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Ethiopia's evolving ties with South Sudan

BY EYUEL KIFLU

ADDIS ABABA –The ever deepening bilateral relation between Ethiopia and South Sudan is promoting regional peace and prosperity, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) said.

As the region continues to grapple with conflicts and instability, the deepening cooperation between Addis Ababa and Juba is seen as a crucial factor in promoting regional peace and prosperity, MoFA's Neighbouring Countries Affairs Director Zerihun Abebe said.

He told *The Ethiopian Herald* that the shared commitment of the two nations would also enhance their diplomatic, economic, and strategic partnership for the mutual benefit of their peoples.

The bilateral cooperation between Addis Ababa and Juba extends to various fronts, Zerihun said, highlighting the recent Ethiopia-South

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Ethiopia, Singapore to solidify cooperation on transport, logistics

BY STAFF REPORTER

ADDIS ABABA - A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on bilateral consultations and a Statement of Intent between Ethiopia's

Ministry of Transport and Logistics and Singapore's Ministry of Transport were signed during Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed's stay at the Istana in Singapore.

The signing ceremony was presided over by

the leaders of the two countries, according to the Office of the Prime Minister.

Leaders of the two countries also expressed

See Ethiopia, Singapore... page 3



Premier congratulates Narendra Modi on election victory

BY STAFF REPORTER

ADDIS ABABA - Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) congratulated his Indian counterpart Prime Minister Narendra Modi on his election victory.

people, demonstrating that the people are the true owners of power.

Congratulations to my friend Narendra Modi on holding an election that respects this will and was conducted peacefully a significant victory and a clear sign that democracy is further flourishing in your country,"

"Elections are a testament to the will of the

See Premier congratulates... page 3

Drawing crucial lessons from Singapore timely: MoFA

BY MENGESAHA AMARE

ADDIS ABABA - It is high time for Ethiopia to draw important lessons from Singapore's developments including service delivery, transport and urban development, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) said.

MoFA Minister Ambassador Taye Atsekselassie said that Singapore has experienced a rapid economic growth through drafting and efficiently implementing appropriate policy in which Ethiopia can draw important lesson to achieve development.

As to him, Ethiopia does have a firm bilateral tie with Singapore since 1960s and Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) has paid an official visit to this country, which has become an affluent nation in Asia after experiencing poverty.

According to Ambassador Taye, Singapore's

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Ambassador Taye Atsekselassie



Institute mulling schemes to deliver standard products, promote food safety

• Ethiopia marks 6th World Food Safety Day

BY ASHENAFI ANIMUT

ADAMA - The Institute of Ethiopian Standards (IES) said that it has been engaging in introducing various schemes to deliver standardized products and ensuring food safety across the entire community.

Institute Director-General Meseret Bekele(PhD)made the above remark at the the workshop organized by the Institute National Codex Committee in partnership with the Ministry of Agriculture yesterday in connection with the 6th World Food Safety Day celebration under the theme : "Food Safety: Prepare for the Unexpected" in the presence of pertinent government entities, media partners and other stakeholders.

Mentioning the government's forefront role towards ensuring food safety and security, she further noted that her institution is closely working with other regulatory bodies and private sectors in agriculture value chain, food processing, packaging and food management systems among many others.

She emphasized that they are carrying out legal activities and schemes, providing trainings and technical supports to various sectors. Also, offering supports to the Lemi Integrated Industrial Park Injera Center to support export and small enterprises.

According to her, they are currently developing and implementing tracking and tracing technologies to come up with standard products.

The Ethiopian Food and Drug Authority (EFDA) Deputy Director-General Negash Simie on his part remarked that the authority is vigilantly working on food safety and processed and semi processed food products.

Apart from developing laboratory infrastructure, capacity building, he elucidated that the Authority has launched a food safety alert system to bring excellences in the area.

He said product-based, organizational structures and food laboratory coupled with experiences to realize efficient health facility.

According to the global research, over 600 million people contaminated by food borne disease globally and 91million people in Africa with higher mortality rate annually, he underscored.

Partners to offer training on tech talents for 10,000 youth

BY TSEGAYE TILAHUN

ADDIS ABABA – Safaricom Ethiopia, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and Sumitomo launched Safaricom Talent Cloud yesterday to train and empower 10, 000 youth tech professionals, entrepreneurs, and digital leaders by the 2024 across the country.

At the event, they also signed Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) with six universities.

Speaking at the occasion, the Ministry of Innovation and Technology (MInT) Minister Belete Molla (PhD) stated that the project aimed to address the tech talent shortages in the country hindering IT industry development by providing comprehensive capacity-building opportunities and career development pathways to 10,000 Ethiopian talents by the end of 2024.

“In Ethiopia, we have embraced digital revolution with open arms, recognizing its immense potential to drive economic growth, create jobs, and improve the lives of our citizens. Our partnerships with Safaricom Ethiopia, Sumitomo Corporation and JICA have already yielded remarkable results in expanding access to affordable internet as well as providing Digital Skills



to the youth.”

The cooperation between universities and Safricom Ethiopia, Sumitomo and JICA would help to train and empower youth talents to thrive in the Digital economy. He urged all stakeholders to work collaboratively and diligently to ensure the successful implementation of MoC.

“JICA believes that investing in human capital development is essential for catalyzing Ethiopia's digital transformation journey. The Safaricom Talent Cloud equips Ethiopian brilliance with the tools to spearhead solutions for local challenges while actively shaping the Fourth Industrial Revolution from Addis. We are proud to support in laying the groundwork for a more

skilled workforce and a stronger economy.” said JICA Ethiopia representative Chie Shimodaira.

The project will shape Ethiopia’s digital landscape in the coming years. It requires ensuring the inclusiveness of talents across the country, he said.

Towards realizing the inclusion of talent from all over Ethiopia, JICA has partnered with six major Universities such as Adama, Bahir Dar, Mekelle, Jigjiga, Dire Dawa and Hawassa universities to provide physical venues with internet connectivity and equipment, he added.

The platform will enable to teach, develop and empower 10,000 young Ethiopians by the end of 2024, it was learnt.

Integrated water resource mgt. vital for holistic dev't: MoWE

BY MESERET BEHAILU

ADAMA - Ministry of Water and Energy (MoWE) said that activities are being carried out to ensure integrated and proper water resourceutilization across the country.

The Ministry has organized a two-day workshop to endorse the plan of an integrated water resource management systemdesigned to realize fair utilization of Genale Dawa, Omo Gibe, and Wabishebelle Basinsand initiate a forum among regional states sharing these basins.

The event was launched yesterday under the theme “Establishingan integrated water resource management system is a guarantee of success for all sectors’ development.”

In his opening remark, MoWE Water Management State Minister Abraha Adugna (PhD) said that a number of activities have been carrying out to ensure the fair and equitable water resource utilizationespeciallyin the last four years.

As to him, the country needs to preserve and develop basins to achieveeconomic and social development.

Ethiopia has plenty of surface and groundwater resourcesthough a numbers



Abraha Adugna (PhD)

of people are stillfacingshortage ofpotable water due to lack of effective water resource management, he noted.

Abraha further stated that the Genale Dawa,

Omo Gibe, and Wabishebelle basins share large areas and generate huge water volume. Accordingly, he mentioned that the Ministry carried out discussion with various states in the country to ensure sustainablewater resource management in these loci.

Likewise, the MoWE also formed a technical committee to ensure water realizemanagementby giving heedsfor an integrated approach to bring remarkable outcome in this regard, he added.

Representing the Ministry of Lowland and Irrigation, Mesfin Dagne on his part said that absence of proper utilization of alternative water resources has made a significant number of people vulnerable todrought and flood.

Mesfin, who is also Member of the House of People Representatives, expressed that the Ministry has the mandate to support the activities in protecting basinswhilepreserving and developing the water resources should not be left to a single body.

Therefore, he said,the workshop would bring a paramount significance to collaborate stakeholders to work togetherthrough applying research-based approaches.

News

Japan, dev't partners to reconstruct 17 schools in Amhara, Tigray

BY STAFF REPORTER

MEKELLE - Yesterday marked a significant milestone in the journey towards rebuilding education infrastructure in conflict-affected areas of Tigray and Amhara states as a groundbreaking ceremony kicked off at Negash Primary School in Tigray.

It was learnt that the reconstruction of the schools symbolizes hope and progress amid adversity.

In a press release sent to *The Ethiopian Herald*, UNICEF, with generous support from JICA and the Government of Japan, initiated a project in 2023 that aimed at restoring school infrastructure, including Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) facilities, in 17 schools across Tigray and Amhara states.

Accordingly, the project aims to reconstruct and rehabilitate severely damaged school facilities in conflict-affected areas, to ensure that children have the much-needed access to a safe and conducive learning environment. In addition, the provision of gender-disaggregated and inclusive WASH facilities will promote hygiene and sanitation practices, benefiting over 12,000 children and nearly 48,000 community members.

"The Government of Japan is committed to supporting Ethiopia's education



sector since it is our profound belief that children's education and health is crucial for the development and well-being of any nations and communities, and such efforts will undoubtedly contribute to a brighter future for children in Tigray, Amhara, and beyond," said SHIBATA Hironori, the Ambassador of Japan to Ethiopia.

The UNICEF Representative also underscored the hope found amidst the conflict through such initiatives making a tangible difference in the lives of children, especially in conflict-affected states.

"UNICEF is extremely grateful to the Government of Japan for this generous contribution," said Aboubacar Kampo, UNICEF Representative in Ethiopia.

"Reconstructing schools in conflict-affected

states is crucial for restoring normalcy and providing children with a safe and conducive environment for learning."

"The work that we have started here today aligns with JICA's values to build trust and strong partnerships, as well as achieving the Sustainable Development Goals by providing access to education, clean water, and sanitation," said TAKANO Shintaro, Senior Representative, JICA Ethiopia. "Above all, we are excited to invest in building an environment that will allow children to learn, grow and one day give back to their communities."

The project ceremony signifies a collaborative effort towards rebuilding educational infrastructure and fostering a brighter future for the children of Ethiopia.

Drawing crucial ...

green legacy is the ever exciting that needs to be learned as an important lesson.

He further said that as Singapore, a city state, has recorded a remarkable growth and achieved an unbelievable economic turnaround, Ethiopia has to follow the suit of this nation and lift its citizens out of the grip of poverty.

He said, "During his stay with officials of Singapore, Prime Minister Abiy will discuss green legacy, education, transport and logistics, investment, innovation, manufacturing, green development, providing citizens prompt service, urban development, among others, as per agreement."

As to him, a memorandum of understanding was signed regarding continuous consultation in various areas as they have development and firm commitment in this regard. "We would conduct discussions with some 15 Singapore companies with regard to manufacturing, green economy, knowledge transfer etc."

The diplomatic ties between Singapore and Ethiopia are really bearing fruits since the former is advancing towards making green legacy practical, he added.

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed's visit to Singapore, would strengthen the historical ties that date back to the 1960s when Emperor Haile Selassie I of Ethiopia and former Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew of Singapore conducted exchange visits, laying the foundation for the enduring relationship.

Premier...

the prime minister posted on X.

Similarly, Prime Minister Abiy has congratulated President of South Africa, Cyril Ramaphosa on overseeing an election process that truly honors the principles of democracy.

"Your leadership in ensuring a fair, transparent, and peaceful election is a testament to your commitment to the will of the people and the democratic values that bind us all," he said.

Ethiopia's evolving ties...

Sudan business and investment forum, as well as upcoming political consultations.

Regarding the Abbay Dam project, he noted that South Sudan, as a Nile Basin country, welcomes former's efforts to utilize the Nile waters. He explained that while Juba is not directly linked to the Blue Nile, the country recognizes the importance of the equitable and reasonable management of the Nile's resources.

He stated that the energy generated from the Dam will also benefit South Sudan, and

the two countries are working to connect their power grids.

Zerihun highlighted the scholarships provided by Ethiopia, which sponsor hundreds of South Sudanese students annually across various fields. Security cooperation between the two nations, particularly along their shared borders, is also a priority.

Infrastructure development is another area of focus, with the two countries finalizing an agreement to construct a road connecting

their territories. Zerihun expressed optimism that this project, once completed, will further strengthen the bonds between Ethiopia and South Sudan.

The Director emphasized that the people-to-people connection between the two countries is also described as "amazing," with a shared destiny of mutual prosperity and regional stability. He also underscored the historic ties between the two nations, stating that they are "cemented by blood" due to their joint sacrifices during South Sudan's fight for independence.

Ethiopia, Singapore to...

their views about possible bilateral cooperation; the meeting between the two leaders coincides with the 55th anniversary of diplomatic ties between the two sides.

Speaking at the official dinner, Ethiopian Prime Minister, Abiy Ahmed (PhD) said that: "We're inspired to come and to visit your country for one reason, which is political continuity and economic continuity. In Africa in general and Ethiopia in particular the biggest challenge we have is on con-

tinuity," Ethiopian News Agency reported.

Singapore Prime Minister and Minister for Finance Lawrence Wong also said that Singapore-based companies are interested to expand their operations in Ethiopia in the agriculture, logistics and aircraft maintenance sectors.

Ethiopia serves as gateways to enhance links between Southeast Asia and Africa, Wong said adding that: "Prime Minister Abiy and I are committed to take the bi-

lateral relationship to greater heights. We have agreed to establish bilateral consultations between our foreign ministries to review and explore new areas of cooperation."

Both are also exploring the possibility of cooperation in new areas like transport, connectivity, digitalization, and capacity-building issues.

Moreover, Singapore has named an orchid hybrid in its national park after Prime Min-

ister Abiy Ahmed and First Lady Zinash Tayachew to promote friendship with Ethiopia.

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) and First Lady Zinash Tayachew attended an Orchid naming ceremony at the National Orchid Garden where an orchid hybrid was named after them (Aranda Abiy Ahmed Zinash Tayachew) as a gesture of friendship to promote goodwill between Singapore and Ethiopia.

Opinion

Everlasting diplomatic tie through 'blood brothers'

BY MENGESHA AMARE

The phrase 'Blood Brothers' has suitably described the bond that Ethiopian veterans of the Korean War shared with their Korean brothers in arms over six decades ago. Yes, amicable ties ranging from individual amity to nations acquaintance, at a larger scale of course, are of significantly useful in leading a successful and healthier life as what one lacks can easily be fluffed by another and the situation has potentially made conditions suitable to back one another/each other.

Taking such a lucrative merger into consideration, almost all countries of the world establish, with whom they have a historical linkage, boundary share, similar visions and missions for change and progress, you name it, diplomatic ties with a view to fostering common progress and augmentation.

In principle, diplomacy is the art and science of maintaining peaceful relationships between nations, groups, or individuals for a common advantage. Often, diplomacy refers to representatives of different groups discussing crucial issues as conflict, trade, the environment, technology, or maintaining security, among other things.

Since long back, Ethiopia and the Republic of Korea have been strategic partners, which are working to boost common benefits in all aspects via fostering diplomatic relations. Relations between Ethiopia and the Republic of Korea are key agreements to be in a state of frequent, numerous bilateral consultations regarding a number of issues.

Ethiopia and the republic of Korea have established diplomatic relations since 1963, obvious. The latter has had an embassy in Ethiopia's capital Addis Ababa since 1965. Since Ethiopian troops' participation in the Korean War in 1950 and it was a laborious and uncommon effort to be made by an African country, the bilateral ties between the two countries are expected to be heightening well.

As leant from the function it has been serving and the means it has been run, diplomacy is the main instrument of foreign policy which represents the broader goals and strategies that guide states' interactions with each other and with the rest of the world, too. Yes, international treaties, agreements, alliances, and other manifestations of international relations are usually the result of diplomatic negotiation and cordial processes.

In due course of making diplomatic moves fruitful, diplomats, councilor officers, liaison office representatives of a given country help shape the way a country has been trekking by advising government officials. These days, modern diplomatic methods, practices, and principles have been well exercised since long back, especially with regard to the aforesaid nations.

Most diplomacy is now conducted by

accredited officials, such as envoys and ambassadors, through a dedicated foreign affairs office, and diplomats operate through diplomatic missions, most commonly consulates and embassies, and rely on a number of support staff; the term diplomat is thus sometimes applied broadly to diplomatic and consular personnel and foreign ministry officials.

Examining the dialogues, attitudes, and actions Korea has taken to engage with Ethiopia, everyone can easily find the fact that Ethiopia dispatched its troops to combat in aid of Korea and the latter has very heavily weighted the foreign policy positively toward Ethiopia.

Ethiopia and the Republic of Korea have been discussing the bilateral and diplomatic relations between Addis Ababa and Seoul, and arduously working to increase their partnership on multilateral platforms pledging to deepen and expand their partnership relations in the social, economic, political and even financial meadow. The two countries will, more importantly and seriously think of maintaining how long diplomatic ties are further consolidated. Yes, Ethiopia, since long back, has been considering Korea as its example for growth and development as well as pivotal progress partners both qualitatively and quantitatively for the economic growth and progress of the former.

True, further strengthening cooperation between the countries in bilateral and multilateral venues, has to receive due attention and special emphasis to be pushed forward. The friendship between the two countries is forged in blood and agreed to further consolidate the long-standing diplomatic relations in the fields of trade, investment and cooperation for development for the benefit of the respective peoples.

The people and government of Korea needs to be well acknowledged for choosing Ethiopia as one of the critical priority development partners in Africa following their bloody brother and sisterhood, of course.

Ethiopians and Koreans expressed commitment to renew their historic ties which has been manifested in several areas of mutual interests for many years. The two countries have been expressing respective commitment to renew their historic ties which has been manifested in several areas of mutual interests for many years.

Without a shadow of doubt, Ethiopia-Korea ties have been set up following their encounter and expected to boost the diplomatic relationship between the two houses. Needless to state, too, Ethiopia and Korea have been enjoying over sixty years of exceptional ties in the diplomatic landscape, people to pole ties, military field, and more, with a view to seizing a new height.

Spatially thinking, Ethiopia has a high potential and it is five times the size of the Korean Peninsula; its population is around 120 million; and young people are more than 60% of its population.

The very important historical and blood bondage that has firmly glued the two countries has ever been remembered from generation to generation. If one requests that why does Ethiopia have a specially outlook toward the republic of Korea, they have gained the response staking that 'Not only have Ethiopia and the Republic of Korea associated in terms of social, economic, technological and even political fraternity that can potentially bear material wealth and prosperity, but they have had ever memorable blood combination as their beloved troops had fought and been buried in one cemetery.

Yes, Ethiopia is an ally committed to protecting democracy and freedom on the Korean Peninsula during the Korean War by sending more than 6,000 troops, and as the largest development cooperation partner in Africa, the two countries maintain special friendly relations that help each other to peace and prosperity. This well founded relationship would continue flourishing as the commitment of the two sisterly nations is being renewed year after year and well transcend from posterity to posterity.

The two countries have keeping intervals of course discussed a range of economic cooperation, trade, and people-to-people relations, even political trajectories among other things. That is why their bilateral ties have been bearing fruits.

Truly speaking, the close collaborations between the two counties have been heightened as these countries are in a position to well cement ties of all sorts and committed to provide each other opportunities to review and further strengthen the already existing symbolic Ethio-Korea diplomatic lash.

Such a symbolic relation, taking all circum stances and workable diplomatic atmosphere into account, must be transformed into visible, practical development achievements, trade, investment, and overall enhanced economic cooperation between these countries.

What matters here is the two countries need to embark on more practical steps to be taken, especially if there are shortcomings in due course of running a doable diplomatic relations, towards making the special relation the two countries have had so as to yield practical socio-economic development and other important ladder. Strengthening such a longstanding ties will undoubtedly provide the two countries with opportunities to formulate win-win partnerships with African countries, scale up the bilateral relations into long-term strategic partnerships, and usher in substantial practical development cooperation and commitment to work for a

common good.

Here, the two sides have to come up with necessary frameworks in various areas of cooperation to be translated into practical actions and bring about meaningful strides with a view to furthering the bilateral relations set up over six decades ago.

So long as diplomacy is the art, the science, and the means by which nations can commonly work out their assignments in a collaborative way, it is also a viable means towards safeguarding their interests and promote their political, economic, cultural or scientific relations through maintaining peaceful relationships, fraternity, unity and unwavering stance towards marching against obstacles facing the two parties.

True, diplomacy can be license or document allowing someone to travel or to have privileges. Besides, it has become fundamental to the conduct of foreign relations, and ensures that diplomats can work without threats of influence by the host government and people as well. The very point that needs to be taken into account in this regard is protection for the diplomats and their families from any form of irregular act, the protection of all forms of diplomatic communication, the immunity from civil and administrative jurisdiction, and the obligation for diplomats to respect the laws of the host state. Under such a binding, and applicable diplomatic concepts, diplomatic community from sending country to the host one is duty bound to respect the rules and be active ambassadors of their respective counties.

Being abided by such a doable approach diplomats of Ethiopian and those of Korea are discharging their respective responsibilities and duties keeping the national interests of their origin.

In a nut shell, the historical and longstanding bilateral ties between Ethiopia and the Republic of Korea need to be well taken care of and translated into a meaningful measure to make real difference in all aspects. The ever quoted and remembered saying 'Blood brothers!' needs to be well recited by the new generation as it helps the young generation of the two countries to further reinvigorate the historical and longstanding bilateral ties between Ethiopia and Korea. The phrase 'Blood brothers' definitely refers to real and authentic brothers coming out of the same womb. Nothing can be cited to express the true relations between countries more than this telling and practical wording. This is the expression that Korean and Ethiopian officials use when they talk about the relationship between their two countries. These words also aptly describe the bond that Ethiopian veterans of the Korean War share with their Korean brothers in arms. Long live Ethio-Korean firm ties!

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

Editorial

Make sure startups grow into multinational businesses!

This week, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed stopped in the once poor now affluent nations in Asia. After stopping in South Korea for the Africa-South Korea summit, Abiy also arrived in Singapore for an official state visit. The two nations are among the four East and South East Asian economies nicknamed Asian Tigers. While Hong Kong and Singapore are the world's leading financial centres, South Korea and Taiwan serve as global manufacturing hubs. Before clinching the title of Asian miracles, the four economies were once poor populations, particularly in the 1960s.

In only four decades, the economies turned to be vibrant and achieved a miraculous economic turnaround. Investment in innovation, manufacturing and saving are credited with the rapid transformation. These economies set a good lesson for the African continent that ticks all the boxes for manufacturing.

In many instances, what began as startup businesses have turned out to become multinational companies. With the right policies and adequate investments, startups were able to morph into big investment ideas backing national development.

And, African Nations like Ethiopia with a productive population, and abundant yet untapped natural resources will invest in these areas should they see sustained and rapid economic prospects.

In Ethiopia, startup businesses, manufacturing and the green economy have been prioritized particularly in the last few years. The sector is one of the areas that have received a great deal of attention in the 10-year economic plan. And, there have also been big initiatives directed at fostering the manufacturing sector.

In recent years, Ethiopia has witnessed the growth of startups that focus on industries like e-commerce, renewable energy, finance, and agriculture. Ethiopia has several advantages for startups, such as a youthful and sizable population, rising internet usage, and government programs.

The country this week hosted the Start-up Award Program.

Startup businesses are coming up with new ideas and solutions in agri-tech, financial inclusion, and education, among others.

While toiling to sustain growth, the country has set lofty targets to build a green economy and achieve carbon neutrality.

There are ongoing investments in geothermal energy, wind power, biofuels, utility-scale and off-grid solar, and geothermal energy.

While opening the prestigious Ethiopian Startup Awards event organized by the Ministry of Labor and Skills (MoLS) in partnership with the Global Startup Awards, Deputy Prime Minister Temesgen Tiruneh said that Ethiopia remains committed to strengthening floods of emerging startups encompassing technology and innovation to expedite the socio-economic development aspirations

This event also connects African fellows which help address ideal solutions for African solutions for African problems in reality.”

The government has been paying prime attention to initiatives which are firmly believed as engines for development through spearheaded initiatives thereby garnering global recognition.

Aside from promoting creativity, startups have also huge contributions towards creating national and global business interconnections and accelerating the country's foreign direct investment, Temesgen remarked stressing the need to promote further cooperation.

As far as Africa is concerned, Startup business is flourishing. Continental initiatives like the above one should take root to make sure that startups grow into multinational investments. Moreover, there must be a strong nexus between the manufacturing sector and green economic initiatives. Coordinated effort is needed to facilitate, explore, capacitate and harness emerging startups via mentorship, training and capacity building to spur global connectivity as well.



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Opinion

Startups guarantee Ethiopia's sustainable economic growth

BY GIRMACHEW GASHAW

The term startup refers to a company in the first stages of operations. Startups are founded by one or more entrepreneurs who want to develop a product or service for which they believe there is demand. These companies generally start with high costs and limited revenue, which is why they look for capital from a variety of sources such as venture capitalists.

Launching a startup is a very exciting situation at the moment. Even though individuals come up with a brilliant entrepreneurial idea, they may struggle to sustain their venture if they are unable to face the challenges of the business process. These start-uppers will not be able to turn their brilliant ideas into successful business entities unless they receive business-related training.

There are a variety of advantages to working for a startup. More responsibility and opportunities to learn are two. As startups have fewer employees than large, established companies, employees tend to wear many hats, working in a variety of roles, which leads to more responsibility as well as opportunities to learn.

Startups tend to be more relaxed in nature, making the workplace more of a communal experience, with flexible hours, increased employee interaction, and flexibility. Startups tend to also have better workplace benefits, such as nurseries for children, free food, and shorter workweeks.

Through short-term training, entrepreneurs can gain crucial new expertise, especially in the area of marketing. Despite having developed their products, they may lack marketing experience. Business-related training helps startups develop a business model and learn how to attract new clients.

By doing so, they will be in a good position from day one of their business engagement until the production phase, as they begin to sell their products using the skills acquired from the training to find new customers.

An entrepreneur who comes up with an innovative idea may lack the skills to develop a business plan and manage a business effectively. They may struggle with making cost-benefit analyses, preparing product samples, importing machinery, and ordering, importing, and installing machines.

Young people with the necessary skills and experience can develop their businesses, build confidence, and plan for the future. Strong entrepreneurs are crucial for Ethiopia's growth and development over the next 20 to 30 years, so it is time to support them effectively.

Stakeholders in the field need to support entrepreneurs with new business ideas. By recognizing the wonderful ideas they have,

stakeholders should select them and find ways to provide various supports such as networking, finance, and training to help their businesses grow and develop.

Young entrepreneurs play a crucial role in making sustainable decisions and developing businesses that positively impact the environment.

The government supports entrepreneurs by connecting them with investors to access finance for their ideas and encourages them to be effective in their business journey. For example, the Ethiopian Startup Awards were launched on June 3, 2024, with the objective of encouraging innovative entrepreneurs in the country. The Award Program was co-hosted by the Ministry of Labor and Skills, Global Startup Awards, and the Ministry of Innovation and Technology.

The government of Ethiopia is making efforts to boost startups and help the country become influential in terms of innovation and technology. This shows that attention has been given to startups, which are vital for the development of other economic sectors. The month-long National Startup event launched by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed recently attracted over 300 startups, showcasing the government's special place for startups.

Such events create a platform for knowledge exchange, training, and panel discussions. Ethiopia is aware of the importance of innovation and creativity, intensifying reforms to further stimulate the sector.

Winners of the Ethiopian Startup Awards are expected to participate in a competition at the African level next year in Ethiopia. Continental winners will also be part of the international award competition scheduled to take place in Istanbul, Turkey.

It is important to appreciate private companies and stakeholders for their unwavering support for startups. They should continue to provide enhanced support.

The government of Ethiopia has embarked on massive development activities to transform the country, citing surplus irrigated wheat production, a green development revolution, and other infrastructure projects.

Overall, the startup initiative has been showcasing the capacities of Ethiopian youths in innovation. The attention given to innovation and creativity has created opportunities for startups to thrive, as many startups are engaging in business activities.

Startups have been given utmost attention in the country's 10-year development plan. The government has taken important steps, such as enacting proclamations to promote the sector.

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

Business & Economy



Exerting effort on manufacturing industry boosts the economic progress

Building resilience via home-grown economic reform

BY ABEBE WOLDEGIORGIS

According to the World Bank's report on the global economic outlook, Ethiopia's economy was critically affected by the two-year war in the northern part of the country. The Pretoria agreement signed in 2020 brought it to the war to end. But it has left its daunting impacts behind.

By the same token, the emerging market and developing economies will be buffeted by economic headwinds from multiple quarters: pressure on weak health care systems, loss of trade and tourism, dwindling of remittances, subdued capital flows, and tight financial conditions amid mounting debt.

It is highlighted that countries need to undertake comprehensive reform programs to improve the fundamental drivers of their economic growth.

On the other hand, when the economy is affected by the external shake, countries that rely on rain fed agriculture and importing goods and services from abroad like Ethiopia suffer a great deal because of the imported inflation and the public faces the brunt of high living cost.

Taking this reality into consideration, the Ethiopian government has launched a "Homegrown Economic Reform" agenda three years ago which aimed to transform the country from a largely agrarian low-income economy to an industrialized lower-middle-income economy by 2030. This will require the private sector to engage in the nation's economic growth by minimizing the public sector's financing capacity.

While explaining about the new economic reform agenda to the high ranking officials recently, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) said that the initiative aims to propel Ethiopia to become the African icon of prosperity by 2030.

The newly introduced initiative, among other things, outlined macroeconomic, structural and sectorial reforms that are said to pave the way for job creation, poverty reduction, and inclusive growth. The initiative gives special emphasis to sectors such as agriculture, manufacturing, mining, tourism, and information communication and technology (ICT).

To this end, having a well-organized homegrown economic policy will have a significant role in realizing Ethiopia's sustainable development. In the past, the country's economy was highly dependent on imports from overseas and donations. Even, the country had been importing food items from abroad while it could harvest locally. However, its suitable climate, wide arable land, and water resources allow the country to harvest abundant crops.

In the past, the agricultural sector contributed below the expectation of the nation. This had been so because of the less attention paid to the sector; very little agricultural investment and extreme climate condition. After assuming power six years ago, however, the reformist government rendered much attention to the sector and there have been an encouraging increment in the amount of yield over the last year. The expansion of irrigated dry-season wheat farm can be cited in this regard.

The irrigation farm practice is expanded year after year not only in the high land parts of the country but also in the low lands and arid places of the country such as Afar and Somali regions. Currently, the pastoral community residing in the two regions has been engaging both in sedentary farming and cattle rearing. The communities, in addition to producing wheat, they are harvesting the by-products of wheat for animals' forage.

According to the Ethiopian Economists' Association, Ethiopia is home to diversified natural resources. Nevertheless, it has been experiencing severe drought repeatedly though it is known as the water tower of East Africa. Being the water tower of East Africa has not benefited its development efforts in the past. However, supporting the agriculture sector with mega irrigation projects will enable the country to ensure food security and even export to its neighboring countries.

Apart from irrigating farms, the country's water resource is able to generate enough electric power to local consumption and to export surplus to neighboring countries. Due to lack of capacity to develop mega electric projects on its rivers, substantial number of citizens still lives in darkness. Recent reports indicate that more than 56% of the country's citizens do not have access to electricity. That means, close to 58 million people in the

country never use electric power.

The population residing in the rural parts of the country still heavily relied on traditional energy sources such as bio-mass for cooking and light. In order to meet their energy demand, they resort to cutting forest trees which in turn aggravates deforestation, soil erosion and land degradation. Building different hydroelectric dams like the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) and others can be taken as a way out for easing modern energy deficit.

Power generation capacity of the country from hydropower dams and other sources is huge. Thus, the government has gone long distance in exporting electric power to the neighboring countries side by side with addressing local demand. On top of connecting the region's countries with electric power, this step enables the nation garner foreign currency which is badly needed for the importation of capital goods and vital industrial inputs. Besides, Expanding manufacturing industries is possible where there is ample electric power supply. It is also understood that it is impossible to attain development without expanding industries and technology. The service sector is also directly linked with electric power.

Besides, the supply of electric power boosts tourism, accelerates production capacity of manufacturing industries, improves health care, and the education sectors.

Proper utilization of water resources is essential for both electric power generation and expansion of irrigated farms. Most emerging economies like China utilized their water resource potentials properly to reach higher level of living standard. China has built numerous hydroelectric dams on its rivers during the 1980s and established small and medium manufacturing industries. These industries have ignited their endeavors towards industrialization. After this, industrialization blossomed in China, electric-based irrigation projects expanded and the agriculture sector has become profitable and gone beyond feeding the bulk Chinese population.

India has also shared similar stories with China regarding its development. India launched a green revolution campaign to develop its water resource sustainably and limit desertification. As agriculture

prospered, the industry also prospered in India. The story of the US and other countries is not different from this. Exploiting the natural resource for stimulating the economy is the beginning of development for every country in the world.

Currently, Ethiopia accomplished more than 95% of the GERD construction. With no doubt, GERD Project will have enormous potential to intensify the country's development endeavors after its completion.

The Ethiopian Economists' Association surveyed how GERD will contribute to the country's annual economic growth. The survey also assessed the extent to which it benefits Sudan and Egypt. The research study assured of the three countries immense benefits from the GERD. Even if, Ethiopia builds the dam investing huge amount of money from its own treasury, it will benefit not only Ethiopia but also the lower riparian countries.

Sufficient supply of electric power to manufacturing industries will make them provide products to market with fair price. The industries will also become competitive in the global market. GERD's completion will mobilize the industry sector through increasing its employment opportunities, working hours, productivity, and finally promoting export. In line with this, GERD's presence will have a significant role in ensuring sustainable water flow to Sudan and Egypt.

As mentioned above, the homegrown economic reform aspires to transform the nation's economic sectors such as agriculture, service and manufacturing from the small productivity rate to the higher level which boosts the national growth. The expansion of manufacturing sector creates job opportunities to hundreds of thousands, helps import substitution so that the nation could save hard currency, boost export, transform the agriculture sector and encourage the inflow of foreign investment along with technology and knowledge transfer.

Moreover, on top of playing its role in ensuring food security, the agriculture sector increases production that could yield enough surpluses for export. The hotel and tourism industry will also attain the higher level of development.

Art & Culture

'Year of the return?' If Italy can do it, why not Africa?

BY MULUGETA GUDETA

Culture is as much important or more important than other concerns in Africa. News about the rise of African contemporary arts in music, painting, or the film industry might be encouraging and a source of much pride to the new generation of Africans. But the return of lost or stolen ancient African historical or cultural relics should trigger much more concern because these lost items represent Africa's "lost soul" and Africa's "lost spirits". A nation or a continent that has lost some of its most important cultural souls: cannot be said to have achieved full independence from colonialism.

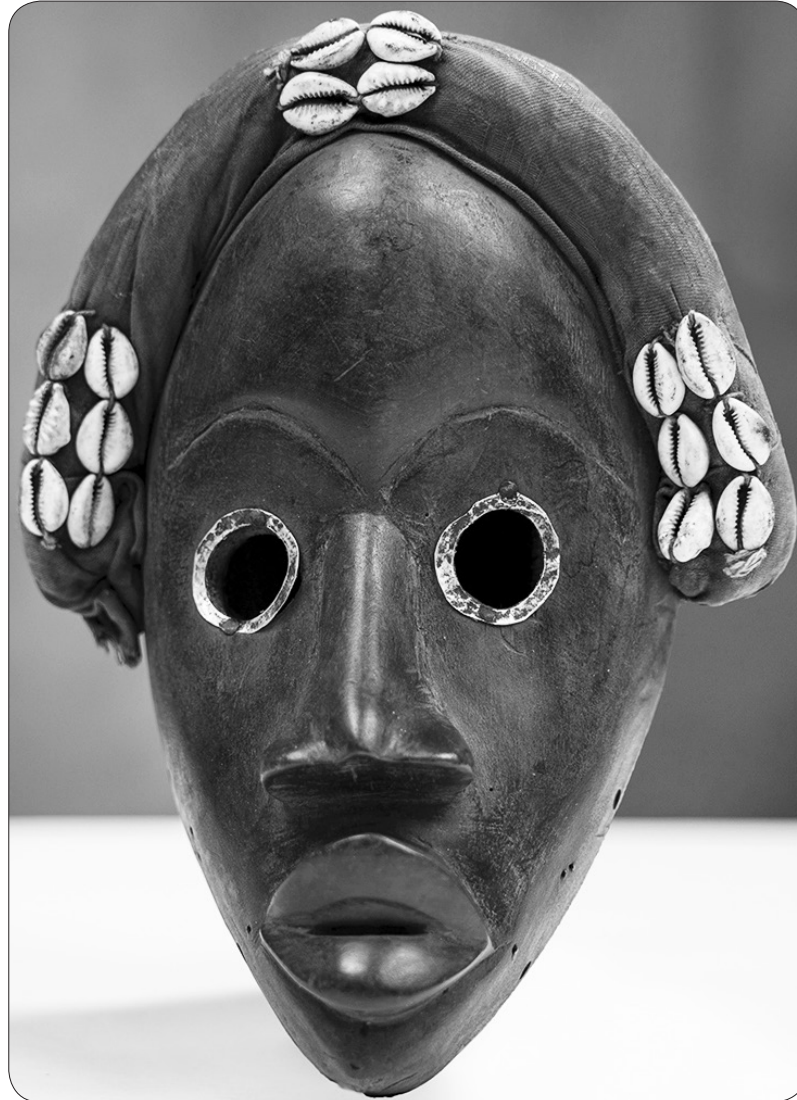
It is only functioning on borrowed time and borrowed identity that will sooner or later prove a house built on sand. It is only when a country or a continent has rediscovered its lost identity that it can be said to be culturally and spiritually free and capable of living its natural identity that will promote other engagements in politics or economics. It is in this context that we should appreciate the current trend in the global cultural arena where countries are fighting to recapture their lost identity by reclaiming their lost cultural or traditional relics.

It would not be erroneous or an exaggeration to look at the current year 2024, as the year that may go down in contemporary history something like the year that has heralded the launching of a widespread movement by Africa and other countries to get historical artifacts back to their countries of origin. Africa is leading the initiative. This year may even earn the accolade of 'year of return' or the 'reversal of injustice'. The number of countries that are requesting the return of their stolen artifacts is rising. The latest country to do so is Italy. It may be the first European nation to announce it publicly. This is not only encouraging but also inspiring.

Italy was of course the weakest link in the colonial occupation of Africa, suffering a historic rebuff by Ethiopia at Adwa. That was the first victory by an African country scored against European power, if Italy could at all be called a powerful country. Mussolini had messed up with its politics and contributed to hastening the end of Italy's adventure in Africa while the major powers were still in control of their African possessions. Italy was indeed the weakest link in the chain of colonialism, and it claimed a few petty possessions, like Italian Somaliland or Eritrea, alongside Germany which was a real global military and industrial power but not a colonial power.

The paradox of Italy's weakness has continued to reverberate throughout the 20th century as many countries, and Ethiopia in particular, launched a campaign for the return of its stolen artifacts. Historical justice has never been meted out and in a comic twist of history; the country is now requesting the return of its own stolen artifacts. This has also the flair of 'poetic justice' being served at last. What is interesting in this narrative however is to know how, when, and by whom Italy's artifacts were stolen.

A story recently appeared in The Guardian online, the digital version of the famous British newspaper well-known for its global



coverage of artistic and cultural developments. According to the source, "Italy last Tuesday, celebrated the return of around 600 antiquities from the US, including ancient bronze statues, gold coins, mosaics and manuscripts valued at \$65 million, that were looted years ago, sold to US museums galleries and collectors and recovered as a result of criminal investigations."

The same sources maintained that "This was the latest presentation of Italy's decades-long efforts to recover antiquities that were looted or stolen from its territory by "tomb raiders" and sold to antiquities dealers who often forged or fudged provenance records to resell the loot to high-end buyers' auction houses and museum."

There are two ways or methods of reclaiming stolen or looted relics once their destination is known. It is either through purchases that the items are returned to the country of origin of the looted or stolen objects or through official appeals and campaigns that are launched against a given government or institution. In the case of Italy as a wealthy country, it must have the financial muscle to buy back its stolen items or file legal proceedings to reclaim them from museums. Whether they are bought back or reclaimed legally, the return of the items is of course an event worth celebrating. Any country, whether rich or poor does not tolerate the theft of its history and culture and Italy could not be an exception.

The latest move by the Italian government to reclaim the country's cultural relics testifies to the fact that consistent and long-term legal efforts supported through aggressive campaigns are bound to produce the desired results. It is also commendable that Italy's latest action would give impetus to similar movements in other countries whether in

with some degree of success.

Italy, being an old colonial power although economically and politically weaker than the other European colonialists, had been dragging its feet and took many decades to return the Aksum Obelisk to Ethiopia although the political symbolism of the obelisk had long faded and did not serve colonial or great ambitions of any kind.

It has taken many decades of concerted campaigns by Ethiopian cultural experts, intellectuals, and the governments of the time to secure the return of the obelisk against resistance by right-wing governments in Italy that directly or indirectly harbored nostalgia about Italy's fascist past. Africa is still fighting to take control of its history and culture in the face of stiff resistance by the major stakeholders in the global markets for stolen ancient relics that are enjoying rising demands globally.

In my earlier article about the fate of Africa's lost artifacts, I had written the following observation. The task of repatriation of African cultural heritages started a long time ago and is still progressing although slowly. This is because repatriation is being conducted based on individual or group initiatives and has seldom been conducted by the African Unity the single body with the relevant power and authority to conduct the work under its supervision.

And now a second generation of cultural activists seems to be knocking on the doors and making the same demands. It is to be noted that the first generation of activists was composed mainly of historians like the Pankhurst family and writers as well as the local intellectual community. The present generation which is yet on its way to emerging with the same demands is so far composed of artists and seems to have taken the initiative.

This is of course a positive development that should be supported by government authorities and the cultural establishment here at home. The nature of support may be in the form of institutionalization of the efforts being undertaken or coordination in the form of information and prioritization of the campaign. First and foremost, this demands a major forum, whether online or live interactions, for all the new stakeholders to discuss the matter and achieve consensus around the major issues.

As I wrote in my recent piece on the subject, African countries have more or less lost various historical and cultural relics that are now found in various European capitals some of which are still regarded as war trophies or war booties. We need to reclaim what was ours and let the old colonial wound heal and the ongoing legal and illegal business with looted African treasures that is promoted with the full knowledge and sometimes the direct or indirect cooperation from European authorities although they are denying that such activities are taking place in their turfs.

If Italy has joined the campaign for the return of lost or looted relics, there is no reason indeed why Africa cannot join the campaign and coordinate its activities with Europe and other countries that are interested in lending force to the restitution of lost histories, lost souls and lost identities.

Historical justice has never been meted out and in a comic twist of history; the country is now requesting the return of its own stolen artifacts. This has also the flair of 'poetic justice' being served at last

Europe or Africa while bringing the issue to the attention of the international public.

The situation is however different in Africa where the governments may not have the financial resources to devote for the purchase of their own historical and cultural relics that were looted or sold by illegal traders in artifacts. There is no reason why other European countries would not follow suit even though it is extremely difficult and sometimes impossible to trace the whereabouts of the lost relics. Whatever the case may be, African countries or the African Union may find a feasible means of returning Africa's lost cultural relics either by allocating a common fund for purchasing the relics in some cases or for launching and promoting the return of the relics that in itself requires operational funds money if such attempts are to be crowned

Science & Technology

The rise of the startup industry in Ethiopia

BY DARGIE KAHSAY

With the government's initiatives to create a conducive ecosystem for the startup industry and continuous support for startup businesses, the startup industry has shown significant developments in recent years. Different initiatives are being applied by the government to promote and develop start-ups. Especially, the incentives, support, and the enabling ecosystem by the reformist government help the rise of startup businesses and innovations during the past five years.

Ethiopia aims to make the technology sector the backbone of its development. For the development of the technology sector, the government focuses on promoting the development of home-grown ideas and startups. These initiatives of the government and the conducive environment for the sector inspire local innovators, start-uppers, and researchers. These continuous and all-rounded efforts have brought new changes in the trends of the startup industry in Ethiopia in recent years.

According to Startup Blink's Global Startup Ecosystem Index 2024, released this week, the startup industry in Ethiopia shows significant development. Global Startup Ecosystem Index 2024, in 2024 the startup scene of the capital, Addis Ababa shows considerable development and increased in the Global Index by 89 posts. (Startup Blink is a global startup map and research center, empowering stakeholders with ecosystem development services and tailored analysis on the global innovation economy).

The Global Startup Index 2024 revealed that Addis Ababa's startup ecosystem ranked 10th in Africa, showing significant developments from the previous years. Not only Addis Ababa but also, according to Startup Blink- Global Startup Index 2024, the startup ecosystem in Ethiopia registers remarkable developments within recent years.

According to the Global Startup Index 2024 report, international cities startup rank, Addis Ababa city's rank in the startup ecosystem has increased by 89 posts. Accordingly, by improving from its previous rank of 417, Addis Ababa city ranked 328 in the international startup rank of cities in the 2024 Global Startup Index. According to the index, from 1000 international cities ranked by Startup-Blink, Addis Ababa ranked 328 at the international level, 10th among African cities, and 4th among East African cities, according to the Global Startup Ecosystem Index 2024.

This radical development in global and regional ranking is the outcome of the government's initiatives and investments to promote the startup industry in the country. To create a conducive and enabling ecosystem for the startup industry, the Ethiopian government is taking serious measures and actions to inspire and promote innovators and start-uppers. In addition, the government amends policies about the startup industry aiming at creating vibrant



Ethiopia Startup Award Ceremony in Addis Ababa, which is part of the Global Startup Award

startups.

In promoting and developing the startup industry, the Ministry of Innovation and Technology (MInT) jointly with other stakeholders, gives due attention to the sector. This effort helps Ethiopia to improve its ranking at the international level and create vibrant and competitive start-uppers. Similarly, internationally competitive innovators and start-uppers are joining the industry, inspired by the ecosystem and the development of the industry.

Among the government's initiatives to promote innovators and start-uppers, in addition to reforming the policies and strategies, are awarding the innovators, organizing startup exhibitions, creating market linkages, applying different incentives, and providing financial support to realize their ideas. In this regard, only in this budget year, a lot of events targeting to promote startups were organized by MInT and other governmental institutions. The ecosystem promotes startups and home-grown ideas.

This week, on Monday, a Startup Ethiopia Awards, which was part of the Global Startup Awards program, was organized in Addis Ababa. During the award program, successful start-uppers were recognized. During the award ceremony, Deputy Prime Minister, Temesgen Tiruneh said that the Ethiopian Government gives due attention to creating a technologically developed country. Accordingly, he said, the government focuses on supporting, promoting, and creating a conducive environment for startup technologies to realize the national vision of creating a technologically developed country.

Temesgen stated that "the Ethiopian Government is working to make Ethiopia a technology influencer country." According to Temesgen, similar to other critical sectors, the government gives due focus for the startup technologies to realize the country's prosperity endeavors.

"The reformist government is working on vast development works to transform Ethiopia into a new chapter of development. Summer irrigation wheat initiative, green legacy initiative, and other infrastructural developments are bringing meaningful outcomes for the country," he stated. Parallel to that, the government continuously supports startup businesses, to make the sector an engine of the country's economic development.

Special attention is given by the government for the development and promotion of startups in the country, according to Deputy Prime Minister Temesgen. Countries that become internationally dominant in the innovation and technology sector are dominating the global economy and ensuring their development works. As to him, understanding the role of innovation and technology in the overall development of a country, Ethiopia gives due attention to the development of the startup industry. He assured that the government will continue the investments and initiatives in creating a more suitable ecosystem for the sector and to support start-uppers.

According to the Deputy Prime Minister, start-ups can play a great role in accelerating economic development and technology transfer. By promoting and encouraging local innovations and technological developments, the Ethiopian Government is working to make Ethiopia an influencer in the innovation and technology sector. So far, the country has convened chains of startup events and exhibitions, thus fetching valuable experiences that help address possible setbacks witnessed in the sector, the DPM noted.

Ministry of Labor and Skills (MoLS), Muferiat Kamil for her part stated that the ministry is giving due focus to the development of innovation and entrepreneurship as part of the country's ten-year perspective plan. To explore the untapped potentials and skills, the ministry is working on significant milestones to

facilitate, explore, capacitate, and harness emerging startups via mentorship, training, and capacity building to spur global connectivity as well.

As to her, Ethiopia highly requires knowledge-led innovative solutions for resilient economic development. It was learned that 68 start uppers were selected to participate in the coming 2024 global startup competition from about 731 Ethiopian start uppers involved in the 2023 competition.

Meanwhile, while attending the Global Startup Awards program here in Addis Ababa, global startup founders laud Ethiopia's incredibly encouraging ecosystem for startup businesses. Speaking to ENA, Global Startup founders stated that Ethiopia creates a healthy environment for startups.

Appreciating the ecosystem for startups, Global Startup CEO and Founder, Kim Balle said that the Ethiopian government has created a healthy ecosystem for startups. As to him, lack of support from national agencies and governments globally, a lot of founders and startup entrepreneurs are going down. This shows that, for the success of startup entrepreneurs, it is critical the support of government agencies.

On the other hand, Global Innovation Initiative Group (GIIG) Co-Founder, Jo Griffiths on her part said that the Government of Ethiopia is incredibly encouraging start-uppers. As to her, Ethiopia's commitment to developing startups is astoundingly promising, adding that the impact is visible in various activities such as Ethiopia hosting the Startup Award Program.

"We observed significant solutions in coming in Agri-Tech, financial inclusion, and education, among others, especially from Ethiopia where there is an incredible increase in technology in the agriculture sector." The Startup Award Program was organized by the Ministry of Innovation and Technology (MInT), Ministry of Labor and Skills (MoLS), and Global Startup Awards.

Society

Safeguarding generations from health troubles!

BY TEWODROS KASSA

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), although tobacco use is a major public health problem, tobacco products are one of the few openly available commercial products that are virtually unregulated in some countries. They are also the only legally available products that kill up to half of regular users when consumed, as recommended by manufacturers of these products.

The WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC) also stipulates measures to regulate the contents of tobacco products and their disclosures. To support countries to implement these measures, WHO provides guidance on regulating tobacco products with the aim to reduce their demand and contribute to wider tobacco control objectives, thereby saving lives.

In recent times, regulation of tobacco products has been extended to cover newer products, such as e-cigarettes and through its networks. WHO also provides successive technical assistance to countries to enable them to regulate tobacco products. As one mechanism to draw global attention and to create a platform to young people across the world towards the tobacco epidemic and the preventable death and disease tobacco causes, every year, World No Tobacco day is marked on May 31st. This year's World No Tobacco Day was also marked under the theme "Protecting children from tobacco industry interference" to protect future generations and ensure that tobacco use continues to decline.

Currently, the Ethiopian Food, Medicine and Healthcare Administration and Control Authority is actively working to ensure public health. The Authority is also implementing various strategies to control bad habits including tobacco use among citizens.

According to the Authority, Tobacco Control Directive Number 771/2021, every manufacturer or importer of tobacco products shall submit the required information as to the content of its tobacco product, the type of each tobacco product, its single product, and ingredients used to produce each brand product that are under the main brand.

However, there are some tobacco manufacturers that failed to effectively fulfill their social responsibilities of ensuring public health.

In relation to this and seizing the international 'No Tobacco Day 2024', day as an opportunity Mathiwos Wondu – YeEthiopia Cancer Society (MWECS), highlighted the need to counter the threat of tobacco industry interference, mount advocacy effort, to reduce the negative consequences of tobacco and its health hazards, and obtained successes in tobacco control.

In a press release sent to The Ethiopian Herald, the Society indicated the need to fight the intent of some foreign industries to export tobacco products to African markets.



"As Ethiopia advocates for public health, we are deeply alarmed by the recent push by British American Tobacco's (BAT) Pakistan Tobacco Company (PTC) to manufacture and export 10-stick cigarette packs, specifically targeting African markets such as Sudan. This move undermines global efforts to protect children and vulnerable populations from the devastating effects of tobacco addiction."

For Ethiopia, the threat extends beyond the borders of Sudan. Ethiopia is already struggling with significant illicit tobacco products smuggled through its Somali border. The introduction of smaller packs could exacerbate this issue, making it easier for these products to penetrate the Ethiopian market through illicit channels. Additionally, the tobacco industry is waging another war along Ethiopia's second-longest border [Sudan], further complicating efforts to control the spread of harmful tobacco products.

The problem of illicit tobacco trade in Ethiopia is dire, with significant implications for public health and the economy. According to recent data, illicit tobacco products account for a substantial portion of the market, undermining legal tobacco control efforts.

In 2018, an independent study identified significant figures of tobacco illicit trade in Ethiopia. This widespread illicit trade not only increases tobacco consumption but also deprives the government of valuable tax revenue and complicates enforcement efforts. The proliferation of these illegal products is particularly problematic along Ethiopia's borders.

"As public health advocates, we stand in solidarity with our Pakistani colleagues in urging the government to resist these pressures and maintain the integrity of their tobacco control laws. Allowing the

production of 10-stick packs under the guise of export not only endangers public health for Africans but also sets a dangerous precedent that could undermine tobacco control efforts globally."

Accordingly, tobacco control laws worldwide are designed to safeguard public health, particularly the health of children. Many countries, including Ethiopia, have implemented regulations that prohibit the sale of cigarette packs smaller than 20 sticks, recognizing that smaller packs make cigarettes more accessible and affordable, especially to children. Reducing the availability of these "kiddie" packs is a crucial measure in decreasing cigarette consumption and preventing the onset of tobacco addiction, disease, and premature death.

However, this company's recent efforts to amend Pakistan's Tobacco Advertising, Promotion, and Sponsorship (TAPS) regulations to produce 10-stick packs intended for export to Sudan is a direct threat to these protective measures. This stance is not only hypocritical but it is a serious health challenge to the African youths, the Association reiterated.

"Particularly this time, in Sudan and other African countries, the need for essential resources such as food, medicine, and healthcare is critical. The introduction of smaller, more affordable cigarette packs will only exacerbate the public health crisis, increasing the risk of tobacco addiction among African children and young people."

Moreover, Sudan is currently grappling with significant security challenges, which further complicate the situation. In such a vulnerable state, the Sudanese population is at even greater risk of falling prey to these aggressive marketing tactics.

"While claiming to adhere to strict

regulations in developed countries, some tobacco companies seek to exploit legal loopholes and weaker regulatory environments in developing nations," the Association elaborated.

In Pakistan, the situation is equally concerning. Despite opposition from key governmental bodies, the company has leveraged its influence to push for legislative changes that would allow the production of these dangerous 10-stick packs. This move has been met with strong local resistance from Pakistani based tobacco control organizations.

"If a product is deemed too dangerous for one country's children, it is too dangerous for children anywhere. We must protect our future generations from the scourge of tobacco addiction and hold corporations accountable for their exploitative practices," the statement concluded.

Tobacco industry's attempt to manufacture and export 10-stick cigarette packs on the pretext of export has become an issue of profound concern among health activists saying that it will attract children towards smoking and weaken the efforts carried out to monitor tobacco consumption, protect people from tobacco smoke, thereby protect public health, Associated Press of Pakistan reported.

In a press release shared by the Society for the Protection of the Rights of the Child (SPARC) recently, the activists expressed grave concerns over its potential impact on children and low-income groups across the nation.

According to Country Head of the Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids, Malik Imran Ahmed, the attempts for 10-stick packs by the tobacco industry are deeply troubling. It will not only undermine the progress made in tobacco control but also directly target children and low-income individuals who are most vulnerable to the harmful effects of tobacco consumption.

Many countries in the world have banned single-stick and small-stick packet sales because they are easier to purchase for children, youth, and low-income groups, and hence the health burden is very high.

Mentioning that the tobacco industry is still making a profit from this situation by indulging in practices such as under-reporting, price adjustment, and pooling its products in the illicit market, the Head said that if 10-stick cigarette packs are allowed for export, there is a strong chance that the tobacco industry will sell them in the local market. Therefore, to keep people safe, it is better not to allow these packets in the first place, he accentuated.

True, saving the lives of individual citizens who are at greater risk of dying prematurely from the consumption of tobacco demands coordinated effort from all. To this end, we have to join hands and strengthen our efforts to save the lives of our children from totally preventable tobacco epidemics and contribute our fair share in transforming our great continent, Africa, into a better place to live and work.

Ethiopia's cities beautifying campaign ...

According to the scholar, the “Clean Street- Healthy Life” campaign is important to attract more visitors and lengthen the time tourists stay here. “It is not only the hotels and destinations of tourists that should be kept clean, but also all the streets and other places and cities that the visitors might see en route.”

Noting Ethiopia's immense tourism potentials, Ayalew (PhD) however, stressed the need to develop and renovate these resources to get the desired outcome in the tourism industry. According to him, mobilizing the public in cleaning activities is crucial to attract visitors.

“For instance, Jewish people have developed a sense of responsibility to keep the cleanliness of their country; even some of them might travel a long distance in search of dustbins having a waste in hand.”

In this regard, the government is advised to raise public awareness besides to engage in infrastructural development to bring about tangible outcomes in creating a clean environment.

Debre Berhan University Tourism and Hotel Management Lecturer Wubshet Kassa for his part said that all cities need to strive to excel in cleanliness. By drawing the cleanliness experience of different African countries including Rwanda, South Africa, and Seychelles, Ethiopia could attract a large number of



visitors.

The Lecturer also noted that the clean Ethiopia campaign, therefore, is important to build Ethiopia's good image by keeping its sanitation. “The tourists' stay in a given city mainly relies on the cleanliness next to the security and living conditions.”

Likewise, lengthening tourists' stay in cities increases the tourism income and ushers a healthy competition among different cities to become attractive in the eyes of residents and visitors.

Wubshet mentioned that cities' cleanliness is also crucial to boost conference tourism earnings stressing the need to establish clean public convention centers in addition to hotels.

Ethiopia's city cleaning campaign and fund raising was recently launched by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD). In addition to ongoing cleaning activities, the fundraising enabled the government to mobilize 154.5 million Birr in a single day from participants, it was learned.

Beyond Addis Ababa, the Ethiopian government has also been focusing on beautifying other tourist destinations across the country. Various historic sites and new tourist destinations are being meticulously restored to their glory. These sites offer visitors a chance to immerse themselves in Ethiopia's storied past, showcasing the country's rich history and cultural heritage.

In addition to preserving historical

sites, Ethiopia is also investing in infrastructure development to improve the overall tourism experience. New roads, airports, and hotels are being constructed to make it easier for tourists to explore the country's diverse attractions. These improvements not only enhance visitors' experience but also stimulate economic growth in local communities.

As part of its beautification efforts, Ethiopia is committed to promoting sustainable tourism practices. Eco-friendly initiatives such as waste management programs and conservation projects help to preserve the country's natural beauty for future generations. By adopting environmentally conscious practices, Ethiopia is able to attract tourists who are seeking responsible travel options.

In sum, the beautification efforts in Addis Ababa and Ethiopia as a whole are playing a crucial role in boosting tourists' inflow to the country. By preserving cultural heritage, enhancing public spaces, and promoting sustainable tourism practices, Ethiopia is able to offer visitors a unique and memorable travel experience. As the country continues to invest in beautifying its cities and tourist destinations, we can expect to see a significant increase in tourists flocking to Ethiopia in the years to come.



This is Ethiopia

Ethiopia's cities beautifying campaign towards boosting tourism

BY TEWODROS KASSA

With its rich history, diverse culture, and stunning landscapes, Ethiopia is a hidden gem in Africa waiting to be discovered by tourists from around the world. In recent years, the Ethiopian government has been making significant efforts to beautify its capital city, Addis Ababa, and other tourist destinations across the country in order to attract more visitors.

For instance, the recent initiatives of beautifying Addis Ababa sought the creation of more green spaces and parks across the city. These areas not only provide residents with a place to relax and unwind, but also serve as attractive destinations for tourists. The lush greenery and well-maintained gardens in these parks offer a peaceful escape from the hustle and bustle of city life.

No doubt, Addis Ababa is home to a wealth of cultural heritage sites, including the Ethiopian National Museum, the Holy Trinity Cathedral Church, various



Partial view of Addis Ababa road corridor development

monuments, among others. The government has been working to preserve and restore these historical landmarks as well as ensure that they remain a vital part of the city's identity. By showcasing its rich cultural heritage, Addis Ababa is able to offer visitors

a glimpse into Ethiopia's vibrant past.

In addition, in an effort to enhance the aesthetic appeal of the city, Addis Ababa has seen a rise in public art installations in recent years. From colorful murals to striking

sculptures, these art pieces add a creative touch to the urban landscape. Tourists are often drawn to these artistic displays, which not only beautify the city but also serve as a reflection of Ethiopia's vibrant arts scene.

Tourism experts underscored that the national "Clean Street-Healthy Life" campaign boosts tourism beyond creating beautiful and healthy cities for residents.

Approached by the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA), Senior Tourism Researcher Ayalew Sisay (PhD) stated that studies conducted during the reign of Emperor Haile Selassie and the Derg regimes identified poor sanitation among the major hurdles that affect Ethiopia's tourism development.

Many of the tourists that come to Ethiopia are from the developed world so that strict protocol and cleanliness is crucial to keep the health and frame of mind of the visitors, he stressed.

See Ethiopia's cities ... page 13