opportunity to the country to attain economic progress through obtaining access to loan from the member countries; to tap in their market; to attract foreign investment and take the opportunities for knowledge and technology transfer.

As it is understood, when compared to the other BRICS member countries, Ethiopia's economy is small but the country is located in the strategically important area of the Horn of Africa which is flanked with the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean. Red Sea is the water root where 40% of the world's petroleum oil is transported to Europe via Suez Canal. This again elevates the strategic importance of the nation in the Horn of African region. Attracted by the strategic value of the area, Western Countries such as USA, France, China, and Turkey and Russia established their military base in Djibouti, Somalia and Port Sudan. Hence, Ethiopia must exploit its strategic significance through strengthening its multilateral relations.

Ethiopia's aspiration of becoming a middle income economy needs a huge finance. The country has embarked upon the second phase of the home-grown economic endeavors. The

plan aims to foster efficiency and introduce competition in key growth-enabling sectors such as agriculture, manufacturing, service, tourism, mining and others like energy, logistics, and telecom that improve the business climate, and address macroeconomic imbalances.

Ethiopia seeks to chart a development path that is sustainable and inclusive in order to accelerate poverty reduction and boost shared prosperity. Significant progress in job creation as well as good governance will be needed to ensure that growth is equitable across the society. Achieving these objectives require addressing key challenges, such as macro-economic imbalance that constrained private sector's development, structural transformation, job creation and reducing conflicts among others.

While exports and foreign direct investment rebounded in 2020/21 and jobs have been recovering, some lasting scars are likely to remain. Urban employment levels have not been fully recovered; some households and firms continue to report income losses and inflation needs more attention.

Food insecurity has continued to affect the nation's economic growth due to bad weather condition and related problems. Besides, locust invasion, conflicts, and global conditions are contributing for the skyrocketing inflation. Frequent severe weather condition, accompanied by long-term climate change is highly impacted the agriculture and pastoral livelihoods as well as food security. The 2022 drought is the worst in forty years' history of the country by severely affecting millions in the southern and eastern parts of the country.

The country's growing workforce (with roughly 2 million persons reaching working age per year), puts pressure on the absorption capacity of the labor market. It necessitates creating sufficient new jobs. In addition, exploring and exploiting natural resources through utilizing foreign and local investment is vital. Side by side with this, boosting export should be strengthened so that the nation can create wealth which could be used for poverty reduction.



Art & Culture

Adult Education-A promise still waiting fulfillment

BY MULUGETA GUDETA

Adult education in Ethiopia, otherwise known as literacy campaign, was, in the early days of the Ethiopian revolution of 1974, one of the key programs of the military administration whose leading objective was to give the rural and urban masses access to basic education centered on alphabetization. It was later on considered the key precondition for the economic development of the country. Since the time of the monarchy, education in Ethiopia was considered the engine of economic and social development.

Literacy, is defined as, "The ability to read and write at a designated level of proficiency. Literacy is more precisely defined as a technical capability to decode or reproduce written or printed signs, symbols, or letters combined into words. Traditionally, literacy has been closely associated with the alphabet and its role in written communication."

According to Encarta Encyclopedia, "Literacy is not an inborn human characteristic, but rather an ability that is learned, most often in schools. No correlation has been found between literacy and intelligence, but literacy and educational level are closely related. Experts have long considered literacy an important contribution to the healthy development of individuals and societies.

Adult literacy programs can be distinguished by the stages of literacy they address. Programs to counter below-functional literacy stress the development of decoding and word recognition, similar to the goals of early elementary schools, but they use materials more appropriate to an adult age. Programs that deal with development at the functional literacy level stress the use of reading to learn new information and to perform job-related tasks. Advanced literacy programs stress the development of higher-level skills needed for high school equivalency diplomas."

However, the adult literacy program under the Derg and in the context of the Revolution was designed as mobilization for the implementation of the Land Reform program that followed it. Critics of the regime however portrayed it as an attempt to neutralize opposition by sending tens of thousands of young high school and university students to the provinces in order to undermine their political activities.

The program was shaped after a similar program that was successful in Cuba in the early days of their revolution. "The great importance of reading ability is underscored by the growth of literacy programs in some Third World nations, as, for example, in Cuba. These programs, which generally send young people to rural areas to serve as teachers for illiterates in a national effort, often combine the teaching of reading with political instruction."

The launching of the Development Through Cooperation Campaign, otherwise known as the Zemecha back in 1976, was a massive mobilization of the educated youths of the country whose number exceeded 60,000, to take part in the first massive grassroots educational program. Its objective was ambitious indeed. In the long term, the program aimed at eradicating illiteracy from



Door Sticker used to indicate that a household is now free of illiteracy

the country while its short-term ambition was to allow a great number of peasants to acquire the basic skills of writing and reading in order to expedite the land reform program.

The Zemecha was not however the first program of alphabetization. Under the previous imperial administration, there was an alphabetization program such as "ye' fidel gebeya" literally meaning 'the market of alphabets'. It was not however as massive and widespread program as the Zemacha initiative whose scope covered the entire country and all sections of society and involving almost all the nationalities of the country.

The alphabetization campaign aimed at educating 19 million people throughout the country back in 1978. But, as the literacy campaign and other development objectives of the Zemecha that were expected to take place could not materialize in the following two years. The social and economic disruptions that followed the Land Reform program created so much chaos and upheavals that cut the program short. Young campaigners in many provinces clashed with landowners in the name of "class struggle" that led to the early interruption of the entire program together with the literacy campaign that was so promising at the beginning. Nevertheless, successful initiatives were taken to continue the program under the supervision of a national institution and a well-planned program. In the final analysis, the program proved untenable in the long-run due to the fact that it was put under the leadership of political institutions rather than under civic organization. And when the political process met formidable challenges, the literacy program simply stumbled or went out of steam. With the end of the Derg regime, it altogether disappeared for good, leaving behind only hazy memories of its ambitious beginnings.

In the last thirty years or so, the adult literacy program has almost ceased to exist. True, the adult literacy program of the Derg had clear political connotations and it was used for mass mobilization in support of the government whose program had socialist tinge. By definition, "Adult literacy programs assist adults to become literate and obtain the knowledge and skills necessary for employment and self-sufficiency to allow parents or guardians to obtain the educational skills necessary to become full partners in the educational development of their children."

While this program enjoyed considerable popular support at the beginning, it started to lose its momentum sooner than later. One reason was that the literacy campaign could not go beyond the objective of helping the population to read and write and do simple arithmetic. Once this objective was achieved, it could not proceed beyond it because the necessary preparations were not made to take it beyond its first phase.

True, millions of people had started to see the light of literacy for the first time in their lives. Older people in their 60s, 70s and even beyond went to attend literacy classes that were given at night as well as during the day, in the shadows of trees and in makeshift classes as well as in the rooms and premises of regular schools. Many people could sign on documents for the first time in their lives instead of putting their thumbs to ink and pressing them on papers and do simple arithmetical calculations as they did in the past. But all this effort went to waste soon after they graduated from literacy classes and stayed at home for lack of additional activities that could help them develop their skills further.

The post-literacy educational opportunity

was totally absent as functional literacy was non-existent and those who graduated from literacy classes could not link their newly acquired skills to promote their practical activities and their job prospects. Millions of people who were made literate in a short time had no alternative other than reverting to illiteracy as they forgot how to use their new skills that they acquired with so much dedication and so much enthusiasm.

Although some attempts were made to save the situation by creating what were called then centers for training adults who have acquired the literacy skills, this too proved untenable as neither adequate preparations and technical and financial resources that could support the new program were lacking. As some analysts indicated at that time and what they called "campaign fatigue" or "campaign burnout was one of the hurdles that prevented the campaign from continuing with renewed figure.

According to a document released at the time of the launching of the literacy program in Ethiopia, "When Ethiopia launched its National Literacy Campaign (NLC) in 1979, it was announced that illiteracy would be removed from the urban areas of the country by 1982 and from rural Ethiopia by 1987. By the end of the twelfth round of the campaign, in February 1985, 16.9 million youths and adults had been covered by the NLC and 12 million of them. Almost half of them female had earned literacy certificates after passing a test. These impressive results do not mean however that the program had achieved its objective."

This does not however mean that there was no improvement in the average literacy level of the country which was only 36.70% for a long time until 1994 while it has grown to 51.77% by 2017. There was also what was known as integrated functional adult education that was aimed at integrating basic literacy skills with livelihood of adults. This was also known as functional literacy. According to another information, "The Revolution of 1975 provided a springboard for further development especially in the areas of education and literacy. The literacy rate rose from 5% to the current 64%"

According to related information released in 2012, the adult literacy rate in Ethiopia has grown substantially. A breakdown of the literacy rate by region shows that "Addis Ababa Administrative Region was 93.8 percent, followed by Dire Dawa with 75.9% and Harar 71.2 percent. The lowest literacy rate was observed in Somali region with 30.5 %."

No serious attempt has been made to continue the failed legacy of the Derg's adult literacy program. However, such a program should have been dependant on the regime in power but on independent institutions or non-governmental organizations to ensure its continuity irrespective of the political system in place at a particular time. The now-defunct adult literacy program had started as a historic event and a positive initiative with the lofty objective of helping millions of people acquire the skills of writing and reading that could have served as bedrock of economic and social development. The vision was lofty indeed but the execution was sloppy and misguided.

Science & Technology

Cultivating technology startups, innovators at the grassroots level (Central Ethiopia organizes 1st science, innovation Expo)

BY DARGIE KAHSAY

Developing and promoting the science, technology, and innovation sector is among the priority national agendas of Ethiopia to realize prosperity. Within this context, the Ethiopian government, at the federal level, is taking various measures to create a conducive ecosystem for the sector and to promote local innovations and scientific research. In addition to that, organizing national exhibitions, trade fairs, and expos are among the initiatives being undertaken by the federal government to promote startups and new technological innovations. These continuous initiatives are developing innovations; inspiring young innovators and creating competition.

STRIDE Ethiopia Expo 2024, National Aviation Innovation Expo, Startup Ethiopia Expo, ICT Expo, and similar national events were organized only during this budget year targeting the promotion of the science, technology, digitalization, and innovation sectors at the federal level. Taking the federal government's initiatives, regional governments are giving due focus to the development of science, innovation, digitalization, and technological development at the grassroots level.

As Ethiopia gives special attention to the development of the science, digital, and technology sectors, it needs the local and regional governments' commitment to realize the initiative. Taking this federal government's initiative of promoting and supporting local innovators and technology companies, recently the Central Ethiopia Regional Government has organized the first-ever Science and Innovation Exhibition at Hosaena City. The first science and innovation exhibition of the regional



state was organized at Hosaena City where more than 100 innovators and technology companies presented their products.

While opening the exhibition, Endeshaw Tassew, Central Ethiopia National Regional State Chief Administrator, said that Ethiopia is working to realize the development of science, technology, and local innovations. Taking this initiative, the Central Ethiopia Regional Government gives due priority to the development of local innovations, technological developments, and scientific research. As to him, the regional government is committed to supporting youth innovators who are engaged in manufacturing problem-solving science and technological products.

The Chief Administrator, after visiting the

technological products and innovations presented at the expo said that there is a promising development in the science, technology, and innovation sector. As to him, a lot of innovative products that can solve societal problems are invented and presented at the expo. Hence, for him, supporting and promoting these local innovations and products of the youth generation would have multidimensional benefits for society and the nation at large.

Endeshaw noted that supporting and developing these local science, technology and innovation products helps in creating job opportunities, in technology transfer and for import substitution. The Expo and the panel discussion was organized under the theme: "Let us make Central Ethiopia a National Regional State hub for Science, Innovation, and Technology." At the event, more than 100 private and government companies engaged in science, innovation, and technology sectors comprised from districts and zonal levels from across the regional state presented their products. Students, teachers, private entrepreneurs, eight polytechnic colleges and other individual innovators were among the participants of the expo, according to Central Ethiopia Government Communication.

For his part, Dilamo Otre (PhD), Chief Whip, Central Ethiopia National Regional State noted during the panel discussion that promoting local innovations would solve local problems. As to him, considering the critical role of local innovations and scientific research, the regional government like the federal government is working for the development of innovations and startup technologies within the regional state.

"Science is a base for everything, and technology is an accelerator of development," Dilamo stated adding the innovational

products and startup technologies presented at the regional exhibition are promising products showcasing the efforts of the generation in the sector. As to him, the regional government will continue supporting and promoting such innovations and startup technologies within the region and calls the youth generation, students, and technology-based institutions within the region to continue their efforts in capitalizing their innovational and scientific ideas.

Central Ethiopia Regional Government Deputy Chief Administrator, Social Cluster Coordinator and Education Bureau head, Anteneh Fekadu for his part stated that science, technology and innovation sector is vital to ensure economic competitiveness and national sovereignty. For him, the secret behind the economic development of the developed world is science, technology and innovation. As to Anteneh, to achieve economic benefits of the people of the regional state, it is critical to promote and develop the science, technology and innovation sector.

Selamu Amado, Central Ethiopia Regional Government Science and Information Technology Bureau Head also said that science, innovation and technology sector is a critical sector to achieve overall national development. Considering its role, Ethiopia is working to realize strong science and technology sector. As to him, the Central Ethiopia Regional Government is also working to support and develop the sector. Realizing the technological developments and scientific researchers is critical for the overall development of the region Samuel stated adding developing sector needs strong collaboration and integration of all stakeholders assuring regional government's readiness to collaborate with all stakeholders for the development of the sector.

The locally manufactured mobile Tomato processing plant

BY DARGIE KAHSAY

During a recent "Ethiopia Tamrit" exhibition organized at Millennium Hall here in Addis Ababa, the Bishoftu Automotive Industry an affiliate part of Ethio Engineering Group presented a mobile Tomato processing plant.

Quality Assurance Department head with Bishoftu Automotive Industry head, Girmaye Leul told Ethiopian Press Agency that Bishoftu Automotive Industry by itself is comprises different manufacturing industries. As to him, Addis Machine Tools, Power Engineering which is transformer manufacturing industry, Adama Agricultural Equipment Manufacturing and Machineries manufacturing company in Debre Birhan City are among the nine industrial companies within the group.

The Tomato Processing Plant was manufactured by the Bishoftu Automotive Industry, Girmaye said. As to him, the Tomato Processing Plant is not an exception in manufactured mobile agro processing plant; the industry manufactures three



Mobile Tomato Processing Plant manufactured by Bishoftu Automotive Industry

different types of mobile agro processing plants. Tomato Processing Plant, Grains and Spices processing Plant and the Tomato Processing Plant are among the mobile plants manufactured by the industry targeting the agro processing sector.

The Mobile Tomato Agro processing Plant, according to the head, aims to easily reach in the agricultural fields to process the tomato product without transporting the raw tomato in to manufacturing plants found

far from the agricultural fields. As to him, by processing the tomato immediately at the farm land using the mobile processing machine, it helps to extend the lifetime of the tomato product which develops the gains of both the producers and buyers.

According to Girmaye the mobile processing plant saves tomato producers from product wastage during excess of product. "Tomato is time sensitive product and when excess product is produced, farmers were unable

to sell or to use the product. But, by easily processing the produced tomato, the mobile machine would save farmers from losing what they produced," he stated. This helps to widen the market accessibility of the product.

In addition to the producers, due to the seasonality of the product the price of the tomato market fluctuates. Hence, by processing the product during the excess product, the machine would help to provide processed tomato to the market. Hence, it also helps to stabilize the market. For Girmaye, the Mobile Tomato Processing Plant has the capacity to process up to 250 kilogram of tomato within an hour. Any by improving the boiler and machine capacity of the plant, efforts are underway to make the plant processing 500 kilogram per hour, he added.

The plant is easy to use both at rural and urban areas. It uses both electric and generator for energy. The machine is fully automated, according to the head and it can packed the processed product through pasteurized the processing.

Society

Expanding cancer treatment centers; to improving access to detect, treat, prevent cancers

BY MENGISTEAB TESHOME

Since recent decades, cancer is becoming more common and one of the public health burdens in Ethiopia. According to various studies conducted on cancer, the country's annual cancer incidence is increasing rapidly from year to year due to various reasons including poor public awareness regarding cancer, change in lifestyle, unhealthy food and consumer goods markets, consumption of alcohol and tobacco as well as failure to conduct checkups on a regular basis among others. And cancer deaths in Ethiopia are rising alarmingly. Worse than this, for the reason that most of the patients visit health facilities after the diseases get to advanced stages, it is lowering their survival rates and escalating the number of deaths in cancer.

A study carried out a year ago indicated that the country's annual cancer incidence is estimated to be around 60,960 cases, with an annual mortality of over 44,000. Breast cancer is the most common cancer in Ethiopia, accounting for 30.2 percent of all cases, followed by cervical (13.4 percent) and colorectal cancers (5.7 percent).

Surprisingly, even if some are preventable and at the same time curable if detected at early stage, such as breast cancer and cervical cancer, cancer has keeping on causing deaths and impacting the health, wellbeing and productivity of the society as a whole negatively.

Despite the activities exerted to strengthen cancer control efforts and lessen the burden of cancer incidence in the country through raising the awareness and knowledge of the public towards the significance of prevention, early detection, and follow up, the case is becoming one of leading causes of death.

To address the challenges and minimize the health burden of cancer and cancer related deaths, Ethiopia has developed a National Cancer Control Plan in 2015 and has put in place policies, strategies as well as programs to do away the impacts through collaboration. These days, though not enough, several activities that target to treat, control and restrain deaths due to cancer, including radiation therapy, are provided in limited health institutions.

As part of this effort, recently, Hawassa University has inaugurated a cancer treating center built at a cost of one billion Birr, yet another latest inclusion to the health center it is running.

The medical facility was inaugurated in the presence of Health State Minister Dereje Dhuguma (MD), Deputy President of Sidama State Beyene Barasa, President of Hawassa University Ayano Berasso (PhD), University's community and concerned bodies.

The facility comprises cancer radiation therapy center, forensic and toxicology monitoring, model pharmacy, psychiatry



treatment center, pediatrics and intensive care services.

Expanding facilities for cancer radiation therapy in Ethiopia and intensive care services are vital as the cost of travelling abroad to get treatment is unbearable.

According to sources, the cancer burden in Ethiopia is significant and; of its more than 100 million populations, estimated to be nearly 80000 people were diagnosed with cancer in 2022 and 55000 people died.

All cancer patients require access to diagnostic imaging services to inform their course of treatment, and approximately 50 percent need access to radiation therapy, however, currently only possible to give this service at three public hospitals in the country. Waiting times are long, and most patients only seek medical help when their cancer is already advanced, reducing their chances of survival.

Understanding this predicament, the federal government has made a policy change and made a strategic plan six years ago in order to give due emphasis and combat cancer through decentralizing chemotherapy and radiotherapy services across the country.

Hawassa Cancer Treatment Center is the fourth in Ethiopia after Jimma, Harar and Addis Ababa, and it is said to be another latest move to provide treatment to cancer patients from all over the country.

Meanwhile, it was learned that on May 8th, 2024 Hawassa University Comprehensive Specialized Hospital treated the first cancer patient with radiotherapy. Hawassa is one of the 6 cities that will provide radiotherapy facilities to cancer patients in Ethiopia, and now the 4th (after Addis Ababa, Jimma, Harar) treating patients.

In an exclusive interview with *The Ethiopian Herald*, Yetsehay Mengesha Memorial Medium Clinic Medical Director Abdu Gudisa (MD) said that expanding cancer treatment centers is crucial because they provide specialized care, cutting-edge treatments, and support services tailored to

individuals battling with cancer.

“We have been working for the past ten years in advocacy activities to create an informed society about cancer and providing clinical services in Yeka Sub City.”

Early detection is vital in controlling cancer, but following the poor culture of the society to conduct checkup, many patients come to health facilities after all stages of cancer symptoms are surfaced. This culture should be changed. In this regard, the media and the health professionals have double responsibility, he underlined.

Responding to the importance of cancer center establishment in higher education in various parts of Ethiopia, he said, it is clear that centers could bring together multidisciplinary teams of doctors, nurses and other healthcare professionals to provide comprehensive care, including diagnosis, treatment and emotional support for patients and their family members.

According to him, there is high progress in the health sector in many ways but because of the strain of budget and other challenges to provide quality healthcare services, especially for diseases like cancer, bringing the desire outcomes remains unachievable.

By leveraging the intellectual capital and research capabilities, these institutions can contribute to the development of innovative treatment modalities, early detection methods, and provide affordable healthcare solutions tailored to the country's needs, he opined.

Early detection is vital in controlling cancer, but following the poor culture of the society to conduct checkup, many patients come to health facilities after all stages of cancer symptoms are surfaced

He also urged respective higher education institutions to follow the footsteps of Hawassa University. “In my view, it is imperative for Ethiopia's higher learning institutions to recognize their pivotal role in prioritizing the establishment of cancer treatment facilities and forging partnership with relevant stakeholders, including government agencies, philanthropic organizations and international partners. Bringing these all together can make tangible differences in the lives of millions of Ethiopians affected by cancer.”

What is more, Ethiopia stands at a critical juncture in its healthcare journey, and the establishment of cancer treatment facilities within higher learning institutions represents a significant step forward in advancing cancer control efforts nationwide.

Through harnessing their academic expertise, research capabilities and commitment to social impact, these institutions should beef up efforts to contribute to a future where all Ethiopians get access to high-quality cancer treatment and support services.

“In my view, it is the ideal time to act now and the benefit will be felt for the generation to come,” he added.

International News

ECCAS and ECA are delving a strengthened partnership around the development of regional value chains

YAOUNDE (ECA) - Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) Commission Chairperson, Ambassador Gilberto Verissimo, paid a courtesy call to ECA's Sub-Regional Office for Central Africa in Yaounde, on the sidelines of his participation in the 6th COPIL/CER-AC Council of Ministers Meeting held in Yaoundé, Cameroon, from June 06 to 07, 2024

The Chairperson's visit was an opportunity for ECA-CA experts, led by Jean Luc Mastaki Namegabe, Director of the Office in Central Africa, and the ECCAS team to take stock of the economic situation in the sub-region and review the major achievements of the partnership between the two institutions, saluting a long-standing collaboration spanning the last 40 years. These exchanges also provided an opportunity to discuss future projects that will further our shared ambitions.

The rich discussions resulted to critical areas of collaboration with a view to deepening economic integration in Central Africa. It was emphasized that the promotion of industry should play a central role in efforts to regionalize economies. This involves the local transformation of the resources and raw materials with which the 11 economies of the sub-region are richly endowed, the

priority value chains being timber, mining, agro-industry and oil-gas. This ambition is in line with the aspirations set out in the Douala Consensus, which the entire subregion adopted in September 2017. "Central Africa has made commitment for economic diversification, and for us, as for all the endorsers including ECCAS, the Douala Consensus remains the roadmap. Together with ECCAS, we advocate that the transformation of raw materials through regional value chains will crystallize our integration efforts, because without local manufactured products, there can be no real intra-regional trade", said Jean Luc Mastaki, Director of the ECA Sub-Regional Office.

To facilitate and accelerate the set up of industries, ECA has developed tools, the most important of which is the New Generation Special Economic Zone (NGSEZ). A model for domesticating added value, promoting local content and upgrading technical and industrial skills. ECA hopes to extend the maturing model between the DRC and Zambia to establish sufficient cross-border SEZs to attract more investments. Cameroon, Chad and Congo are well in the maturation of national scale SEZs.

To facilitate and accelerate economic

diversification driven by inclusive and sustainable industrialization, ECA has developed tools, the main one being the Master Plan for Industrialization and Economic Diversification in Central Africa (PDIDE-AC). The Plan highlights New Generation Special Economic Zones (NGSEZs) as catalysts for the domestication of added value, the promotion of local content and the development of technical and industrial skills. ECA is working to extend the maturing model between DRC and Zambia to promote some priority cross-border value chains. Cameroon, DRC and Congo are moving well in the maturation of national scale SEZs.

Industry, value chains and intra-regional trade are inconceivable without quality infrastructures in the fields of energy, transport and telecommunications. Despite efforts, Central Africa is still lagging behind other sub-regions in terms of infrastructure, according to the Report on the State of Regional Integration in the ECCAS, CEMAC, CEPGL Zone produced by the ECA.

ECA's call for a review of the implementation of the Plan Directeur Consensuel des Transports en Afrique Centrale (PDCT-AC) has been taken up by the ECCAS Commission

Chairperson: "We are in the process of preparing an assessment of infrastructure in Central Africa. We would be delighted to benefit from the support of the ECA, our traditional partner" pledged Ambassador Gilberto Verissimo.

Embracing the issues of innovative financing for economic diversification, ECA highlighted the opportunities offered by the development of the carbon credit market, as well as other options for accessing green financing that can be mobilized through an environmentally-friendly industrialization model. By better accounting the natural capital, ECCAS economies, located at the heart of the Congo Basin, will be able to take advantage from an effective advocacy tool for better mobilization of resources driven by the ecosystem services provided by their biophysical cover.

The ECCAS-ECA partnership is born of an "umbilical link that the commemoration of the 40th anniversary of the Economic Community of Central African States should enable us to celebrate and consolidate for even stronger links in the future", mentioned Adama Coulibaly, Head of the Sub-Regional Initiatives Section at the ECA-CA Office.

Source: UNECA

We Must 'Reimagine a World Where Trade Is a Force for Shared Prosperity - Not Geopolitical Rivalry', Secretary-General Tells Global Leaders Forum

Following are UN Secretary-General António Guterres' remarks to the Global Leaders Forum for the sixtieth anniversary of UN Trade and Development (UNCTAD), in Geneva today:

It is a great pleasure and a privilege to join you to commemorate the sixtieth anniversary of UNCTAD, now known as UN Trade and Development.

Sixty years ago, at a time of transformation and upheaval, UNCTAD was born out of the recognition that development is inextricably linked with trade.

The very first session of UNCTAD saw the signing of the Joint Declaration of the 77 developing countries — the creation of the G77.

Indeed, UNCTAD and the Group of 77 were two parts of a joint endeavour: giving developing countries a greater voice in debates on development, and building a more development-oriented economic, financial and trade architecture.

UNCTAD has spent much of the past six decades championing the interests of developing countries and advocating for a more equitable and inclusive global trading system — as a powerful engine for economic growth, poverty reduction and social progress.

UNCTAD's commitment to this cause is reflected in its achievements. These include the creation of the least developed countries category; the adoption of the Principles and Objectives for a New International Economic Order; and the establishment of the Common Fund for Commodities.

UNCTAD also has a proud and longstanding record of contributing to discussions on reforming the international financial architecture. It has been a powerful force for

change at the global level, shaping narratives, influencing international negotiations and advancing the cause of multilateralism.

UNCTAD's work has not only created a legacy. It continues to be an inspiration for today's debates and decisions.

The first Secretary-General of UNCTAD, the renowned Argentine economist Raúl Prebisch, once remarked that UNCTAD could not be neutral on development problems — just as the World Health Organization (WHO) could not be neutral on malaria.

Today, the clarity and commitment of UN Trade and Development are more relevant than ever.

Geopolitical divisions are rising; inequalities are growing; the climate crisis is hitting many developing countries hard. And new and protracted conflicts are having a ripple effect across the global economy.

Global debt has soared while key development indicators, including poverty and hunger, have regressed.

The international financial architecture has been exposed as outdated, dysfunctional and unjust. It has failed to provide a safety net for developing countries mired in debt. And the international trading system is challenged on all sides; teetering on the verge of fragmentation.

Trade has become a double-edged sword: a source of both prosperity and inequality; interconnection and dependence; economic innovation and environmental degradation. In this context, I welcome the reforms to UNCTAD initiated by Secretary General Rebeca Grynspan.

Your new branding — UN Trade and Development — reflects a renewed commitment

to expanding your reach and amplifying advocacy for developing countries.

Your role remains essential: identifying and working to close gaps and discrepancies in the system and proposing pragmatic, evidence-based solutions. This aspect of UNCTAD's work was essential to the Global Crisis Response Group, created in 2022, and led by Secretary General Grynspan.

Above all, UN Trade and Development remains faithful to your core principle of promoting inclusive and sustainable development through trade and investment. And this is essential as multilateral cooperation is weakened and the forces of fragmentation grow stronger. New trade barriers introduced annually have nearly tripled since 2019 — many driven by geopolitical rivalry, with no concern for their impact on developing countries.

The world cannot afford splits into rival blocs. The implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the need to ensure peace and security makes essential to have one global market and one global economy, in which there is no place for poverty and hunger.

The elimination of poverty remains the primary objective of sustainable development.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) estimates that increased international trade restrictions could reduce global economic output by more than \$7 trillion in the long term — three times the annual output of sub-Saharan Africa.

It is becoming clear that we also need a new architecture of international finance, taxation and digital governance and a new vision of how to measure progress, how to promote South-

South trade, and how to ensure stability in a multipolar world.

The Summit of the Future in New York in September will seek concrete progress and political momentum on these issues. This will be a unique opportunity to forge a new global consensus around addressing the complex economic and development challenges we face and turbocharging investment in the Sustainable Development Goals.

And the next three days will be an important milestone on the way to the Summit. I urge you to consider concrete, pragmatic contributions to this process.

We must channel the courage and wisdom of those who built UNCTAD, to reimagine a world where trade is a force for shared prosperity — not geopolitical rivalry.

Where global supply chains are source of green innovation and climate action — not environmental damage.

Where sustainable development is a central goal — not an afterthought.

And where a networked and inclusive multilateralism, drawing on the expertise of the corporate sector, academia and civil society, is a means to realizing our shared ambitions — not a relic of the past.

UN Trade and Development has an essential role in that world.

I look forward to welcoming you to New York to take forward your proposals and recommendations from this important Leaders Forum. And I congratulate UN Trade and Development once again on its important history, and its new, forward-looking agenda.

Source: press.un.org



This is Ethiopia

New tourist destinations augmenting Ethiopia's tourism sector performance

BY TEWODROS KASSA

Ethiopia known for its rich history, diverse culture, and stunning landscapes, has been making significant strides in enhancing its tourism sector through new projects and initiatives.

In recent years, the country has seen a surge in tourism development, with a focus on attracting more visitors and providing them with unique experiences.

No doubt, the country embraces a wide range of tourist attractions, including ancient historical sites such as the rock-hewn churches of Lalibela, the ancient city of Axum, and the castles of Gondar, the walled city of Harar, Lucy-the ancestor of human-kind, the active volcano of Erta Ale, among others.

Moreover, the country is also home to breathtaking natural wonders, such as the Simien Mountains National Park, the Omo Valley, and diversified endemic animals, which make the country a real land of origins.

With a growing emphasis on sustainable tourism practices, the country is committed to preserving its cultural heritage and natural resources for future generations.

Recently, the Ministry of Tourism announced that Ethiopia generated some 3.2 billion USD from international tourists during the past nine months of the current fiscal year while domestic tourism has channeled 48.8 billion Birr to the national economy.

Presenting the nine month's performance of the tourism sector to the Trade and Tourism Standing Committee of the House of People Representatives, Tourism Minister Nassise Chali stated that of the plan to generate 3.5 billion USD, it was able to amass 3.2 billion USD by attracting 861,126 foreign tourists.

Around 30.5 million local tourists also visited different attraction sites though the plan was to lure 31.2 million.

Through the efforts that have been put towards enhancing meetings, incentives, conferences and exhibitions tourism (MICE tourism), Ethiopia has organized 19 international events in nine months. The country also took part in six international trade fairs that were hosted in the UK, Germany, Belgium, France, Pakistan and India which is said to be instrumental in promoting its tourism potential.

Highlighting that over 406,000 tourists visited the National Museum in the stated period, the Minister indicated that 152.1 million Birr was generated from park visiting, sport hunting, issuing and renewing license, and film production, among others.

Mentioning the numerous activities that have been carried out to expand local and



international investment, Nassise noted her Ministry has prepared a national tourism investment profile as well as a tourism investment promotion document and distributed to domestic and international stakeholders.

To this end, 91 new investors have been engaged in the tourism sector while around 63 investments that had been on the pipeline have become operational in this year. Some 1,016 new guesthouses have also been open to service.

"By undertaking several digital promotion activities, the Ministry has increased its online penetration by 45 percent. It is also promoting and delivering tourism information using social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Telegram."

Also, the Ministry has executed valuable activities including building tourist information centers, putting landmarks, towers and informative symbols on tourist destinations including preparing restrooms nearby.

"Of the plan to create 105,000 jobs, about 81,673 jobs were created from which 30,968 are permanent. The aforesaid employment opportunities were created in hotels, tour operators and guides, tourism technology and digitalization, event organization, among others."

She also noted that to minimize the threats on reserved tourist areas, efforts have been geared towards providing alternative livelihoods for citizens. Thus, around 29,295 citizens have benefitted through eco-tourism, agriculture, provision of renewable energy, small enterprises, and sustainable natural resources.

With regard to development of new and already existing tourist destinations, the Minister stressed that the PM Abiy Ahmed



(PhD) initiatives such as 'Gebeta' projects have played a significant role in enhancing Ethiopia's international competitiveness and creating more jobs.

Nassise also highlighted the ongoing renewal and infrastructural development projects in Jimma Aba Jifar, Senkele Swayne's Hartebeest Sanctuary (SSHS) and Rock-Hewn Churches of Lalibela.

Commending the best performance in the report, members of the Standing Committee emphasized the need to engage the private sector in the tourism business, adding value to tourist destination developments, properly utilizing tourism potential as well as creating more jobs in the sector.

Apart from this, the country has been investing heavily in new tourism projects to capitalize on its vast potential and attract a larger number of international visitors. The construction of new luxury resorts and eco-lodges in popular tourist destinations becomes new potential tourist destinations. The development of new tour routes and experiences that showcase the country's unique culture and traditions helps to generate more from the sector.

Thus, these new tourism projects are expected to have a positive impact on Ethiopia's tourism sector performance in several ways. By offering new and exciting attractions, Ethiopia is likely to see a rise in the number of international tourists visiting the country. Parallel to this, the development of new tourism projects will also help to attract a more diverse range of visitors, including luxury travelers, adventure seekers, and cultural enthusiasts.

Finally, a thriving tourism sector can provide significant economic benefits for the country by creating jobs, generating revenue, and supporting local businesses.

In sum, Ethiopia's focus on developing new tourism projects is poised to elevate the country's tourism sector to new heights. With its unique cultural heritage, stunning landscapes, and commitment to sustainable tourism practices, the country is well-positioned to become a premier destination for travelers from around the world. So far, the new tourism projects are playing a crucial role in enhancing the tourism sector's performance.