



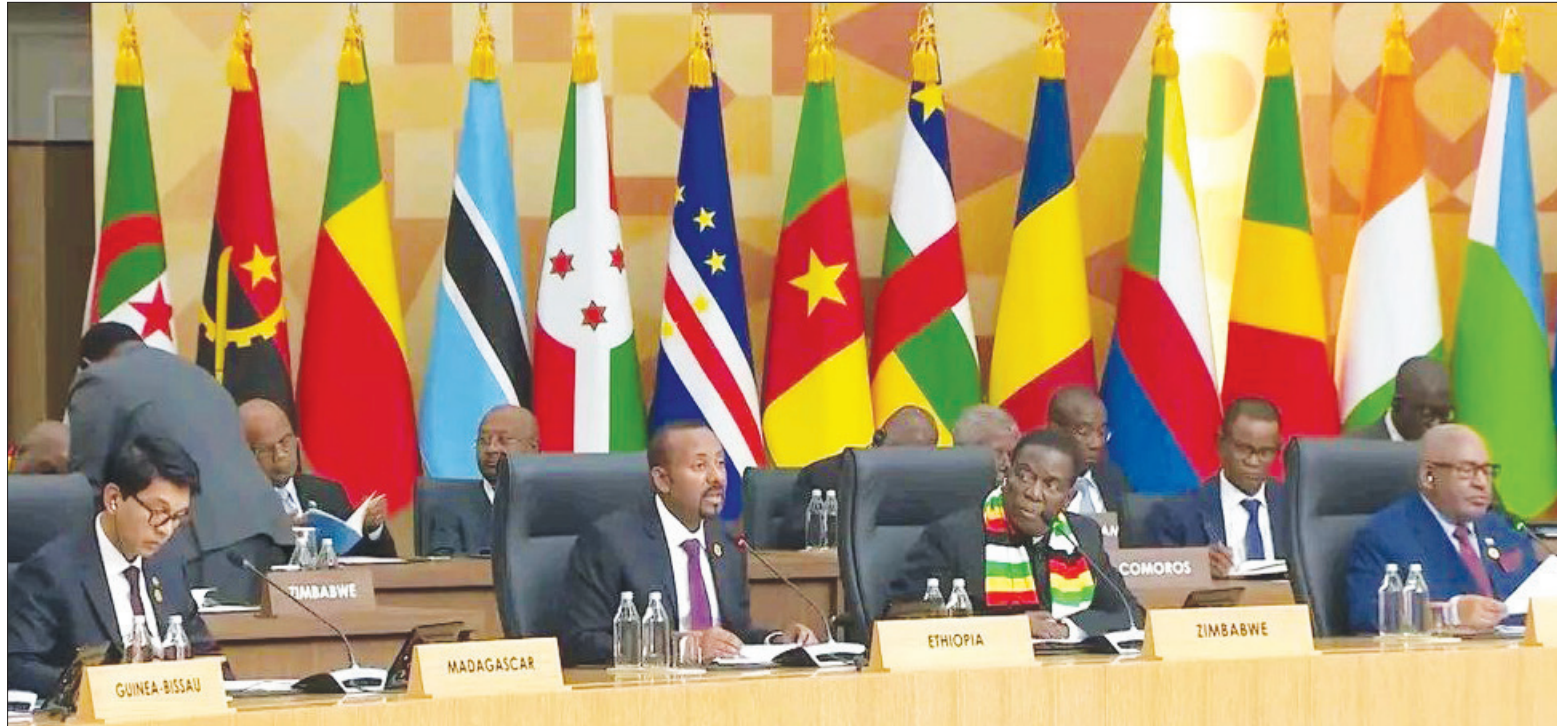
The Ethiopian Herald

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Addis Ababa Bureau of Women, Children & Social Affairs

Bureau calls on public to cope with violence against children

BY YESUF ENDRIS

ADDIS ABABA- Addis Ababa City Administration Women, Children, and Social Affairs Bureau has called for public and stakeholders cooperation to combat violence against children.

The Bureau also announced that it will conduct series of movements in the upcoming weeks in line with the celebration of the African Women's Day.

In her presser held yesterday, Bureau Head Emebet Tesfaye

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“Now is the right time to boost Africa-Korea relations”: Premier

BY STAFF REPORTER

ADDIS ABABA- Now is the right time to boost the longstanding relations between Africa and South Korea, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) said.

The Premier made the above remark

yesterday while addressing the Africa-Korea Forum in Seoul.

The Prime Minister recalled that Africa-Korea relations which began in the early 1950s during the Korean War is based on common interests and has laid in a strong foundation.

Abiy (PhD) mentioned that Ethiopia is a major partner of Korea and the former sent troops which played a role in the freedom and peace of Korea. The two countries bilateral relationship has been growing based on mutual benefit in the past years.

See “Now is the ... page 3



Bayisa Bedada (PhD)

Ethiopia employs research, innovation to harness biotech industry

- Hosts 1st African Biotechnology Congress

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Ethiopians demonstrate ability to resolve contentious issues: ENDC

- Finalizes agenda gathering in Addis

BY BETELHEM BEDLU

ADDIS ABABA- The agenda gathering consultation meeting has demonstrated Ethiopians' ability to discuss national issues and resolve their differences when they get the opportunity, Ethiopian National dialogue Commission (ENDC) said.

The ENDC successfully finalized the agenda gathering consultation phase that has been held for seven consecutive days in Addis Ababa.

In a press briefing he gave here yesterday, ENDC Chief Commissioner, Prof. Mesfin Araya stated that besides undertaking the agenda gathering process with the sense of belongingness, participants have realized that Ethiopians are capable of identifying, handling as well as resolving their differences by devoting the right amount of time and maturity.



Prof. Mesfin Araya

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News

DBE plans modernizing services in 2nd reform period

BY MESERET BEHAILU

ADDIS ABABA – The Development Bank of Ethiopia (DBE) disclosed plan to register better performance in modernizing and expanding its services in the second reform period.

DBE's CEO Yohannes Ayalew (PhD) said that the Bank has planned achieving a better result in the second reform period founding on the milestones registered in the 1st reform period.

As to him, improving technology, communication, bridging skilled human resource gap, expanding districts branches, and encouraging the partnership with international development partners are among the major focus areas of the bank to realize its plan.

“DBE has a constructive relationship with World Bank (WB) and the German Development Bank for its remarkable contribution to industrial and agricultural development. For instance, DBE utilized 13 million Euro from 15 million Euro signed based on the agreement signed with German Development Bank for agricultural mechanization,” he noted.

Similarly, DBE in close cooperation with WB provided capacity building for over 130,000 trainees including from 57 main cities and 97 trainee centers in the 3rd round training alone. Encouraged by this success, the Bank also increased its project from 556 in 2019 to 953 projects at present, he added.

He further stated that DBE is discussing with various development partners to acquire loan and run its service across the country. The bank will expand its activities through working with different states in the nation.

“Of course, most of the industries (factories) are still located in Addis Ababa and in the surroundings, which is difficult to say fair distribution is persisting at present. Therefore, it needs an intervention in expanding industries to various states across the nation considering the lucrative businesses,” Yohannes underlined.

It was to be recalled that the total capital of the DBE is now reached 39.7 billion Birr whilst registering 4 billion birr profit in the past nine months of this fiscal year.

Leather strategy instrumental to identify constraints, comprehensive solutions

BY TSEGAYE TILAHUN

ADDIS ABABA –The recently designed leather strategy is of great significance to identify the sector's major constraints and help to come up with comprehensive solutions, the Manufacturing Industry Development Institute (MIDI) said.

MIDI Deputy Director General Seleshi Lema made the above remark yesterday while opening the National Ethiopian Highland Leather (Ethiopian Highland Leather) conference here yesterday.

Speaking at the occasion, Seleshi stated that tremendous efforts have been exerting tremendous efforts to develop the Ethiopian highland leather over the past several years. Ethiopian highland leather has also been tested in the international market with initial success with the support of partners, particularly JICA and being promoted among global customers.

“The meeting is expected to scale up the potential and address the sector's impediments and shed the lights on the means to tackle the problem and serve as a roadmap for further marketing and promotion.”

The director general further noted that in



order to scale up the initiative further, the Ethiopian highland leather certification needs to be addressed. The leather sector growth and development remains stagnant particularly over the last few years in terms of export earnings. Conversely, promising performance is witnessed in other economic indicators including import substitutions and job creation.

Recognizing the sector's low export performance, the Ministry of Industry and MIDI recently designed a leather strategy along with a comprehensive action plan to reinstate and enhance its role and contribution in the

overall economic performance. The strategy identified major constraints which challenged the leather sector growth and development alongside the value chain particularly the quality and availability of raw hives and skin, technology, inputs, market diversification and others, Seleshi elaborated.

“It is not only identifying problems, but the strategy has come up with identification of possible comprehensive solutions specifying the role and responsibility of stakeholders and parties in the leather value chain.”

For his part, CBI, the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs Expert Jan Willem Richeleman stated that collaborative efforts would contribute to push forward the leather sector's performance. Developing EHL certification is very critical to promote the leather products to penetrate the global market. The CBI identified EHL as high value added products and instrumental to Ethiopia to access new markets.

The Ethiopia Chamber of Commerce and Sectoral Association in collaboration with the Ethiopian Leather Development Association, MIDI, CBI (SNV) and JICA organized a conference that aims to utilize Ethiopia's enormous highland leather potential.

Diplomatic training crucial to foster nations' ties: Director

BY EYUEL KIFLU

ADDIS ABABA- As diplomacy is the cornerstone for maintaining peaceful relationships between nations and addressing critical regional and global issues, it needs to be systematically handled and treated, so stated Executive Director of the Institution of Foreign Affairs.

Speaking at a three-day diplomatic training for South Sudanese diplomats kicked off yesterday, Executive Director of the Institution of Foreign Affairs (IFA), Jafar Bedru, said that the volatile nature of the Horn of Africa region has been experiencing common challenges such as peace and security, environmental degradation, piracy, and irregular migration. “These shared challenges can only be effectively countered through collaborative efforts, regional partnerships and well framed diplomatic moves,” he asserted.

Recognizing Ethiopia's crucial role, Jafar praised the country's support for the people of South Sudan, dating back to their struggle for self-determination and establishment of the Republic of South Sudan. “Ethiopia has



always stood by the people of South Sudan since their independence, and the two nations share a common destiny of prosperity and stability.”

The program aims to enhance the skills of South Sudanese diplomats in areas such as negotiation, conflict resolution, peace and security management, and the effective management of trans-boundary resources. “The training will provide a platform for discussing the region's geopolitical challenges and exploring innovative solutions to the multifaceted problems,” Jafar explained.

The IFA, known for its research, training, and dialogue initiatives, has employed curated a line-up of highly skilled veteran diplomats and researchers to share their expertise and

engage in fruitful exchanges with the trainee diplomats. “This training is just the beginning, as we look forward to continued engagements and collaborations in the future,” he concluded.

Ambassador Fisseha Shawel, Director General of African affairs with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA), on his part said that the training would equip diplomats with essential tools for navigating complex challenges. He further underscored the importance of the Ethiopia-South Sudan partnership in the region.

Veteran Ethiopian diplomats, South Sudanese diplomats, and ambassadors were in attendance in the training. It is known that the two countries have a long-lasting blood-bonded historical relation.

Association receives medical equipment for overcoming hearing impairment

BY FIKADU BELAY

ADDIS ABABA- Hearing for Ethiopia Association has announced that it has received essential medical equipment from the Austrian company MED-EL for diagnosing hearing impairment.

The President of Hearing for Ethiopia Association, Dr. Eshak Bedir, stated that the donated equipment, which is expensive and

worth millions of birr, includes Otoacoustic Emission (OAE) and Auditory Brainstem Response (ABR) machines. This support has been secured at a critical time, as there is a special need for such equipment in the country, he said.

He further mentioned that these advanced diagnostic tools will be made available for use in four selected medical institutions, named Tikur Anbesa Hospital, Petros

Specialized Hospital, Koria Hospital, and Migbare Senai General Hospital. He also expressed his hope that the implementation of this equipment would help save the lives of many children.

The Ambassador of Austria, Dr. Simon Knapp, stated that this partnership will empower the hearing healthcare sector in these targeted countries to develop national hearing screening strategies and continue

the development of improved services for hearing impaired persons in general.

Through cooperation efforts, private stakeholders, civil society NGOs, and government institutions partner with health institutions to develop the funding instruments to make all these possible and to support the hearing impaired public sector in the country.

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News

Ethiopia employs research, innovation to harness biotech industry

• Hosts 1st African Biotechnology Congress

BY ASHENAFI ANIMUT

ADDIS ABABA - The government has given prime attention to the development and growth of biotech research and innovations to ensure food security and economic growth, the Ministry of Innovation and Technology (MInT) said.

The 1st African Biotechnology Congress organized by the Ethiopian Society of Biotechnology (ESoB) jointly with the Ethiopian Bio and Emerging institute (BETin) and other partners held under the theme "Biotechnology for Sustainable Development of Africa" yesterday.

Speaking at the occasion, MInT State Minister Bayisa Bedada (PhD) said that the government has given heeds to the development and growth of biotech research and innovations in all the agricultural, industrial, medical, pharmaceutical, environment protection and other critical areas of the economy.

"Ethiopia, as a country with immense genetic biodiversity, requires a balance between biotechnological scientific research and bio-safety measures as well as research and professional ethics."

As to him, MInT has been providing institutional, human resource capabilities and policy directions to the Bio and Emerging Technology Institute and registered significant outcomes in research, bio-economy strategy development, educational and awareness creation among many others in the country.



Hence, the biotech community in Ethiopia and in the African continent needs to exploit this huge potential of the science and the development aspiration of Ethiopia and contribute their level best to realize a food-secured, developed and prosperous African, the state minister noted.

Reaffirming commitments to strengthen support in the sector, the government has also given due emphasis to science and technology, especially in AI, ICT, Digitization and biotechnological advancements.

On her part, AATF Program Officer and Nutrition Sensitive Agriculture Lead Cecilia Limera (PhD) stated that technology is highly required to address climate change which has a devastating impact in the agricultural outputs and the issue of decreasing arable land. The government is working to address these shocks and increase productivity.

As to her, the event would be of a great significance for the scientific community and

agricultural community as global challenges are facing population growth in Africa.

Limera (PhD) elucidated that the consultation is also crucial to enlighten the people about the significance of biotechnologies and how to leverage the technology in an appropriate manner to boost agricultural productivity.

"Moreover, there are emerging technologies that help improve productivity and create resilient crops that resist climate change, disease, pests and drought tolerant crops."

She also indicated at the occasion that Ethiopia is the leading biotechnology development with experts and this could be exemplary to the entire countries across the continent.

The congress is aimed at providing a platform for Africa and international biotech communities to deliberate on the role of biotechnology in continental development and Africa Agenda 2063 in the presence of Ethiopian stakeholders and overseas, it was learned.

"Now is the right time ...

The Premier also noted that in the current global situation, Africa and Korea should increase their partnership, especially in the fields of development and security. The Africa-Korea Forum will create an opportunity to further develop the existing

relationship and promote common goals.

"Africa is a continent with economic potential and it has the capacity to handle many needs."

Ethiopia is working to solve the problems faced by food security, climate change and

energy supply. The country's efforts to prevent climate change through the Green Legacy Movement and to become self-sufficient in food through the *Ye limat trufat* Program show its commitment to building a green economy, PM Abiy remarked.

Ethiopians demonstrate ability...

Participants have shown deep commitment in reflecting the major agendas of the people who they represent. People with different perspectives sat around the table and exchanged deep thoughts which are huge steps towards developing a new culture of resolving differences through dialogue, the Chief Commissioner emphasized.

"Had it not been for their deep sense of belongingness and commitment for the successful realization of the National Dialogue, participants would have been minding different important business of their own over the past seven days."

Prof. Mesfin further noted that the concerned bodies have been discussing and gathering the agenda divided into five groups where they put utmost effort in identifying the core challenges that Ethiopia is facing.

"There were about 121 Community members' representatives, 52 political parties representatives, 100 idea leaders,

126 government bodies (legislative, executive and judicial), and more than 250 representatives of different institutions in the five groups that were drawn from 119 districts of Addis Ababa."

It was mentioned that the commission will continue the agenda gathering consultation in Dire Dawa City Administration and 12 states across the country including at federal and Diaspora level.

According to him, once the agenda is gathering across the nation, the commission would disclose the main agenda which will be tabled at the National Dialogue Conference to the public and concerned bodies.

Noting that ENDC has put effort to get across its credibility with its entire process for the public, the Chief Commissioner extended appreciation for the concerned bodies that provided unwavering support for the Commission throughout the consultation phase.

Association receives medical ...

Additionally, the ambassador stated that we want these alliances to provide innovation, global experience, and ongoing research for future needs, thereby offering the services that are essential in every nation on the globe. In addition, to strengthen healthcare institution growth and capacity building.

The World Health Organization estimates that around 460 million people suffer from hearing loss globally, with 25-80% of them living in low- to middle-income countries, like Ethiopia. Fatuma Saied, Executive Director of the Ministry of Health, Inclusive Women, and Social Affairs, noted that there are not enough comprehensive studies to determine the exact number of Ethiopians with hearing problems, but the figure is believed to exceed five million.

She emphasized that many children in

Bureau calls on ...

emphasized the need for collective action from the public and various stakeholders including NGOs to ensure children's safety and security.

This year's theme for the African Women's Day promotes child education, she said underlining that children's education and violence against children are serious issues that require immediate and sustained attention.

The Bureau is striving to enhance community engagement since every individual has a responsibility to promote children's participation and protect them from harm, she stated.

"We are diligently monitoring the conditions of children throughout the city. Our Bureau is dedicated to closely following the situation of children living in day care centers and adoptions," Emebet noted.

She also expressed her appreciation for the increasing initiatives aimed at adopting homeless and orphan children, highlighting the growing willingness within the community to provide loving homes for these children as a positive trend.

"The number of children living in adoption is still not significant, but the growing effort of the community to adopt them is commendable," she noted.

The initiative is a vital step towards creating a supportive opportunity for all children who deserves family love and schooling, she said, while restating her Bureau's appeal for all stakeholders to create a safer and more supportive environment for children.

Ethiopia are affected by this issue, and a significant portion of the population is suffering from hearing loss due to natural or man-made causes. The main challenge, she explained, is the lack of a complete medical infrastructure to treat ear-related problems and identify them early on. The absence of any standardized protocol to assess the hearing ability of infants has exacerbated the situation, she said.

To address this, Es-hak remarked that it will continue to collaborate with relevant stakeholders to conduct hearing screening programs in various schools and throughout the country.

Hearing for Ethiopia is working in partnership with concerned parties and private companies, a crucial step towards improving access to essential hearing health services and addressing the needs of the hearing-impaired population in Ethiopia.

Opinion

Seaports matter the most

BY MENGESHA AMARE

It is well recognized that seaports can potentially bring quite positive impacts to the nation as per its suitable location, vicinity and regionally and even continentally intertwined patterns following peripheries of seas or oceans. The other crystal clear fact in this regard, too, is being landlocked for any country across the globe has hampered their overall growth and progress for a number of challenges have been widely witnessed peculiarly in relation to transportation of basic necessities like petroleum. Bringing other pivotal goods and commodities to one's territory also badly requires the use ports of whatsoever.

To overcome all the problems in that regard, landlocked countries like ours need to have seaports as much as possible. Undeniably, by providing access to global supply chains, seaports enable countries to access international trade markets, which are instrumental in boosting economic development and socio-economical ties with others, in fact.

Undeniably, a good practice to observe in order to develop seaport activities is to add value to the myriads of activities of countries from time to time. In terms of quality services and the creation of a systematic and efficient organization, for example, one good way is to nurture a strong relationship between seaport owners and its users.

The recent seaport agreement with Somaliland, for instance, will enable Ethiopia to benefit a lot by exporting and importing goods at fair price from many countries. With regard to the preparation of the country to properly benefit from other trade blocs, where Ethiopia has recently been a member, BRICS, in this regard, the significance of seaport is really untold.

As a member of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) again, Ethiopia has submitted tariff offers for goods and is in the process of joining World Trade Organization. True, the recent agreement with Somaliland to secure seaport will have great significance in shipping the nation's products to BRICS nations and to import good at fair prices from those countries. The bold step would give Ethiopia the opportunity to obtain a permanent and reliable naval base and commercial maritime service in the Gulf of Aden through a lease arrangement, while Somaliland gets share from Ethiopian Airlines.

Advanced technologies facilitate better logistics performance through reengineering transport routes, scale, modes or frequencies. The ability of a country to offer diverse logistics services are partly driven by the quality of physical infrastructures such as roads, ports principally.

It is well recognized that seaports have long been an intrinsic part of international trade as all sorts of world traded goods have since long back been transported by sea and other relevant water bodies such as

oceans. Without the shadow of doubt, one of the major transport arteries for wider business is a sea and an ocean, too. The importance of seaports on an international, national and regional basis stretches far beyond the facilitation of trade, national and international assimilation.

Furthermore, seaports are maritime facilities which typically comprise one or more wharves or loading areas, enabling the transfer of cargo and passengers by ship. Besides, they are usually situated on sea coasts or estuaries but can also be found far inland, with access to the sea provided by adjacent rivers or canals. Transport, circulation, logistics, commercial and spatial facet can be carried out using such a reliable waterway. Yes, are usually situated on sea coasts to help countries transport machinery and transport equipment, miscellaneous manufactures, chemicals, material manufactures, food and live animals, fuels, raw materials, beverages and other unspecified goods.

Seaports are also vital to economic activity in coastal areas, areas which are typically some of the most deprived. That is why Ethiopia is working hard to further consolidate its firm ties with the nations it has recently concluded a seaport accord.

Needless to state, the growth of seaports and maritime related trade directly and indirectly stimulates both national and regional economic growth. Taking seaports' significance in enabling it to access international trade markets thereby boosting economic development, Ethiopia has reached such a decisive conclusion. International trade also allows consumers access to products and services which are not typically found within Ethiopia, whilst allowing the nation to utilize resources such as labor, technology or capital as efficiently as possible.

As physical infrastructure is an important determinant of transport so as to facilitate logistics transportation particularly in landlocked countries like ours, bridges, dams and crucial pathways are given due emphasis by the government.

Yes, ports are the hub and node of networks for all kinds of waterborne transport and link countries with rest of the world. Besides, not only do ports promote transportation and distribution in the cheapest way but they also determine freight transport costs and help companies' access international markets as they are than just an infrastructure that facilitates international trade. Hence, the accord reached between the aforesaid two countries needs to be translated into practical actions.

Plus to this, if there are discrepancies in due course of understanding the aspiration of to be beneficiary out of having seaport, there need to be a well framed idea to get understood one another/ each other between or among nations.

In this present era of globalization, products

are usually produced far away from consumer markets, and raw materials for a single product are often sourced from several different countries. Port-related activities stemming from the supply of goods and services can drive economic productivity and growth. Many of the positive effects of port regions spill over beyond these regions. Hence, cooperation among or between countries in utilizing seaports matters the most.

Ports are not only the intersection points between land and sea transport systems, but they are regarded as more complex, logistics and multimodal transport centers and value added organizations.

Seaports are the main links in the supply chain systems that add value to the port users and final customers. Ports play an important role in the management and co-ordination of materials and information flows, as the transport is an integral part of the entire supply chain. This well streamlined supply chain between Ethiopia and Somaliland needs to be well reinvigorated as the port under discussion would play the significant role in all systems by providing effective functioning of the whole system and creating value to the players of the supply chain.

No question about it, Ethiopia has to continue adaption the situation around the seaport it has been granted with as a port cannot be effective without adapting to the changes in its environment.

A seaport for which Ethiopia has been aspiring would play an essential role in facilitating trade and increasing the competitiveness of a nation or region by providing cost-efficient, reliable, and frequent connections to overseas and inland markets.

It is basically an area including port land and port water area, where infrastructure is built and equipment is installed for ships entering and leaving to operate to load and unload goods, pick up and drop off passengers and carry out other activities on behalf of Ethiopia and other countries from where the former would import myriads of items.

A seaport consists of berths in a water area of a certain depth and width for ships to anchor or dock. Seaports are usually deep-water ports serving large ships with high tonnage. This is the gateway to trade in import and export goods, the focal point for converting sea transport to rail, road and inland waterway transport.

Yes, the proximity of efficient seaports in Somaliland can be an important factor in the location decisions of firms of Ethiopia and the availability of a competitive seaport system can reduce reliance on foreign ports for trade and can reduce the total logistics costs for firms located in the region.

Ports can also be sources for innovation, productivity enhancements, and strategic cooperation through the presence of large multinational firms, leading firms, and

clusters of related and supporting industries.

The agreement between the two countries can also enhance specialization, innovation, and productivity improvements through cooperation with ports and other logistics hubs in the Horn of African region. Interestingly, a port in question would potentially help support the diffusion of competencies and the further gathering of knowledge in port management and logistics.

The importance of a port to a regional, national, or supranational economy is greater than shown by measures of direct and indirect value-added and employment.

The seaport due to be given to Ethiopia will undoubtedly help the nation minimize the sum of sea, port, and inland costs, including inventory and quality considerations of shippers. Since port choice becomes more a function of the overall network cost and performance for Ethiopia, it has to well embark on it and continue undertaking all the required activities to make it a success.

No doubt, a well-coordinated logistics and distribution function of seaports, with the cooperation of various service providers, facilitates the integration of ports in advanced logistical and distributional networks through a new range of high-quality value-adding services. Hence, Ethiopia and Somaliland have to do all their level best toward this end.

In sum, as a seaport plays a key role in transporting goods and is considered an important gateway to the economy and in the process of loading, unloading, transporting and circulating goods from many different parts of the world, it has to be given due emphasis more than anytime else. Truly speaking, at the seaport, the goods are unloaded from the ship and then stored, processed, loaded, packaged, and shipped to various destinations.

Moreover, using seaports helps reduce transportation time and costs, while improving flexibility and efficiency in goods management. Therefore, not only are Ethiopia and Somaliland expected to walk the talk but other countries located at adjacent spatial site are supposed to apply as utilizing seaports in an amicable way gets both parties highly benefited. Certainly, choosing the right seaport and effectively utilizing it is the right of nations and is extremely important to help businesses optimize their operations and meet customer needs as a seaport would be instrumental in creating employment opportunities, promoting trade activities and contributing positively to the economic development of every nation.

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

Editorial

Cooperation to address global challenge

Ethiopia is preparing for the second phase of the second round massive afforestation program which will take place in this upcoming rainy season aiming to restore and re-green degraded lands and reduce the impact of climate change thereby building green and climate-resilient Ethiopia.

Currently, as part of its annual mass tree planting program dubbed the Green Legacy Initiative (GLI), launched in 2019, the country has set a target to plant over 6.5 billion tree seedlings across the country in this planting season, mainly from June to September.

Accordingly, in the previous seedling plantation programs carried out over the last six consecutive years, impressive outcomes were registered. The nation, by mobilizing millions of Ethiopians from the four corners of the country, can register notable results-planting billions of saplings, surpassing its set targets and achieving new records.

For instance, merely in the preceding year (2023), the nation can hit global headlines and grab the attention of regional, continental and international organizations by planting over 566 million saplings in 12 hours surpassing the set goal of 500 million seedlings.

The endeavors, aside from practically demonstrating Ethiopia's commitment and its firm stand to global efforts to mitigate climate change; will certainly contribute to global green growth objectives.

In fact, Ethiopia's commitment to reducing the severe impacts of climate change is not confined within its own territory. Rather, going far from its borders, it has made every effort to motivate neighboring countries and make them emulate the practice. Essentially, understanding that collaboration is a must to bring about substantial outcomes in mitigating climate changes, Ethiopia has also encouraged countries of the Horn to plant seedlings by delivering over millions of various types of saplings, including Somalia, Sudan, Djibouti, Kenya and Eritrea.

Once, Osman Mohammed Babikir (PhD), IGAD Secretariat Director of the Economic Cooperation and Regional Integration Division (ECRID), lauded Ethiopia's successful Green Legacy Initiative stating that it will significantly contribute to reinforcing regional integration and reduce carbon emission.

Undeniably, climate change is an existential threat that our planet earth has ever faced. Regardless of any differences, the undesirable impacts of the change have been felt by all countries in every region of the world; and it still is.

These days, many global countries have been hit the hardest by record-breaking climate change related crises and are experiencing unpredictable weather patterns- from heavier rainfall to extreme floods and droughts, from searing heat to bone-chilling weather, as well as droughts and wildfires among others. These days, peoples of both developed and developing countries are experiencing the ever increasing impacts of climate change, and facing existential threats in a manner they have never experienced before.

Ironically, when it comes to developing nations, like Ethiopia, the adverse effects of the change are more grueling. Those countries though have contributed the least; they are disproportionately bearing the brunt of the crises.

Ethiopia, through its designed initiatives, programs and projects, such as massive tree planting initiative, development programs and greenery projects, is always committedly working to contributing its share to climate change efforts. However, the fight against global challenges cannot be overcome just by a good intention of a single country; rather demands collaboration and cooperation between and among all countries.

Thus, countries across the world should support Ethiopia's Green Legacy Initiative and follow suit to mitigate the detrimental impacts of climate change for the reason that climate change demands global cooperation and intervention. Likewise, international community residing in the country needs to be ready to actively participate in the upcoming Ethiopia's seedling plantation program.

Opinion

Ensuring effective national dialogue via inclusive, sustainable approach

BY STAFF REPORTER

Once a national dialogue process is planned or started, the focus is mostly on the dialogue space itself; questions are raised like who will participate, how to include marginalized actors, how to link the grassroots with the national process, how to get actors involved that do not want to engage or cannot be engaged out of legal or other reasons, or in general how to develop the agenda setting for the process in an inclusive legitimate way.

The first step should be the political and social context around the dialogue. Comparative research from past national dialogue processes shows that support from key political, economic and societal elites as well as public support for the process are a make or break factors for any dialogue. It is not enough to have elite and public support at the beginning of the process; this support needs to be sustained throughout the process.

The issue of sustainability is also mostly left open to the end of the process. Dialogue organizers and participants often feel that there is an automatism between the discussions at the dialogue and its sustainable implementation. However, comparative research shows that the majority of national dialogue results are never implemented. It is thus crucial to shape the dialogue design and procedures in such a way that contributes to future sustainability.

The transparency and inclusivity in selection of participants and the designing of the decision-making procedures will determine how this will be applied in future governance procedures. The dialogue needs to pave the way into the future by example. Inclusion quotas for all delegations participating in the dialogue like gender, age, and geography, have been used in the cases of South Africa and Nepal as affirmative action for future government and public institutions. In Nepal, these quotas even permeated public life as they were automatically applied in social settings like associations or schools.

Agenda selection is a critical step in the national dialogue process, as it determines the issues that will be discussed and addressed. An inclusive, transparent, and strategic approach to selecting the agenda ensures that the dialogue is relevant, comprehensive, and capable of addressing the root causes of conflict and division. Here's a detailed guide on how to approach agenda selection in national dialogue:

Conducting initial consultations with a wide range of stakeholders, including government officials, opposition parties, civil society organizations, ethnic and religious groups, youth and women's groups, and marginalized communities could be the first step towards the agenda section. Identifying historical grievances and longstanding issues that have contributed to conflict and division is of paramount importance in agenda selection.

Addressing urgent and current crises, such as political instability, economic challenges, or human rights abuses could be several of the core issues in agenda selection.

Considering the future aspirations of different groups, including visions for governance, development, and social cohesion pays off in the long run of a national dialogue.

Thematic topics might include constitutional reform, governance structures, electoral processes, power-sharing arrangements, and decentralization.

Discussions could cover economic policies, resource distribution, development strategies, and addressing inequalities. These might include social justice, human rights, ethnic relations, education, health, and social services.

Focus may be made on disarmament, demobilization, reintegration of combatants, security sector reform, and addressing violence. Consider environmental policies, climate change adaptation, and natural resource management.

Identifying issues that require immediate attention and resolution to stabilize the situation in a country could also be considered in greater detail. Setting long-term goals and issues that need to be addressed over an extended period is an important step in the process of agenda selection for a national dialogue.

It is also important to decide on the sequence in which issues will be addressed, ensuring that immediate concerns are tackled first, followed by medium- and long-term issues. Ensuring that the agenda reflects the interests and concerns of all segments of society, especially marginalized and underrepresented groups must be carefully considered.

Implementing measures to ensure that issues affecting women, youth, and other marginalized groups are prominently featured on the agenda selection will make the agenda selection process more inclusive.

Communicating the selected agenda clearly to the public, explaining why certain issues were chosen and explaining how they will be addressed is an important task to be accomplished by the media houses in a country.

Establishing mechanisms for ongoing feedback from the public and stakeholders throughout the dialogue process makes the agenda selection and the entire dialogue process more participatory and transparent.

It is also very useful to keep the agenda flexible and adaptable to incorporate new issues that may arise during the dialogue process. Regularly reviewing and preparation of the agenda to ensure it remains relevant and comprehensive.

Ensuring that there is a legal and institutional framework to support the agenda-setting process and providing legitimacy and structure is also no less important. Forming dedicated committees or working groups to handle specific themes or issues on the agenda can make the agenda selection process more meaningful.

Given the above points set on agenda selection, the author wishes to further expound on the elemental aspects of agenda selection in a dialogue process to be conducted in Ethiopia.

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



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The Ethiopian Herald

Business & Economy

Financial supply: A backbone of manufacturing industry

BY BACHA ZEWDIE

Financial supply is one of the resources that play a significant role in economic activities and serve as the backbone. However, one of the main problems facing the development of the manufacturing sector in Ethiopia is lack of finance. This problem combined with other challenges in the sector has forced industries to produce only half of their capacity and the share of the manufacturing sector in the total national product is low.

Among the activities carried out by the “Ethiopia Tamirt” (Made in Ethiopia) national movement, which is one of the solutions that are being implemented to alleviate the problems of the industrial sector, is solving the problems in the provision of finance through a coordinated system.

Currently, the manufacturing sector, which does not have sufficient financial supply, cannot increase the national production capacity and realize the structural transition of the economy. With this in mind, Mamo Mihretu, governor of the National Bank of Ethiopia (NBE) said that priority has been given to enhancing a stable price and foreign exchange system to support the manufacturing sector, as well as maintaining the wellbeing of the financial sector.

According to him, the manufacturing industry sector needs high foreign exchange, stable price conditions and a sound financial system, so the bank has implemented various operational reforms to achieve these issues. This has a significant role in access to finance for the manufacturing sector.

The governor stated that the “Ethiopia Tamirt” movement will create an opportunity to support the manufacturing sector with special attention. The steps taken by NBE to fulfill its responsibility of creating a stable macro-economic environment will help increase the number of investors investing in the manufacturing sector.

“The National Bank is responsible for creating a stable macro-economic environment. It will perform various activities to create a stable and orderly monetary policy, a healthy financial system and an attractive investment environment,” he said. If a stable macro-economic environment is created, investors will be encouraged to engage in both manufacturing and other investment sectors. The bank has achieved good results in maintaining a strict monetary policy in the country, creating a stable price situation and regulating the supply of credit, he explained.

Last year’s 33.5% general inflation is decreased to 23.3% this year. The inflation rate of 36.1% for non-food items was reduced to 18.1%. It is planned to reduce the overall inflation to 20% at the end of the fiscal year. When there is such a stable price situation, investment in the manufacturing sector will register growth; the activities carried out on the monetary policy are contributing greatly to the development of



Photo: Ethiopia Insight

Integrated financial support can boost Ethiopia’s industrialization

the manufacturing sector.

According to Mamo’s explanation, measures taken to correct the outlawed credit system, not only contributed to the stabilization of inflation, but also helped banks to pay more attention to the manufacturing sector in the loans they provide. Bank lending is a critical input to a stable financial system. When banks lend properly to the productive sector, the financial system becomes healthy.

Mamo also pointed out that work is being done to make the loan collateral required by banks easier and more efficient when investors in the manufacturing sector request loans. Measures will continue to be strengthened to enable the financial sector to support productive industries in a meaningful way by realizing adequate financial supply.

The Ethiopian Development Bank is one of the institutions that provide finance to the manufacturing industry. Yohannes Ayalew (PhD), President of the Bank, said that the movement will help to solve the problem of lack of finance faced by the producers in a coordinated manner. The bank is providing loans to the manufacturing industry in the medium and long term.

According to him, the Ethiopian Development Bank is providing large loans to develop the manufacturing industry sector as the sector plays an important role in the development of the national economy by increasing productivity, creating job opportunities and making the transfer of technology and knowledge a reality.

The bank provides various incentives to the manufacturing industry through the provision of loans. As most of the producers are based in the agricultural sector, it is providing low interest loans to the borrowers of the agricultural sector. A procedure has been developed to avoid asking for additional property collateral by holding projects instead.

“If producers fail to produce, the country will be dependent on imported products and there will also be a shortage of foreign

currency,” he said, explaining that the Development Bank is making efforts to reduce dependence on imported products and increase foreign currency earnings by providing loans to producers so that they can carry out their production activities efficiently. The bank’s performance has been improved after the reform. Its capital has reached 38 billion Birr, and it is earning more than 6.3 billion Birr annually. It has created the capacity to lend up to nine billion Birr.

According to the president, out of the 46 billion Birr loans that the bank provided in the 2022/23 fiscal year, 35 billion Birr was provided to the manufacturing sector. In nine months of this fiscal year, out of the 44 billion Birr loan approved by the bank, 30 billion Birr has been given to the manufacturing sector. The Bank’s provision of substantial credit to the manufacturing sector will help create capacity for structural economic transformation by producing import substituting goods and increasing exports.

“Small and medium enterprises are established and operate in all regions. Therefore, these producers have a key role in achieving equity. 18 billion Birr of the loans approved in the fiscal year was given to these enterprises. To increase the efficiency of the enterprises, the construction of sheds should be given a lot of attention,” he said.

The Commercial Bank of Ethiopia (CBE) is also indebted to the manufacturing industry in terms of financing. Abie Sano, president of CBE, said that the activities carried out by the “Ethiopia Tamirt” movement are creating the capacity to set the right path for the industrial sector. According to Abie, it is a great step forward for the movement to enable coordination among the stakeholders in the sector. Half of the loans provided by the Commercial Bank of Ethiopia are given to the industrial sector. Out of this, most of the financing is used for power supply. 90% of the bank’s loans are long-term loans.

The president also indicated that the bank

is preparing to develop a system to provide loans to the manufacturing sector under special conditions. Mentioning that it is working to give priority to manufacturers that use local raw materials, he explained the efforts of the Bank to support the manufacturing sector with finance.

He said that the task of encouraging producers who use local raw materials should be done with special attention. Tax and customs issues should also receive due attention. In addition to this, investors who are engaged in the manufacturing sector are advised to enter the sector based on adequate research and preparation.

On his part, the Minister of Industry, Melaku Alebel, indicated that the “Ethiopia Tamirt” movement was launched with the main goals set in the ten-year development plan, namely improving the production capacity of the industrial sector; increasing foreign exchange; substituting import production and creating job opportunities; as well as improving the lives of citizens in general. Access to finance is an issue that needs a lot of attention. Therefore, the government will continue to strengthen provision of finance to increase role of the private sector in the industrial sub-economy.

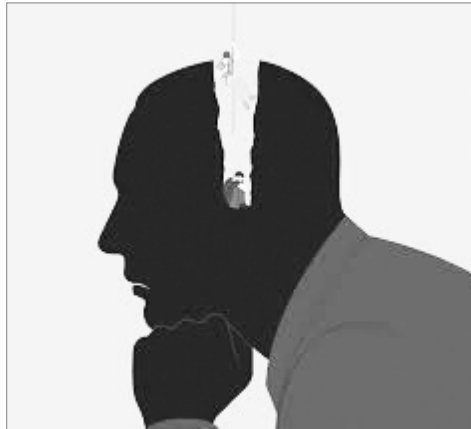
Strengthening the manufacturing sector is a resource that boosts other sectors of the economy. For example, to increase agricultural productivity, modern agricultural equipment and to improve the efficiency of the service sector, there is a need for a productive sector that can produce the inputs in quantity, quality and speed. One of the ways to strengthen the manufacturing sector is to provide the necessary support and supervision to investors in the sector, especially in terms of financing.

Developing favorable legal frameworks including policies; expanding infrastructure provision; facilitating credit provision and providing accessible, efficient and quality services are mentioned among the supports. In Ethiopia, in order for the productive sector to replace the role of agriculture and lead the economy and to record continuous economic growth, it is necessary to give a quick and coordinated response to the problems faced by investors in the productive sector in terms of financing.

It should not be forgotten that the national movement of “Ethiopia Tamirt” can achieve its goals of improving the quality and competitiveness of industrial products, increasing the coverage of substitution of imported products, producing and selling industrial products that are competitive in the international market, and overcoming the shortage of foreign currency if there is sufficient financial provision.

In addition to this, the multi-faceted economic reform programs implemented by the government in the last five years have an important role in alleviating the problems in terms of financing, so it is necessary to work diligently for the implementation of the programs.

Art & Culture



Suicide

BY CHABINGA TAPIWA

*Suicide,
At times,
It may seem like an escape,
But in the actual sense, it's
nothing close to escaping..
It creates worse feelings,
Leaves loved ones depressed and
confused,
And doesn't give your soul the
rest it deserves upon leaving
your body,
Suicide is never a solution,
Its a sign of weakness and
hopelessness,
And we all reach that point,
But if we survived once,
We can always survive our
difficulties.*



What is Love?

BY ALEM KIDANE

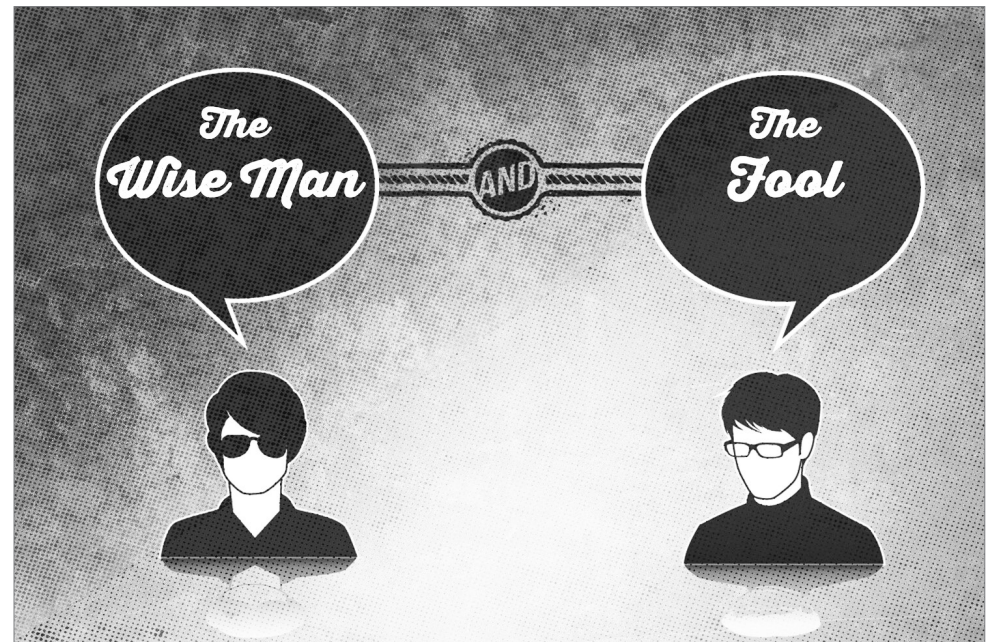
*He sang to me his music of
silence.
His canvases empty...
a great painter was he.
He wept devoid of tears,
and he laughed without teeth...
his books contained no lines
nor did his poetries.
He never said the words
but I know he loved me...
one who truly feels love,
discerns it quietly.*

The wise, the fool

BY ALEM HAILU G/KRISTOS

*In keeping their head
Above water
The wise draw
A quick lesson
From others' blunder,

While the fool
With a deaf eye
To many a wrong turn
Their life squander!*



One sad Saturday morning

BY ALEM HAILU G/KRISTOS

*Coming out of
A nearby hut of mud
A rose bud
Used to mix with
High school
Students' flood.*

*On the street
With a bow
Her I used to greet.
Drawing close
And casting an
Affectionate glance
I used to say "Hi"
Often I never
Failed to utter
"Lovely!" "Cute one!" ...
In her heart a cherished
Corner to buy.
Though she was shy
Her angelic face
Smiles used to aurify.

When she comes of age
I was sure to propose to her
Though age gap could
Put us asunder
"Does that she too wonder?"
I still ponder.*

*One sad Saturday morning
A funeral procession
Round the hut
Drew my attention.*

*To her parents & siblings
And, of course,
To my hidden grief
She opted to be brief*



*You see
She could not tolerate
"Detained!" on her
Grade 10 certificate.*

*Vexed
She found it hard
To reflect
A pitch dark night
Will certainly
Cedes place to
A broad day light.*

*Had she managed that
Dark moment to outgrow,
She could have
Long forgotten her sorrow.*

*Two decades later
whenever I pass
By that place
I see her younger brother
With sadness stamped face!*

"Suicide why?"

*Is it not cruel
Inflicting
A harrowing pain
On those we
Will be survived by!*

*Is it not selfish
Taking our life
In to our hands
Our corporeal existence
To finish?*

*If we share our sorrow
Moral prop
From our confidants
We could borrow
This way
What is unbearable today
We may forget tomorrow.*

*Is it not better taking
The bull by the horn,
Circumventing challenges
To stand shoulder high
While many are born?*

Global Affairs

Explainer: Understanding carbon trading, its rationale



Credit: Joyce Chimbi/IPS

Kenya is home to the world's first-ever blue carbon initiative that sold carbon credits from mangrove conservation along its vast coastline.

Carbon trading has gained growing popularity on the African continent and is considered by many governments as a viable way to achieve their climate targets while building communities. IPS takes a look at what's behind the carbon market.

What is carbon trading and where did it come from?

During the United Nations Climate Change Conference in 2015, 196 nations agreed to an internationally binding treaty on climate change known as the Paris Agreement. The agreement was a commitment to limit global warming to 1.5°C by the end of this century.

A significant rise in global temperatures is a significant threat as it increases the effects of climate change, such as prolonged and severe droughts and deadly floods, like those experienced in Kenya recently, killing people and animals and destroying crops and critical infrastructure.

One of the biggest contributors to global warming or a dangerous rise in temperatures are greenhouse gas emissions, which include carbon dioxide, methane, and nitrous oxide. Carbon emissions are particularly dangerous. These gases are emitted as human beings go about their day-to-day living and business activities, such as driving a vehicle or running factory machines using coal-generated electricity.

The Paris Agreement, therefore, requires that nations make significant efforts to reduce carbon emissions. One of the solutions laid out was carbon emissions trading—those who reduce emissions would receive a financial reward and those that emit would bear a financial responsibility.

Simply put, carbon emissions trading allows you—who is unable to reduce carbon emissions to the required limits—to pay someone who is not only successfully limiting their own carbon emissions but has also gone a step further to remove additional carbon from the atmosphere. A similar approach was deployed in the 1990s to successfully remove sulphur from the atmosphere.

How does carbon trading work?

One of the best ways of removing carbon from the atmosphere is by planting and maintaining mangrove trees, as they capture

3–5 times more carbon from the atmosphere compared to other types of trees.

Kenya has various projects that remove carbon from the atmosphere and receive money for doing so through projects such as the Mikoko Pamoja (Swahili for Mangroves Together) and the Vanga Blue Forest. Mikoko Pamoja project was the first in the world to trade in carbon from planting mangroves.

The Mikoko community plants mangroves and successfully removes at least 3,000 metric tonnes of CO₂ from the atmosphere per year. The project started in 2013 and it will continue to capture carbon for trading until 2033, generating an annual revenue of about USD 130,000 from selling all the carbon captured annually.

Internationally recognized scientific methods exist to calculate how much carbon a certain business, activity or project emits and how much carbon a project, like the Mikoko Pamoja, captures in a year.

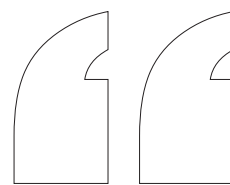
One tonne of carbon dioxide emitted into the environment is equivalent to one carbon credit. A carbon credit is a permit to emit carbon dioxide. For example, in line with the Paris Agreement, when company X in Europe is unable to reduce their emissions by say 3,000 metric tons, they can 'artificially' reduce them by paying for carbon credits from a community in Kenya that is able to reduce emissions and go a step further and remove an additional 3,000 metric tonnes from the atmosphere.

The community is allowed to sell the excess amount of carbon captured, in this case, 3,000 metric tonnes. The principle of selling and buying carbon credits is that the Kenyan community is already living below their emissions, have no obligation to make additional carbon emission reductions, but have been incentivized to remove more carbon from the atmosphere for money.

Company X is therefore punished by having to pay for the carbon they are releasing but at the same time rewarded by having their own carbon emissions wiped off by the carbon removal activities conducted by the Kenyan community.

What is a carbon market?

There are many carbon markets around the world. The kind of exchange of carbon



Kenya has various projects that remove carbon from the atmosphere and receive money for doing so through projects such as the Mikoko Pamoja (Swahili for Mangroves Together) and the Vanga Blue Forest

emitted for money described above is conducted through a carbon market called the Voluntary Carbon Market. The community in Kenya planting mangroves to capture carbon uses a middleman or broker to find a market for their carbon and negotiate the best price on their behalf.

The money is deposited into the community's bank accounts for the community's development projects. For example, Kenya's Vanga Blue Forest spans over 460 hectares and is expected to avoid emissions of over 100,379tCO₂-eq over a 20-year period.

In sub-Saharan Africa, an estimated 65 percent of carbon credits issued are in the voluntary carbon market, concentrated in just five countries: Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia, Zimbabwe, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The government of Kenya can enter into a carbon trading arrangement with another

government and this bilateral approach is much more lucrative compared to the voluntary approach. The World Bank estimates that one ton of carbon dioxide or one carbon credit would cost between 40 and 80 USD, in line with the Paris Agreement.

Remember, if you—from anywhere in the world—pay for one carbon credit from the Mikoko Pamoja project, you are essentially buying a permit to emit one ton of carbon dioxide.

In 2020, the Vanga Blue Forest received USD 48,713 in exchange for the carbon captured that year.

The voluntary carbon trading sector has grown exponentially and was valued at USD 2 billion in 2022. The players in the voluntary market gathered in Kenya in June 2023 for the world's largest carbon credit auction event where more than 2.2 million tonnes of carbon credits were sold.

This auction worked the same way as a painting auction works—only that carbon is an intangible commodity. Emitters haggle for the best prices to buy carbon credits or permit to help them wipe off their own emissions—they pay for the permit to emit.

What are the advantages and disadvantages of carbon trading?

Heavy carbon emitters are in the global north. Africa for instance, emits about 3.8 percent of global carbon emissions. Kenya's alone accounts for less than 1 percent of global carbon emissions.

Some say carbon trading systems are fraudulent—the global North buys the 'permission' to continue polluting and the global south receives financial crumbs to wipe off the former's harmful emissions. They also say carbon markets are a new form of colonialism and a distraction, as heavy emitters continue to emit without making strides to reduce their own emissions. Human Rights Watch has also expressed concern about the rights of an Indigenous community in Cambodia as carbon trading continues.

For others, carbon markets are increasing carbon removal projects while providing the money that developing countries need to accelerate growth and development.

(SOURCE: INTER PRESS SERVICE)

Law & Politics

Turning political tensions to national consultation

BY DANIEL ALEMAYEHU

Ethiopia, throughout its long history, has been beset by socioeconomic and political strife casting a shadow on the national unity of the country. Divided views sometimes hostile on some outstanding national matters have impacted cohesion and a tense political environment. Although registering growth for consecutive years, unresolved issues have impacted the peace and stability of the country.

Years of polarized views and antagonistic interest regarding major national matters have been leading to widespread discontent, protests, and even violence. Somehow, regimes have been trying to suppress divided views through force. Still, the failure to peacefully settle the issues has continued to pose serious challenges threatening the peace and stability of the country.

And, during the past many years, there have been few attempts to conduct a national dialogue and resolve divisive national issues.

The adamant political culture, inflexibility of different groups and the unwillingness of the regimes to resolve disputed matters have only resulted in the death of people and the destruction of properties. That is at least what has been observed in past years. As much as the good things, the attempt to impose certain political thinking through armed insurrection or violent acts has only brought mayhem to the whole country.

The incumbent has acknowledged that it is through a national dialogue that divisive rhetoric can be addressed and polarized views reconciled. After almost two years of preparation now the country has embarked on the actual work and optimism is high that if the process is credible and effective it can propel the country into the avenue of lasting stability.

In addition to the socioeconomic conundrums, political tension has been taking a toll in the nation. The hot debates on the current federal system and in some articles of the constitutions have been a divisive element in the country.

Moreover, political parties have been making the political environment tense and agitating the people along different political ends. And, this time, the political parties should bring their differences to the table and contribute to the national dialogue.

It is vital to mention that every part of society must play its role to realize the goals of having a national dialogue. Reports illustrate that different sects of society have been taking part in the process. Women, elites, leaders and members of political parties, even religious leaders, and



Political parties should take the opportunity that the dialogue blesses to bring their issues and make their stand known

institutions are doing well in supporting the process.

The commission is also working with different bodies. Local and international organizations coupled with responsible stakeholders are eager to play their part and support the commission. As the dialogue is a nationwide event, it is unable to perform every act only by the commission. This also paves the way to work in collaboration for a unified objective.

Starting last week, Addis Ababa is hosting the first and long-awaited agenda-gathering event for the national dialogue. During the week-long agenda-gathering event, many sections of the society of the capital participated and put their fingerprint into the process.

Similarly, political parties that reside in Addis Ababa are also getting involved in the process. It is reported that Mulugeta Abebe, Addis Ababa Political Parties Joint Council Chairman, stated that all parties in Ethiopia should practice dialogue in finding solutions to the various challenges.

The council firmly believes that political problems of the country, as to the chairman, should be solved through dialogue and building national consensus. 14 of the 16 political parties under the Addis Ababa Political Parties Joint Council are keen to contribute to the national dialogue and work for its success, added the chairman.

“It is necessary to work hard to create a common understanding on major issues by making use of the opportunity brought by the Ethiopian National Dialogue Commission and making dialogue a practice,” he noted.

The council will consolidate its contribution to the national dialogue, the chairman pointed out, adding that every citizen should also actively participate in the consultation process with a sense of ownership.

Ethiopian National Dialogue Commissioner Blaine Gebremedhin said on her part that the process of the dialogue chapter that started in Addis Ababa is going in democratic ways. The commission briefed stakeholders, including political party representatives, scholars, NGOs, government bodies, and influential personalities, on the agenda-gathering process.

Recall that the dialogue chapter in Addis Ababa with representatives from 119 woredas opened on Wednesday. Commissioner Blaine stated that the dialogue process is going according to plan and the respect of the participants to one another showed that problems can be resolved through consultations.

“It showed their readiness for peace and consultation,” she said, revealing that the representatives would later draw up a consolidated agenda and elect participants who represent them in the next stage of the dialogue.

After finalizing the Addis Ababa agenda gathering, the National Dialogue Commission will simultaneously begin a similar process in all the other regions.

During the inaugural session of the nationwide agenda-setting consultative chapter held at the Adwa Victory Memorial Museum, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed took part as a stakeholder representing the government. The premier has declared his government’s commitment to implementing the consensus that would be reached through the national dialogue.

The premier noted the national dialogue aims to make Ethiopia a nation of hope by strengthening unity instead of division. He further pointed out that properly utilizing this rare and historic opportunity for dialogue will make all winners. The prime minister urged all stakeholders not to miss this opportunity.

Political parties should take the opportunity that the dialogue blesses to bring their issues and make their stand known. Those parties should raise their issues and narrow the existing deviations so that Ethiopia will enjoy sustainability. The issues that divide the people and create polarization must be taken to the table and solved permanently. This responsibility is mainly given to political parties. Political parties have the potential to raise bold questions that draw attention both from the people and the government. The country seeks bold and tangible participation from its political parties and the government.

Planet Earth



Ethiopia's Green Legacy Initiative cutting global carbon pollution

BY FIKADU BELAY

Climate change is undoubtedly the defining challenge of the 21st century. While the world wars of the previous century significantly shaped the geopolitical landscape, the effects of global warming will likely have an even more profound and far-reaching impact on human civilization as a whole. However, as the planet continues to warm at an alarming rate, the consequences of a changing climate are poised to reshape the global landscape in profound and unprecedented ways, with consequences that, in many cases, may be even more severe and widespread than the ravages of war.

At the most fundamental level, climate change threatens the basic requirements for human life and flourishing. Disruptions to food and water security, driven by rising temperatures, shifting precipitation patterns, and increasingly frequent extreme weather events, put hundreds of millions at risk of malnutrition. Arable land is turning to desert, harvests are failing, and clean freshwater sources are being contaminated or depleted. The resulting humanitarian crises could dwarf even the largest armed conflicts in terms of human suffering.

Climate change is also fueling the emergence and spread of deadly infectious diseases. Also, mass displacement driven by climate disasters is already straining the capacity of nations to provide humanitarian aid, while heightening geopolitical tensions and the risk of armed conflict over dwindling resources. The systemic nature of these challenges raises the prospect of civilizational collapse as multiple interlinked systems that sustain human societies come under unprecedented strain.

In the face of pressing global environmental challenges, Ethiopia has emerged as a beacon of hope with its visionary Green Legacy Initiative. This Green Legacy Initiative lays a profound understanding of the intricate relationship between a healthy, thriving ecosystem and the well-being of the nation's people. Ethiopia has a rich agricultural heritage, has grappled with the consequences of rapid population growth, unsustainable

farming practices, and the relentless exploitation of natural resources. The result has been a steady decline in forest cover, soil fertility, and overall environmental resilience.

The impetus for the Green Legacy Initiative is Ethiopia's severe deforestation and environmental degradation challenges. Over the past several decades, the country has lost a significant portion of its forest cover due to factors like agricultural expansion, livestock grazing, and the unsustainable harvesting of wood resources. This has had devastating impacts on Ethiopia's biodiversity, soil fertility, water resources, and climate.

Through the Green Legacy Initiative, the Ethiopian government aims to reverse this trend and restore the country's natural landscapes. The program has mobilized the entire nation, from the federal government to regional state officials to communities, schools, and businesses, to participate in the massive tree-planting effort. Through coordinated campaigns and community-driven initiatives, Ethiopians from all walks of life have enthusiastically embraced the challenge, with the goal of restoring the country's ecological balance and securing a sustainable future.

Ethiopia has made remarkable strides in environmental conservation and climate change mitigation. According to Kebede Yamam, the Director General of Ethiopia's Forest Development, the country's forest lands alone have stored an astounding 2.8 billion tons of carbon.

Kebede stated that Ethiopia has been able to reduce 30% of the 35 billion tons of carbon polluting the world through its forest conservation efforts. This achievement can be largely attributed to the country's Green Legacy initiative, a program that is making substantial contributions to environmental recovery and air pollution prevention.

As part of the Green Legacy program, it aims to plant an ambitious 50 billion tree saplings over the next eight years. Among these, in the past five years, more than 32.5 billion saplings have already been planted under the initiative, and plans are in place to plant an additional 18 billion saplings in the

remaining three years.

Moreover, the Green Legacy Initiative extends beyond the act of planting trees. It encompasses a broader vision of sustainable development, which includes the promotion of agro-forestry practices, the protection of water resources, and the integration of renewable energy solutions. By addressing these interconnected aspects of environmental sustainability, the initiative aims to create a self-sustaining cycle of ecological restoration and economic prosperity.

The benefits of these tree-planting efforts extend beyond carbon sequestration. He highlighted that the program has also enabled the production of various fruit and cash crop seedlings, contributing to the country's food security. Moreover, the research on how Ethiopia has planted seedlings over the past years, climate protection, and economic impacts of the planted seedlings will be announced next month, promising to have far-reaching implications.

He emphasized that Ethiopia's environmental protection work will not only benefit the country but also contribute to stabilizing peace in the East African region by alleviating poverty to prevent floods, droughts, and unemployment. He stressed the importance of making environmental protection accessible to all areas, preventing land degradation, and guiding the efforts with knowledge and policy.

Beyond the tangible environmental benefits, the Green Legacy Initiative has also served as a powerful icon of Ethiopia's determination to lead the way in addressing the climate crisis. By positioning itself as a global leader in reforestation, it serves as a model for other countries looking to combat climate change and sustainable development. The country has gained international recognition which strengthened its diplomatic ties with other nations committed to environmental stewardship.

As the world grapples with the urgent need to address the devastating effects of climate change and environmental degradation, the Ethiopian Green Legacy Initiative stands as a shining example of what can be achieved through bold, ambitious, and collaborative

action.

Ethiopia has launched a major reforestation initiative, donating millions of tree saplings to its neighboring countries, including Djibouti, Kenya, and South Sudan. This collaborative effort aims to combat deforestation and promote sustainable environmental practices across the region, he noted.

Through its innovative approach and unwavering commitment, Ethiopia is not only transforming its own landscape but also inspiring a global movement towards a greener, more sustainable future for all.

The Director General of the Federal Environmental Protection Authority, Engineer Lelise Nemie, also stated that the commitment activities of a country's society have a prodigious role in environmental conservation. She mentioned that World Environment Day is celebrated on May 27th and 28th, 2016, with the theme of "land restoration, desertification, and drought resilience."

She mentioned that World Environment Day is being celebrated for the 51st time globally and the 31st time in Ethiopia, highlighting the significance of a clean and green environment for human well-being. This celebration spirit involves various activities, such as caring for previously planted saplings, cleaning campaigns, and awareness-raising occasions.

She emphasized that environmental protection is not the responsibility of a single institution but rather a collective effort involving all segments of society. She called for a joint approach to address environmental issues. Like water, soil, and plastic pollution, underscoring the need for collaboration and a unified commitment to safeguarding the planet.

Ethiopia's impressive environmental initiatives, including the Green Legacy programs, demonstrate the country's unwavering dedication to tackling climate change and promoting sustainable development. These efforts not only benefit the nation but also have the potential to inspire and influence the global community in the fight for a greener and more resilient future.