



The Ethiopian Herald

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Vol. LXXX No 251 29 JUNE 2024 - Sene 22, 2016 **Saturday** Price Birr 10.00



Professor Eyasu Elias

Ethiopia manages to preserve over 28 mln ha land from erosion

BY EPHREM ANDARGACHEW

ADDIS ABABA - The national soil conservation and watershed management works have preserved over 28 million hectares of land from degradation, the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) announced.

Agriculture State Minister Eyasu Elias (Prof.) told *The Ethiopian Herald* that over 28 million hectares of land have been kept from erosion through annual efforts to conserve the environment and natural resources.

The soil conservation, watershed management, and reforestation programs are carried out by the people's active participation and help the country to cover degraded lands with a variety of plant species.

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Premier says corridor dev't exemplary for Africans

BY TSEGAYE TILAHUN

ADDIS ABABA - The ongoing corridor development project is an exemplary act for many African countries in employing

collaborative efforts for the betterment of the public, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) said.

Premier Abiy made the above remark yesterday while inaugurating the Mexico

Square-Sar Bet section of the Addis Ababa Corridor Development Project.

Speaking at the inauguration ceremony, Abiy

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Ministry optimistic about addressing skill gaps in labor market

BY BETELHEM BEDLU

ADDIS ABABA- The Ministry of Skills and Labor (MoLS) said the partnership agreement it has made with Toppan Gravity, global smart solution provider company, would address skill gaps in the labor market.

MoLS Minister Muferiat Kamil and Toppan Gravity Managing Director signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) yesterday.

Speaking at the occasion, Muferiat noted that by joining forces with Toppan Gravity, her ministry is creating a framework to

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MPs expected to capitalize recess to Nat'l Dialogue mobilization

•ENDC presents annual performance

BY MESERET BEHAILU

ADDIS ABABA – Members of Parliament are expected to play their due role in mobilizing their electorate in the National Dialogue during the two-month parliamentary recess, the House of People Representatives (HoPR) said.

The HoPR Speaker Tadesse Chafo made the above remark yesterday when the Ethiopian National Dialogue Commission (ENDC) presented its 2024 annual performance report.

In his speech, Tadesse emphasized the MP's role in discharging responsibilities in driving constituents for the National Dialogue during their two-month vacation.

According to him, the main aim of the National Dialogue is to bring national

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Tadesse Chafo



Prof. Mesfin Araya

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Low Obup (PhD)

State working to boost investment, job creation

BY EYUEL KIFLU

ADDIS ABABA- Gambella state stated that it is experiencing a significant boost in investment, employment as well as job creation.

State Investment Commission said that over 400 investment projects are currently in operation and have provided over 1,000 citizens with permanent jobs.

According to Gambella State Investment Commission Commissioner, Low Obup (PhD), extensive investment is taking place in the region, with a diverse range of projects across various sectors.

As to him, the region's favourable topography, including highlands, temperate zones, and lowlands, makes it highly suitable for agricultural development.

The Commissioner also revealed that more than 800,000 hectares from the region's 3.24 million hectares of land is currently under cultivation, with significant potential for expansion through irrigation. Agricultural investments have focused on crops such as corn, sorghum, and rice, while the highlands offer opportunities for coffee, honey, tea, and spices.

The mining sector has also attracted considerable foreign investment, with on-going operations in the Dima district and other areas. Additionally, the region is exploring investment opportunities in animal resources and fisheries.

"Prior to the reforms, there were over 200 investors in the region, many of whom had taken loans but used the funds for unintended purposes, leading to difficulties for both the state and federal governments," the Commissioner explained. "However, the current situation has been regularized, with 109 investors now participating in small, medium, and large-scale projects, with a total capital investment of around one billion," he opined.

The Commissioner also emphasized that apart from investment paying great attention to the transfer of technology and knowledge. Both the state and federal governments are generating revenue through various means, and they have confirmed the potential to earn substantial foreign exchange from exported products.

EIAR, ICIPE urge action to combat Armyworm infestation

BY YESUF ENDRIS

ADDIS ABABA - The Ethiopian Institute of Agricultural Research (EIAR) and the International Center of Insect Physiology and Ecology (ICIPE) raised alarms over the invasive Fall Armyworm that poses threat to maize farming in Ethiopia.

Speaking to Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA), Senior Researchers from the two institutions said that coordinated efforts in using agro-ecological solutions should be taken as a means to combat the infestation.

Senior entomologist and head of EIAR's Holeta Center, Girma Demissie, said that EIAR and ICIPE have been working in collaboration to address the problem since the invasion of the Armyworm posed threat on maize farming in the country.

The flier has invaded almost all corners of the country within eight months and damaged crops, particularly maize farming, he said.

According to him, the government has spent about four million USD to procure chemicals crucial to fight the insect.

EIAR and ICIPE are working with farmers to expand agro-ecological and natural solutions, he said.



"Due to the nature of the Armyworm, We need to collaborate with other countries and international organizations to halt its swift prevalence," he stressed.

Agro-ecological methods including the use of Brachiara and Desmodium grasses, which have proven effective in protecting farms from the destructive insect, is being expanded, Girma expressed.

ICIPE Senior Researcher Rachel Owino stated that the center works on community based monitoring and forecasting for early warning and timely management in fighting the armyworm.

Mentioning that Fall Armyworm has led to production losses, she said, it requires a comprehensive collaboration among

agricultural stakeholders to prevent further damage.

Farmers who have adopted these natural solutions are seeing positive results in defending their crops from the pest. The coordinated approach advocated by ICIPE aims to boost these efforts and safeguard maize production across Ethiopia, she noted.

ICIPE has been working on Armyworm fighting with three years-long national project, dubbed Community Based Spodoptra Frugiperda Monitoring, Forecasting for Early Warning and Timely Management to Protect Food Security and Improve Livelihoods of Vulnerable Communities, *The Ethiopian Herald* learnt.

Academy calls on higher learning institutions to prioritize quality

BY MENGISTEAB TESHOME

ADDIS ABABA- Ethiopian Academy of Sciences (EAS) has urged universities to well revise student admission and program opening criteria peculiarly regarding postgraduate and doctoral degrees.

In a public lecture organized by Ethiopian Academy of Sciences (EAS), senior academicians stressed the need to introduce quality admission criteria for post-graduate program and others.

Addis Ababa University Institute of Educational Research Quality training Director and Supervisor, Belay Hagos (PhD) said that in a move to enhance the quality of higher education, universities should put in place significant changes to student admission policies and the introduction of new postgraduate and doctoral degree programs.

He said, "In our context, since there are similar criteria for admission for postgraduate and doctoral program among universities, this approach should be corrected. Universities' student selection process must attract the most talented and motivated individuals



Belay Hagos (PhD) and Professor Tsige Gebremariam

using the parameters that focus on academic performance of applicant the participation and achievements they demonstrate in extracurricular activities as well as result achieved at standardized test scores and through conducting personal interviews."

According to him, a number of higher education institutions operating nationwide have run activities through high political and structural pressures.

They should pass through relevant steps and equipped with skilled human capital and facilities. Otherwise, they could potentially be exposed to very trying challenges like lack of capacity so as to ensure quality education, he indicated.

Moderator of the public lecture, Professor Tsige Gebremariam on his part said that it is not too late to correct the gaps surfaced through scientific approaches. He calls on pertinent stakeholders to invest in education at the grass root and support the higher education institutions in providing them with working systems.

He further underlined that it is high time to revise admission criteria to universities for postgraduate and doctoral education with a view to attracting the brightest minds and fostering groundbreaking research and innovation that could help nation come out of the vicious circle of poverty.

News

Ethiopia manages ...

The state minister also mentioned that every year, around 20 to 25 million Ethiopians come out for 30 to 40 days to work on soil protection and watershed development. As a result, more than 2 to 2.5 million hectares of soil and water conservation work have been completed annually. Hence, the annual soil conservation and watershed management efforts are yielding results across the country, particularly in the east and west parts of Hararghe, in terms of mitigating climate change and food self-sufficiency.

With a view to promoting the success in environmental preservation and

mitigation worldwide, the ministry is working tirelessly to publish the preservation of over 28 million hectares of land from degradation it in scholarly international journals and educate the public about climate change resilience.

“Besides, the country is also making significant efforts to remediate acidic soil to enhance soil fertility, prevent erosion, and boost output. Farmers are especially being urged to use a variety of techniques, such as preparing natural fertilizers, rotating their crops, and keeping some living crops and plants on the land with the aim of boosting soil fertility and avoiding acidification.”

Eyasu remembered that climate change is causing variations in monsoons in the world, recurrent droughts, decreased water levels, and disruptions to natural equilibrium. As a result, Ethiopia’s annual soil preservation and watershed projects play an important part in its efforts to cope with the negative impacts of climate change.

In addition to works in soil conservation and watershed management, small-scale irrigation development projects, and the annual building of expansive irrigation networks and optimizing irrigation operations are also underway. This not only helps the country to

mitigate climate change, but it also makes progress in developing summer irrigation.

Due to the consolidated efforts of different stakeholders, Ethiopia is now able to produce and replace wheat that was previously imported for over one billion USD. Furthermore, large-scale fruit production has become conceivable, and local beer barley imports have been substituted. Furthermore, the country intends to replace imported rice with domestic production through irrigation expansion, improved soil and water conservation, and other measures, he elaborated.

Premier says...

stated that Africans could draw lessons from the project that would bring multifaceted benefits for Addis residents and help the city to become a true political capital of the continent.

The Ethiopian government has been engaged in infrastructural development that would expedite the country’s overall progress. Improving the infrastructure, changing the working culture, and building the walkways and vehicle paths are critical to urban development and growth, he emphasized.

PM Abiy further noted that the ongoing renovation activity is part of improving the livelihoods of Addis residents and make the city live its name. Addis would be one of the cleanest cities in the world with its comfortable weather and landscape and the ongoing renovation activities would further glorify its beauty and give lots of lessons to fellow African brothers and sisters.

“Today, we have inaugurated the second section of the Addis Corridor Development Project which stretches from Mexico Square to Sar Bet,

marking a key milestone in our city-building efforts. Consolidated efforts are required to execute the project with desirable quality level.”

According to him, renovating cities and towns is part of the necessary steps for the betterment of future generations. Sustaining progress is critical as Addis’ growth is just the beginning. The bright future would be achieved with collective efforts.

The Premier remarked that the government has been working to expand the corridor development across the country to benefit more people and improve the infrastructure.

The Addis Ababa Corridor Development Project was launched a few months ago to modernize the capital and make it a more livable place for its residents and visitors. The government has also been expanding the project in other cities and towns across Ethiopia. Accordingly, Bahir-Dar, Hossana, and Arba-Minch towns followed the suit of Addis Ababa in implementing the massive infrastructure redevelopment project.

MPs expected...

consensus and it has been among the primary concerns of the country in the last year.

“Moreover, transitional justice helps to solve fracture and contradiction and the federal administration system proclamation would play a significant role in ensuring good governance.”

The Ethiopian National Dialogue Commission (ENDC) Chief Commissioner Prof. Mesfin Araya on his part said that despite many challenges, the commission has been carrying out commendable activities since its inception to ensure all-inclusive, participatory and fruitful deliberation and to reach consensus in national agendas.

According to the chairperson, some 57,605 (39,083 men and 28,522 women) participated in the participant’s identification phase in Addis Ababa and six states in the past year. It means that the commission reached 64.5 % out of the plan whilst women’s participation

was merely 32.2%.

Prof. Mesfin further stated that participant’s identification was carried out in two city administrations and 10 states of the country. Forums that participated some 105,370 individuals (men-73,804 and women-31,556) were carried out. In this regard, the ENDC has succeeded 65.2% in its goal for participant’s identification though women participation does not exceed the 30% mark.

Sporadic conflicts that have been happening in some parts of the country, limited women participation, and the like are serious challenges to realizing an effective National Dialogue in the country. “While the federal government is expected to maintain its engagement to create an enabling environment for the National Dialogue, the public’s unreserved participation in the process is something worth equal consideration.”

Ministry optimistic...

anticipate and respond to emerging industry trends, foster innovation, and build resilience in the labor market. The partnership will also help address different macro issues in which the widening of skills gap is the first one.

“Today, we stand at the intersection of global economic shifts and rapid technological advancement. Our partnership with Toppan Gravity is not just collaboration; it is a strategic response to the macro-level challenges and opportunities shaping our world.”

Muferiat went on saying “the partnership will address the widening skill gaps in an increasingly digital economy as Ethiopia aspires to build a digital economy through

its digital 2025 strategy.

Moreover, the collaboration addresses the need for active, future-ready workforce development strategies where MoLS is highly mandated. The Ministry is exerting its responsibilities through executing several activities with different partners as of Toppan Gravity.

The Minister further indicated that the agreement is essential to enhance Ethiopia’s competitiveness at the global stage as it gives it the leverage to play an international role. Moreover, such an agreement is of great significance in Ethiopia’s transition to a knowledge-based economy, ensuring it is not just a participant, but leader in the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

“Our collaboration symbolizes a proactive approach to the future of work, aiming to position our nation at the forefront of global talent development and economic growth. As we formalize this partnership, we are not just signing an agreement; we are charting a course for sustainable economic prosperity and societal progress,” she remarked.

Toppan Gravity Managing Director Jean Pierre for his part mentioned that Ethiopia has so much to bring to the table in terms of skills, young graduates, and talent. “The ambition of Toppan Gravity is to take advantage of the untapped potentials not only to build adventure but also to have enough people with talent to export to

different countries that we are operating.”

According to him, the company’s MoU with the Ministry has laid the foundation to achieve such ambition. Pierre, however, underlined the need for qualified and skilled labor from the Ethiopia side to make the venture a success. “The main reason why we are so confident is because we believe in the potential of the people of Ethiopia.”

The company has laid the foundation recently to build a company which is expected to create jobs for about 200 people and plan to provide skill training on printing and technology and engineering works. Toppan Gravity is cooperating with different schools along with the MoLS, it was learned.

Opinion

Policy compliance

BY GETACHEW MINAS

Ensuring policy compliance with the requirements of donors is a crucial precondition for sustaining preferential treatment. This ensures the sustainability of donor funding on a continuous basis. There are, however, important considerations that ensure compliance and sustainability. It is crucial to understand donor requirements in detail and in clear terms. It is important to read contracts and agreements to avoid ambiguity before signing them. In particular, parties to the agreement have to carefully review the terms and conditions specified in the funding agreement. The concerned officials in Ethiopia used to pay attention to reporting deadlines for performing activities with respect to earmarked expenditures. Also, they give due attention to disallowed expenses as specified in donor guidelines. The reason behind this note is to check for abuse of external resources by corrupt personnel associated with the implementation of projects.

The remedy for abuse of resources is a preemptive measure that leaves no opportunity for loopholes in performance of project activities. It is, therefore, important to clarify expectations by those closely involved in donor financed projects. In case of ambiguous requirements, it is critical to communicate with the donor for the purpose of clarification. Ambiguity leaves the door open for abuse of donor funds by irresponsible implementers of projects. To keep ambiguity at bay, it is a precondition to keep detailed notes of any verbal communications. These have to be confirmed and documented by the concerned parties in writing. It is usually common to prepare internal policies and procedures for the purpose of aligning with donor policies. Here, alignment does not mean willingness to be guided by donors. All parties to an agreement have to maintain their positions with marginal submission.

When aligning with donor requirements, it is important to ensure the policies and programs of the Ethiopian government have to be respected. In this regard, policies and procedures need to be carefully aligned with the preconditions of the donor. Sector programs and projects funded by donors need specific guidelines for the management of projects. This includes financial management and reporting that comply with donor standards. Donors have to maintain certain standards of disbursement, purchase of materials required for specific projects, and qualified staffs responsible for project management. The project staffs have to deliver performance report periodically to both implementing government agencies and donors. A joint assessment of these reports determines the future of the project. If the management of the project abuses resources earmarked for a specific project,

it may be terminated by any party to the project agreement.

It is obvious that when the objective of a development project is not fully achieved as per agreement, it may be due to lack of capacity to manage it. Before a project begins to be implemented, it is required to conduct a training program for capacity building. It is also a precondition to train staff on donor requirements and internal policies. Lack of knowledge regarding these requirements is an impediment for project implementation. There is, therefore, a need to conduct regular workshops related to the project. Most Ethiopian staffs assigned to run a project are carefully selected before the project is conducted. Most donors, including UN agencies in Ethiopia, give prior attention to the placement of trained and qualified staffs to the projects they do finance. Moreover, they ensure that refresher courses are offered on the job to keep everyone updated and knowledgeable about project management. These efforts are also accompanied by skill development for execution, monitoring and evaluation of performed activities.

Activity and financial reports are based on documentation and records kept in an orderly manner. Keeping thorough records of all decisions, activities, and transactions related to the project is a necessary condition. The project management group has to use an approach for documenting and storing in a systematic manner. This practice would help in facilitating simple retrieval and review of the progress of work. It is also critical to the trail auditing of project performance. This ensures the existence of a clear audit performance report for follow-up. Trailing all financial transactions and reports is crucial for ensuring the effective performance of projects. It is also advisable to conduct regular review meetings with stakeholders and reconcile accounts to prevent discrepancies. This procedure helps to prevent misuse of resources and ensures the prevention of abuse of power in the future. Regular monitoring breaks the cycle of corruption and abuse of authority.

It is becoming necessary to monitor and evaluate project activities on a regular basis. A regular review of these activities helps to identify misuse of resources in good time and prevent it. There is a need to establish a regular monitoring of projects before they begin to be implemented. This helps to regularly check compliance by project managers with donor requirements. Any breach in this process will have to be immediately corrected by the concerned local authority and the donor. This should be done systematically using tools such as checklists, which are useful to identify activities that are listed in the project document. Compliance with the checklist is absolutely necessary to detect any negligence of duties. Matrices and dashboards are also objective means of tracking the progress of project activities.

To avoid illegal operations that lead to irresponsible wastage of resources, including abuse of funds and materials, both the government and donors enter into agreements

Internal audits, if conducted periodically as prescribed in the project document, they help to identify any disorder and lack of compliance as early as possible. Based on reports of internal audit, it may be possible to immediately take corrective actions to address any reported errors. Measures have to be taken against the persons responsible for these errors. Negligence to take appropriate steps in line with the terms and conditions of the agreement may abort the project. In this regard, reporting and communication has to be timely, factual and free from any prejudice. The report has to be prepared and submitted in line with donor conditions agreed upon. Both donors and implementers of projects have to ensure these reports are accurate and complete. They have to adhere to the donor policies and requirements. This practice has been observed in projects implemented in Ethiopia.

It is one of the requirements of donors to maintain open communication with local project implementing agencies. This practice contributes to transparent communication on both sides. Transparency is an important means of controlling abuse of donor resources within recipient countries including Ethiopia. Periodic reports on any issues or deviations related to donor financed projects should effectively be used for the purpose of taking corrective actions. In any project, there is an assumption of risks that may impede proper implementation. There is, however, risk management technique that helps to identify possible threats of

implementation. It is crucial to identify potential risks that could impede compliance with donor requirements. In this situation, there is a requirement to develop a risk management plan to minimize or mitigate these risks. This leads to the development of contingency plans for handling unexpected problems and challenges that may arise suddenly during project implementation.

Policy compliance involves legal and ethical considerations in donor financed projects. This requires adherence to laws and regulations of the government of Ethiopia which are related to development plans and programs. These laws and regulations guarantee compliance with local, national, and international laws related to donor project. To avoid illegal operations that lead to irresponsible wastage of resources, including abuse of funds and materials, both the government and donors enter into agreements. In so doing, they consult legal experts to understand and apply pertinent and relevant regulations. In this respect, it is absolutely necessary to apply ethical standards to keep at bay corrupt practices. It is, therefore, useful to maintain high standards in the management of all project activities in Ethiopia. The modality is just to address any ethical concerns promptly, effectively and transparently. In so doing, government implementing agencies may ensure good standing with their donors. This modality of operation ensures and secures funding for projects.

Guaranteeing policy conformity with donor requirements is critical for ensuring good relationships with donors. This helps to make the sustainability of funding certain. There are certain factors that ensure compliance with donor requirements. In this regard, it is important to carefully understand and review the terms and conditions outlined in the funding agreement. Both the donor and responsible government authority must pay attention to reporting deadlines and specific donor guidelines. Periodic reporting of activities by inspectors ensures that a project is implemented in line with agreement entered between the concerned parties. The inspection reports help to identify misuse and abuse of donor resources in time. Based on inspection reports immediate and corrective actions have to be taken by the implementing agency and the donor. In this respect, policy compliance has to be ensured to avoid the discontinuation of funding. Donor funds flow into Ethiopia in foreign exchange for employing skilled project managers and staff from the local labor market. These funds are used to support development projects in the country as per the agreement entered.

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

Editorial

Effective execution of projects deserving scaling up tasks nationwide in different spheres

Squalid villages and shanty houses with rusty corrugated iron-sheet roofs were hiding behind big buildings scantily scattered in Addis, which many agree proved an eyesore specially seen with a bird's eye view. This tragic episode was begging for a turnaround. The dilapidated buildings too were clamoring for refurbishments. It was not unusual to come across dump yards here and there. It was out of this necessity Addis' Corridor Development Project was brought to life to transform Addis from eyesore to eye candy as well as allow ample space for pedestrians and enough rooms for vehicles running to and from.

The new road from the historic Mexico Square to that of Sarbet entailed in the aforementioned Project has just seen completion and inaugurated by higher government officials. As nothing is as assuring as hearing things from the horse's mouth let us see what residents expressed about the transformation crystallizing.

"It is nothing short of a miracle. In the bygone days people living with disability or using wheelchairs like myself were not given due attention. As such, our lives were in danger. But now as you can see we are using the cycle lane entertaining the feeling of safety enjoying the new Addis's vibe meeting the standard Pillars of a modern town. We have left narrow roads suffering congestions behind us. Now, there is no more brushing of sides with vehicles. The difference is as wide apart as the earth and the sky. The grasses and the palm trees are refreshing," so told an interviewee of Addis Media Network.

Another interviewee noted "There were no scenery and greenery. But now we see green spots, parking, basements, plazas, bus terminals, entertainment spots, public rest rooms and what have you."

A middle level official in the city administration noted, "No businessman voiced a compliant though s/he made some space sacrifices. Enthused with the project businessmen are tapping the project on the back. In the infrastructure expansion work streamlined activities were witnessed—that is in the installation of water pipelines, electricity lines and road expansions. Architects from the public side did volunteer in giving expertise. Urbanization promotes economic activities. Everything is superb. Besides, the project has opened job opportunities for many youths. A timely and satisfying compensation has to be upheld to take many aboard. The work culture is evolving for Ethiopians have begun to adopt a round the clock engagement in duty. This has awakened other project heads that were tardy in completing their respective projects."

As the saying goes "seeing is believing," one can check things paying homage to transformed Addis, a seat of many international organizations. Now it could tick all the boxes of be it guests or residents. Resistance to change will go to the background when projects are run by determined executives that do not start not to finish.

The example set by the Addis Ababa City Administration has to be scaled up in other fields of engagements throughout the country so as to ensure the country's envisaged affluence. The spirit of "of course we could do it!" must ripple nationwide. Executing quality-standard-meeting task within the deadline displaying esthetics and synchronicity must be made a norm. Also the extraordinary tasks handled in import substitution producing inputs and raw materials here by own experts are commendable. This spirit must spur the country far in the avenue of industrialization.



The Ethiopian Herald

Established in 1943

Published daily except Mondays
By The Ethiopian Press Agency

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The Ethiopian Herald

Opinion

Ethiopia's homegrown economic policies should look beyond the horizon

BY EPHREM ANDARGACHEW

Following the mid-2018 political reform in the country, Ethiopia has implemented several domestic economic measures to promote development and economic growth. Through various strategies, including infrastructure development, industry, tourism, and agricultural modernization, the goal is to create sustainable and inclusive growth.

The Industrial Development Strategy, which highlights industrialization and the manufacturing sector as crucial drivers of economic growth, is a key component of the policy. This strategy aims to improve business environments, attract foreign direct investment, and support the growth of local enterprises. Additionally, industrialization is seen as a catalyst for economic expansion, promoting growth in the manufacturing sector, attracting foreign investment, and creating job opportunities across various industries.

As part of its domestic economic policy, the government has identified and prioritized development areas. Notably, agricultural development programs such as the Agricultural Transformation Agency (ATA) and the Agricultural Commercialization Clusters (ACC) program are in place to increase agricultural production, improve market access for smallholder farmers, and foster the growth of agribusiness.

The transformation of the agricultural sector is essential for boosting productivity, enhancing food security, and improving the livelihoods of smallholder farmers. Industry reform focuses on upgrading agricultural practices, adding value to products, and expanding market access for agricultural goods.

Moreover, the policy recognizes sustainable development as a critical element in economic policy. The strategy aims to achieve sustainable economic growth that is environmentally friendly and socially inclusive, balancing economic progress, environmental protection, and social equality.

Considering these factors, the government recently reviewed the performance of the 2016 fiscal year's last 100 days and outlined plans for 2017. Based on key macroeconomic sector performances over the past ten months, indicators suggest a 7.9 percent economic growth in the current fiscal year.

Effective execution in agriculture, industry, mining, and other sectors is crucial for meeting economic growth targets. For instance, the main season crop in agriculture exceeded the previous year's by 100 million quintals. Additionally, initiatives like the summer irrigation wheat program and the 'Bounty of the Basket' (Ye LemafTirufat), a national development program launched by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, have shown promising results. By the end of May, 106 million quintals of summer irrigation wheat were harvested out of an anticipated 117 million quintals.

In the manufacturing sector, productivity has increased with the 'Made in Ethiopia'

campaign, providing manufacturers with input and financial support to operate at full capacity. As a result, gold and cement production have risen, with cement output surpassing last year's by over 1 million tons.

To stabilize the cost of living, the government has taken steps such as boosting local output and productivity, allowing duty-free imports of essential products, and expanding market infrastructure, leading to a decrease in total inflation to 23 percent. The service sector is also showing gradual improvement.

With the results from the previous fiscal year in mind, Ethiopia aims for an 8.3 percent economic growth in the 2017 Ethiopian fiscal year. This target considers current capabilities and future potential, with extensive preparations made, from policy changes to budgeting.

Ethiopia's Minister of Planning and Development, FitsumAssefa, has set the goal of 8.3 percent economic growth for the 2017 fiscal year. Achieving this target will require increased coordination in agriculture, industry, mining, tourism, and the digital sectors. The strategy also emphasizes developing economic and social infrastructure to significantly reduce poverty. Efforts to control inflation will continue in the next fiscal year through operational improvements, increased output and productivity, and modernization of market infrastructure.

While the government's efforts through homegrown economic policies to achieve economic growth, stabilize the market, and promote overall development are commendable, other pressing challenges must be addressed. Increasing infrastructure development is crucial to ensure and promote economic growth, as infrastructure plays a vital role in transportation, energy development, and communications, facilitating commerce, attracting investment, and connecting rural and urban centers.

Although the homegrown economic policy recognizes the importance of investing in human capital, the government should also focus on human capital development through education, skills training, and healthcare to build a skilled workforce, drive innovation and entrepreneurship, and engage the private sector in job creation, fostering a favorable business environment, promoting competition, and supporting the growth of small and medium-sized enterprises.

Given the country's comparative advantages, the government should work towards promoting national unity and regional integration, as regional cooperation brings mutual benefits by enhancing market access, stimulating trade, and attracting investment from neighboring countries.

Overall, Ethiopia's homegrown economic policies aim to address the country's specific challenges and opportunities, focusing on long-term and inclusive growth that benefits all sectors of society. By leveraging both internal and external advantages, Ethiopia can achieve sustainable and inclusive economic growth that benefits not only the country but also its neighboring nations.

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

Art & Culture

Reggae as a musical genre of resistance

(Bob Marley, Part II)

BY SOLYANA BEKELE

“Waiting In Vain”

This light-hearted theme is again continued and built on by “Waiting In Vain,” a song that personally makes me feel like I’m lying on a beach in Jamaica, sun on my skin, maybe with the love of my life beside me—enjoying the feel of the earth’s warmth and the soft spray of the azure colored ocean waves. Putting aside how it makes one feel, “Waiting In Vain” is a serenade of a reggae love song that is allegedly about Cindy Breakspere, mother to Damian Marley, and former lover of Bob Marley. The lines of “it’s been three years since I’ve been knocking on your door,” claims Breakspere in an interview, was actually about Marley’s incessant knocking of her door which happened to be an out-house type living unit on Bob Marley’s property at 56 Hope Road.

As the title of the song so aptly puts it, the song is about having affection for another in the hopes of reciprocity. At this point in Marley’s career, I doubt whether he had any trouble getting anyone he desired, but it isn’t hard to believe that maybe Breakspere had him run for his money since in 1976, she was crowned Miss World—and as such was probably desired by many herself.

Regardless of who it’s about and Marley’s motivations, “Waiting In Vain” is a beautifully written love song that is anthem for many lovers—rooty or not.

“Turn Your Lights Down Low”

“Turn Your Lights Down Low” is track that evokes mellow emotions and moods from its start. The first few lyrics is actually Marley creating the mood and space he’s trying to sustain throughout the song: “Turn your lights down low, pull your window curtains, let jah moon come shining in.”

I’ve listened to this song many times over,



but I think I’m just now noticing some eroticism that have absolutely flew past me in the past. The particular line “I wanna give you some good, good lovin’” immediately followed by “turn your lights down low,” gave me that light bulb moment.

It seems that in the later parts of Exodus, Marley is expressing and communicating the more sensitive and loving side of him. Having “Turn Your Lights Down Low” closer to the end of the album—and particularly after “Waiting In Vain” is an appropriate choice. It almost seems like a story; turns out he didn’t have to wait in vain, and now he is—as he puts it—giving, and presumably receiving—that “good, good lovin’.”

“Three Little Birds”

Now on to one of the most known songs in reggae history: “Three Little Birds.” I want to emphasize that it being popular, or mainstream has little to nothing to do with

the value of the song as it is. It’s popular because it’s a great song. However, it is also popular because almost everyone on the earth can relate to it. Again, this is not a bad thing.

“Three Little Birds” is a beautifully sang and written song that is uplifting and comforting. And that in itself is a commendable thing. To write a song as simple as “Three Little Birds” but have it mean so much to so many different people only speaks to the genius of Bob Marley as a singer and songwriter.

For some, “Three Little Birds” might be the only track that symbolizes Bob Marley and his politics. The only potential problem is that this gives leeway for people to interpret Marley as this non-violent, love-your-enemy, type of person through and through. This thought process disregards the first half of the album (some will argue his entire career) that clearly speaks to the militant—or downright pessimistic—side of Marley.

Like any person, he’s too complex to fit him in the box we may have constructed in our heads.

“One Love/People Get Ready”

This is another Bob Marley classic that was actually remade into a reggae song from the original Ska version released in 1965 in The Wailing Wailers album. “One Love,” much like “Three Little Birds” continues that theme of peace and love for all people. These last two tracks really speak to the loving person that Bob Marley truly was because despite the ills he suffered—from his own countrymen no less—he understood that love was necessary. That love makes you “feel alright.” The same love that helps one “have pity on those whose chances grow thinner.” The same love that helps us “fight this holy Armageddon.”

As Marley puts it, this is his “plea to mankind.” As such, this is a great choice with which to close the album because it shows listeners that, again, Marley is not disillusioned by the horrors he’s experienced with the threat on his life and the political violence he saw his people subjected to. Rather, it shows that he truly does have hope for the future.

As significant as Exodus is to Bob Marley & The Wailers’ career—and to the genre of reggae—by no means is this album the superlative work of Marley’s career in any capacity. Before Exodus, Marley—with the help of the original Wailers, Peter Tosh and Bunny Wailer—created revolutionary reggae albums like Burnin’, Catch a Fire, and Natty Dread. After Exodus, Marley continued to drop classic works like Kaya (1978), Survival (1979), and the last one before his death—Uprising (1980). Even his posthumous album Confrontation (1983) (which I argue is the least popular album in terms of reach) is a classic in its own right. It seems that for Bob Marley, creating timeless music was second nature.

Still I rise

BY MAYA ANGELOU

You may write me down in history

With your bitter, twisted lies,

You may trod me in the very dirt

But still, like dust, I’ll rise.

Does my sassiness upset you?

Why are you beset with gloom?

’Cause I walk like I’ve got oil wells

Pumping in my living room.

Just like moons and like suns,

With the certainty of tides,

Just like hopes springing high,

Still I’ll rise.

Did you want to see me broken?

Bowed head and lowered eyes?

Shoulders falling down like teardrops,

Weakened by my soulful cries?

Does my haughtiness offend you?

Don’t you take it awful hard

’Cause I laugh like I’ve got gold mines

Diggin’ in my own backyard.

You may shoot me with your words,

You may cut me with your eyes,

You may kill me with your hatefulness,

But still, like air, I’ll rise.

Does my sexiness upset you?

Does it come as a surprise

That I dance like I’ve got diamonds

At the meeting of my thighs?

Out of the huts of history’s shame

I rise

Up from a past that’s rooted in pain

I rise

I’m a black ocean, leaping and wide,

Welling and swelling I bear in the tide.

Leaving behind nights of terror and fear

I rise

Into a daybreak that’s wondrously clear

I rise

Bringing the gifts that my ancestors gave,



I am the dream and the hope of the slave.

I rise

I rise

I rise.

Law & Politics

A perspective into ongoing dev't approaches

BY SOLOMON DIBABA

PART ONE

Speaking on a ceremony dedicated to the startup of this year's National Green Legacy Initiative, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed underscored on the importance of transferring green and clean Ethiopia to the upcoming generation as an important part for accelerating the prosperity of the country.

This contribution intends to produce a short analysis on the objective linkage between Ethiopia's Climate Change Resilient Green Economy Strategy and policy, the National Green Legacy Initiative, *Yelemat Trufat* Program, food security, TVET, Ethiopia Tamirt programs and their implication for the national economic development of the country.

Ethiopia's Climate Resilient Green Economy (CRGE) strategy, launched in 2011, aims to build a middle-income economy by 2025 while ensuring environmental sustainability. The strategy focuses on four pillars which include agriculture for improving crop and livestock production practices to increase food security while reducing emissions. Protecting and re-establishing forests for their economic and ecosystem services while expanding electricity generation from renewable sources for domestic and regional markets and leapfrogging to modern and energy-efficient technologies. The CRGE aims to integrate these pillars to balance economic growth with environmental sustainability and resilience to climate change.

On the other hand, the Green Legacy Initiative, launched by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed in 2019, aims to combat deforestation and climate change by planting billions of trees across Ethiopia.

The major objectives of the Green Legacy Initiative include: mitigating the impacts of climate change and environmental degradation, enhancing biodiversity by restoring native tree species, mobilizing citizens in environmental conservation efforts as well as supporting sustainable livelihoods through agroforestry and green jobs.

The National Green Legacy is not just about planting trees as some may think. It is not even only about expanding the forest coverage of the country which has now reached more than 23% as recently reported by the Premier. The National Green Legacy Initiative encompasses a global initiative of combating global warming and decarbonizing the earth's atmosphere.

It also involves the development of food forest as a linkage to ensuring food security at household and community levels. The initiative is also closely linked with environmental conservation and beefing up the water resources, flora and fauna in the country.

It is also worth noting that the recently launched Clean and Healthy Streets has an internal linkage with the NGLI in the

context of creating clean livable cities and towns across the country through street corridors development which kicked off in Addis Ababa.

Ethiopia's achievements in climate diplomacy are now growing with higher visibility and international recognition particularly by the UN. The country is now entering into a new phase of climate diplomacy as the nation has now become a member of BRICS effective January 2024. The nation can use climate diplomacy along with other routine diplomatic undertakings to siphon in more FDI, promoting tourism and people to people public diplomacy across BRICS member countries.

In addition, Ethiopia needs to scale up its efforts in G77 countries to promote climate diplomacy in the context of South-South cooperation framework.

On the other hand, Ethiopia can use the nation's experience in public diplomacy to bolster climate diplomacy by blending it with the promotion of ecotourism as a driving force for climate diplomacy and also by incorporating the various forms of diplomacy mentioned earlier.

It must be noted that diplomacy that is conducted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is institutional diplomacy that is conducted at government level. Heads of State and Government also conduct diplomacy at their level either by mobilizing the various government institutions or just by themselves. Climate diplomacy is the one that Ethiopia has a lot to gain from in the future.

This year, the entire population of the country is bracing for planting some seven billion trees across the country scaling up the number of trees planted in the country since 2019 close to 40 billion.

In connection to this, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in Ethiopia is crucial for providing skilled manpower necessary for the development of various sectors, including manufacturing, agriculture, and service industries. The role of TVET in Ethiopia includes, equipping individuals with practical skills and technical knowledge, supporting the growth of key industries and fostering innovation, reducing unemployment by providing market-relevant skills as well as promoting the adoption of modern technologies and practices in various sectors.

Integrating the above mentioned areas is of critical importance for the nation's economy. TVET programs can train individuals in sustainable farming practices and forest management, supporting CRGE's goals and the Green Legacy Initiative. In addition, TVET can provide training in renewable energy technologies, supporting CRGE's energy goals.

Moreover, TVET can help create green jobs through skills development in areas such as agroforestry, conservation, and renewable energy, aligning with both CRGE and Green Legacy objectives. Both initiatives encourage community participation, which can be strengthened

through TVET by providing education and training on environmental stewardship and sustainable practices. It is equally important to revitalize the university-industry operational relations to produce need based technical professionals that can manage the various planned activities and campaigns.

Ethiopia's integrated approach through the CRGE policy, Green Legacy Initiative, and TVET programs demonstrates a comprehensive strategy to achieve sustainable development, mitigate climate change and enhance the resilience of its economy and communities. This alignment ensures that economic growth does not come at the expense of the environment, and it promotes a skilled workforce capable of supporting and sustaining these initiatives.

Yelemat Trufat, also known as 'Basket Bounty', is an initiative by the Ethiopian government aimed at improving the nutritional status of children and enhancing their educational outcomes. The program primarily targets school-aged children in rural and underserved areas, providing them with nutritious meals sourced from local agricultural products.

The major objectives of Yelemat Trufat include nutritional opulence, the development campaign aims to boost productivity of dairy, eggs, chicken, and honey and related products as well as intensify efforts to achieve food self-sufficiency and ensure nutritional richness at family and national levels. The program has the potential to also produce agricultural products which are expected to be used as raw materials for the nascent agro-industrial development in the country.

Since 2003, Ethiopia has continued to engage in a national food security program in cooperation with national and international partners with the objective of ensuring food security at household level in more than 300 woredas across the country. Reducing the vulnerability to the effects of climate change and creating domestic assets for food self-sufficiency at the national level.

Siphoning out the benefits of Yelemat Trufat Campaign named after a local food basket made of straw is a home grown development campaign which focuses on promoting food security and food system, increasing income from foreign trade and promotion of import substitution.

The components are mostly based on agricultural potentials in different parts of the country with varying ecological endowments and climatically conditions. They are also interconnected as they have a common base on agriculture.

In general terms, the food security aspect of the campaign implies production of food ranging from grain food to root crops, vegetables and animal products that are essential for ensuring balanced diet at household level and within communities. Production of food is meant for distribution and marketing of food products to ensure access to enough food both in kind and volume. Access to food related to marketing

food in a sustainable manner at all seasons and conditions at market price.

Generating income for purchasing food and other personal and social needs is also included in the efforts to ensure food security for all at a reasonable quality and in a specific consumption manner pattern. Moreover, food security is also related to the ability of household or community members to conserve food at food stress periods in Ethiopia particularly during the rainy season.

Diversification of food intake is an important component of standard nutritional needs of families, individuals and the society at large. The importance of food is related to consumption of various types of food both for nutritional purposes and for the prevention of micronutrient malnutrition which has continued to prevail in Ethiopia. Taking food, particularly horticultural and vegetables products enables consumers to prevent various preventable illness like diabetes, hypertension, kidney, liver and cardio-vascular diseases. Fruits and vegetables are rich in vitamins and other minerals which are useful for healthy life.

Food security initiatives manageable at household level are to be devised in such a way that millions of families would be capable enough to produce their own food. In this context bio-intensive gardening around homesteads combining fruit trees, tubers and multiple kinds of vegetables could help families to become hunger proofed and thereby improve their nutritional status even during food gap seasons. The DA assigned in every village across the country can play a decisive role in supporting farmers not only to produce their own food but also market access products to the local market so that they can earn some cash at hand.

Although Ethiopia has devised policies and strategies for food security over the last several decades, due to lack of systematic implementation capacity, modernization and mechanization of agriculture, in almost all cases attempts on food security faced several challenges related to climate change induced drought, floods and landslides.

Safety-net programs in arid and semi-arid parts of the country and drought prone areas have rendered a considerable of service for the promotion of food security at family level. The launching of food for work and cash for work programs in various drought affected areas has enable hundreds of thousands of families to withstand the effects of drought and food shortage in various parts of the country.

Promotion of urban agricultural practices in major cities of the country is very useful to reclaim dirt ridden and waste disposal areas in the cities to produce vegetable and fruit trees that could particularly help to enhance food security among female headed families in rural and urban towns.

Please note that the next part comes out in tomorrow's edition.



Sri Lanka committed to spiraling ties with Africa

Ambassador K.K. Theshantha Kumarasiri

BY GIRMACHEW GASHAW

Sri Lanka is an island in the Indian Ocean, located to the south of the Indian Subcontinent. The island is rich in natural resources and has a diverse economy based on agriculture, mining, fishing, manufacturing, and tourism.

In 1948, after nearly 150 years of British rule, Sri Lanka became an independent country and was admitted to the United Nations seven years later. The country is a member of the Commonwealth and the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation.

Ethiopia and Sri Lanka have longstanding relations. The two countries have been supporting each other in the international forum on issues of common interest. Ethiopia and Sri Lanka established diplomatic relations in 1965, and ties between the two countries have been expanding steadily over the years.

The Sri Lanka Embassy in Ethiopia was officially opened on February 7, 2017, by the Foreign Minister of Ethiopia and Sri Lanka.

The two countries have had multiple discussions centered on developing partnerships for trade and investment between Ethiopia and Sri Lanka, with bilateral linkages in targeted priority sectors such as apparel manufacturing, tourism, hospitality, agriculture, ICT, innovation and knowledge creation, logistics, and construction.

The discussions envisioned a wider Africa-centric partnership, particularly on blue economic initiatives, to meet common challenges of climate change, sustainable development, inclusive economic growth, energy, and security within the solidarity of South-South cooperation.

Today's guest is K.K. Theshantha Kumarasiri, Ambassador of Sri Lanka to Ethiopia and Permanent Representative to the African Union and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa.

In an exclusive interview with The Ethiopian Herald, Ambassador Kumarasiri explains the present political, economic, cultural, and people-to-people ties between the two countries.

As the new Head of Mission to Ethiopia, the ambassador expressed his commitment to broaden the existing bilateral interactions between Sri Lanka and Ethiopia under his dual position. Have a nice read!

Could you please provide information on the bilateral relations between the two countries?

The Government of Sri Lanka is committed to strengthening bilateral relations with all African countries, including Ethiopia, as part of the new foreign policy initiative called "Look Africa" introduced by President Wickremesinghe.

The discussion focused on developing partnerships for trade and investment between Ethiopia and Sri Lanka in priority sectors such as apparel manufacturing, tourism, agriculture, ICT, innovation, logistics and construction. The goal is to create a wider Africa-centric partnership, particularly in blue economic initiatives, to address common challenges like climate change, sustainable development, economic growth, energy, and security through South-South cooperation.

Efforts are being made to establish ongoing bilateral interactions between Sri Lanka and Ethiopia, including forming institutional and structural instruments for enhancing cooperation and establishing partnerships with business chambers in both countries for mutual benefits.

Despite challenges, Sri Lanka has remained resilient and is looking to strengthen partnerships with Africa, especially with Ethiopia and other African nations. The upcoming commencement of Ethiopian Airlines flights to Colombo, which will further enhance trade, investment and tourism cooperation between the two countries.

We have a lot to learn from each other. As the Embassy of Sri Lanka, we need to narrow down the gap between our two countries. We are going to sign an MOU on a cultural cooperation agreement with Sri



Efforts are being made to establish ongoing bilateral interactions between Sri Lanka and Ethiopia, including forming institutional and structural instruments for enhancing cooperation and establishing partnerships with business chambers in both countries for mutual benefits

Lanka and Ethiopia, which will help us expand our cooperation, particularly in the literary sector, library cooperation, film industry, photographic industry,

and other areas.

This will help us be more engaged with each other and pave the way for engagement in other sectors at a political and economic level. This partnership is aimed at bridging the gap between our people, the business community, policymakers, and more.

After being assigned as an ambassador, how do you assess the level of bilateral ties between Ethiopia and Sri Lanka?

We have already signed two agreements with Ethiopia - one for political consultations and another for technical cooperation. Additionally, there are several agreements in progress, including defense and energy cooperation, cultural exchange, and potential joint ventures in agriculture and the plantation industry. Sri Lankan companies are particularly interested in these areas.

Continued to page 9



Sri Lanka...

continued from page 8

We have proposed tea, rubber, wheat and rice plantations, as well as partnerships in science, technology and the energy sector. We have introduced seven Ethiopian companies to Sri Lankan partners, with a focus on areas like the cosmetic industry and mining. We are also working on enhancing connectivity between the two countries, with plans to sign an MOU for air services and potentially establish direct flights between Colombo and Addis Ababa.

Expanding cooperation in trade, tourism and digitalization is a priority. Sri Lanka's rich hospitality industry, particularly in tourism and hotels, can be shared with Ethiopia, which is currently promoting tourism and eco-tourism. There is potential for collaboration in Ayurvedic tourism and technology sharing. Both countries are looking to strengthen relations in various fields, including manufacturing and digitalization. Discussions between the leaders of both nations have highlighted the importance of building partnerships and exploring new opportunities for cooperation.

Recently, your embassy celebrated a cultural festival with the presence of the diplomatic community in Addis Ababa. Could you please provide more details about the festival and its significance for Sri Lankans and other members of the international community residing here?

Last Sunday's celebration is the International Day of Vesak, proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly and celebrated by many countries around the world, particularly in South Asian and East Asian countries such as India, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Myanmar, and Cambodia. Many other countries also celebrate Vesak.

Vesak is the day when Buddha was born as a prince and attained Buddhahood, also known as enlightenment. He understood the supreme truth of the world and introduced a philosophy about life. Buddha taught that life is inherently full of suffering and explained how to overcome this suffering.

Buddhists believe in rebirth, where individuals may be reborn as different beings, leading to continued suffering. Buddha provided a solution by introducing a path to enlightenment, a state of mind called Nibbana, where



one purifies their mind and eliminates hatred and ill will. This path, known as the middle path, has helped millions of people achieve enlightenment and end the cycle of rebirth and suffering.

The light festival is celebrated to honor Buddha, who showed us a new way to eradicate suffering. Buddhists celebrate this festival to show respect to Lord Buddha for providing a new path in life. In today's world, where many people are suffering, we promote the middle path as a way to realistically analyze life, find solutions, help one another, and foster compassion and love. This is the message we are promoting through this festival.

What is the purpose of the festival?

The main purpose of this festival is to introduce the culture for Ethiopians, our friends around the world and showcase what we have to offer. It is a platform where we share our knowledge, experiences, and remedies for the conflicts in the world, as the world is currently polarized and many people are marginalized.

There are numerous individuals suffering due to climate change, political conflict, and various other reasons. Therefore, we must find solutions to these problems by creating goodwill, offering compassion to others, extending a helping hand and

providing wisdom to address these issues realistically. This is the true meaning of the festival.

Is there any cultural observation you have noticed here in Ethiopia that aligns with Buddha philosophy?

Yes, because in every philosophy and religion, the fundamentals are similar, with additional segments added over time, such as rituals influenced by climate conditions, region, and cultural factors. Despite these variations, the fundamental principles of love and liberation from suffering are consistent across religions like Christianity, Islam, and Buddhism.

I have witnessed many religious festivals in this country, such as the large gatherings near churches every Sunday where thousands of people march to worship God and Jesus Christ.

Ethiopia's cultural, religious and geographical diversity is evident, but the Christian religion serves as a unifying force in this predominantly Christian country. Religion plays a significant role in bringing people together, fostering harmony and unity, which is truly remarkable and something I have come to appreciate during my time here. The harmonious society in Ethiopia, where people embrace each other despite differences, is truly inspiring and has been a

Sri Lanka's rich hospitality industry, particularly in tourism and hotels, can be shared with Ethiopia, which is currently promoting tourism and eco-tourism

valuable lesson for me.

During the festival, the embassy is adorned with colorful lights and decorations. Is there a connection between this decoration and the festival?

Actually, all the lanterns were created by Sri Lankans living and working in Ethiopia, some of whom work in the Hawasa Industrial Park. Last year, we also celebrated this lantern festival, with all the lanterns made by Sri Lankans working here.

Additionally, a few lanterns were made by my embassy staff. The illuminated lanterns symbolize the teachings of the Buddha, representing the wisdom he shared that has liberated millions of people from suffering and the cycle of rebirth.

Ultimately, it signifies satisfaction and the liberation of life, reflecting the Buddha's teachings of new wisdom. These colors and illuminations pay homage to the Buddha and his teachings that offer liberation.

Here are the questions I have for you today. If you have any additional points to add, please feel free to do so.

That's all I have for now.

Thank you, Ambassador, for your time and willingness.

It is my pleasure.

Society

TVET: Empowering youth, enhancing innovation capacity

BY MENGISTEAB TESHOME

Since the past decades, the waves of technological innovations have revolutionized the experiences of the global community and transformed their lives in every aspect. By allowing them to leverage on the ever evolving technology, the advent of new and advanced technological innovations easing the way people live, work and interact.

These tools not only make daily chores and tasks more efficient and convenient, but they are also playing a vital role in improving the lives of individuals not only for ebled bodies but also people with physical disabilities and severe health conditions.

One key area where these technological innovations are making a big impact is home gadgets. These tech gadgets are making a big impact on easing common household chores. Among other, just to mention but a few, smart washing machines and dishwashers with app-based voice and time control as well as robotic vacuum cleaners are easing house chores and lessening the burden of billions of people across the world, especially women. Likewise, the tech gadgets, such as robotic arms and legs, that are designed to assist those people with some type of physical limitations and health conditions are also playing a significant role and changing their lives for the better. Some devices are also supporting people in detecting diabetics to track their blood sugar levels discreetly and automatically.

The common thread running through all of these innovations is a focus on easing and improving quality of life, restoring a sense of independence as well as achieving satisfaction across several aspects.

These gadgets, by enabling them to replace manual tasks by assistive and adaptive equipment, are allowing individuals with disabilities and severe health conditions become more independent, carry out their tasks and perform their daily lives easier.

Of course, the true heroes behind these life-changing technologies are the innovators and inventors who dedicate themselves to solving real-world problems. Through their relentless creativity and problem-solving capability, they are transforming what was once impossible into possible and making a tangible difference in people's lives.

As we look to the future, it is exciting to see what other ingenious gadgets and devices will emerge to continue enhancing home life and empowering the disabled community, making a significant difference in the lives of many. The potential to improve quality of life is immense, and these innovators are leading the change.

As the 14th City-wide Technical and Vocational Educational and Training (TVET)



Dagim Gartew with his prototype, 'Atomative food feeder'

exhibition, which was opened at Addis Ababa Exhibition Center last Saturday, on June 22, 2024 and ran for six consecutive days, what was witnessed was this same reality- the potential of TVET in building the innovative skills and competence of young people to succeed in the labour market.

At the exhibition organized under the theme 'TVET for sustainable development' a number of innovations in agriculture, wood and metal works were exhibited which in turn grabbed the attention of visitors.

In relation to the exhibition and to have their insight with regard to the vital role that TVET centers play in addressing the need for specialised skills and building the skills for innovation, *The Ethiopia Herald* approached participants and college representatives.

According to, Electronics Department Head with LG-Koica Hope TVET College, Mesfin Cheru the platform gathered a number of public and private educational institutions and a number of gadgets that are produced by innovators of private and public TVETs colleges were presented.

"I am sure the works are helpful in honing the skills of the youth, empowering them and undoing problems. What is more, it paves the way to engage in import substitute activities," he added.

TVET centers have a vital and irreplaceable role in generating skilled competitive workforces, driving economic and social progress in Ethiopia, he reiterated.

In this regard, the College is working round the clock to empower young Ethiopians

increasingly vital role in driving economic and social progress in Ethiopia.

"For instance, we have 13 individuals in Dubai, 2 in Kenya, and one in Saudi Arabia. We are also able to support 106 local business firms that are operating in Ethiopia."

He noted the nation's TVET system is impacting meaningfully as they are leading to improving and growing gadget innovation among the youth. TVETs are providing students with hands-on technical skills, encouraging creativity and design thinking capabilities that are critical to bringing out innovative solutions plus instilling an entrepreneurial mindset to turn ideas into real products.

"It high time to create an informed community to let young people join TVET centers, because there is still low awareness towards it," he underlined.

The other innovator who took part at the exhibition and presented his works is Dagim Gartew.

As Dagim, graduated from General Winget PolyTechnic College in 2024 in Industrial Electrical and Electronic Control Technology, stated to *The Ethiopian Herald*, the work he innovated and presented at the exhibition is a gadget named as 'Atomative food feeder,' an adaptive eating device for individuals with mobility limitations.

"The education I received at the College was pivotal in enabling me to conceptualize and develop this device. The curriculum that emphasizes electronics, programming, and product design provided me with a robust technical foundation. Equally important were the entrepreneurship modules, which equipped me with the entrepreneurship skills needed to transform my prototype into a commercially viable solution." Dagim remarked.

According to him, it took him three weeks to fix his gadget. "The College has supported me financially to purchase inputs that are needed to develop the gadget. "I am sure the gadget is helpful in providing assistance to people with physical disability and with some type of health matters."

There are millions of physically disabled fellow citizens, that means there is a high demand for the feeding gadget; however, there is no established system to develop the prototype to marketable product. There must be a clear system to provide practical assistance for innovations technically and financially.

He also called on academia, the private and public industries to fund the sector and help innovators to show lasting energy and ingenuity in innovation.

The TVET centers are important hubs in pushing the mind set of the youth towards innovations that could solve the problems of the society.

The TVET centers are important hubs in pushing the mind set of the youth towards innovations that could solve the problems of the society

with the required knowledge and skills to help them engage in practical skills. "We are productive, because our graduates are becoming competitors and entrepreneurs at continental and international level."

He further noted TVET is playing an

International

China honors woman who died saving Japanese family

A Chinese woman who tried to shield a Japanese mother and her child from a knife attack has died.

Hu Youping was working as a school bus attendant in Suzhou city when a man attacked a Japanese woman and her child at a bus stop outside a Japanese school.

She suffered serious injuries while trying to restrain him.

Tributes for her have poured out online and the local government has said she will be given the title of "Righteous and Courageous Role Model".

The Japanese embassy in China also lowered its flag to half-mast to honour Ms. Hu. In a statement on Weibo, the embassy said it was "saddened" to hear of her death.

"We believe [Ms. Hu's] courage and kindness also represent that of the Chinese people. We pay tribute to her righteous deeds. May she rest in peace," it said.

There was also an outpouring of condolences and praise on Chinese social media.

"We will remember your kindness and

bravery, for you protected the safety of our Japanese friends and preserved the reputation of ordinary Chinese people," read a comment on Weibo.

Another described Ms Hu as an "ordinary, virtuous, courageous Chinese sister".

The mother and son were hurt in Monday's attack but their injuries were not life-threatening. The suspect, a 52-year-old Chinese man, was arrested at the scene.

It followed another stabbing earlier this month, which injured four US university instructors at a park in Jilin, in China's north-east.

Chinese officials had said the two attacks were "isolated" incidents.

Chinese state newspaper Global Times ran an editorial on Friday paying tribute to Ms Hu, where it also claimed that "China is undoubtedly still one of the safest countries in the world".

Separately, the newspaper reported that Weibo had removed 759 posts that "incited nationalist sentiment" following the attack. These posts contained "extreme opinions"

that "promoted group hatred and even applauded criminal behaviour in the name of patriotism".

The stabbing in Suzhou sparked concern among the local Japanese community and led the embassy to issue a safety alert warning its citizens living in China to take precautions while they are out.

China's foreign ministry said the incident was "regrettable" and that it will "continue to take effective measures to earnestly protect the safety of all foreigners in China".

China has seen a spate of knife attacks in the past year.

In May, two people were killed and 10 others injured in such an attack at a primary school in the southern Jiangxi province. Another stabbing that same month saw two dead and 21 wounded at a hospital in Yunnan.

In July last year, six people, including three children, were killed in a stabbing at a kindergarten in the south-eastern province of Guangdong.

Source: BBC

South Africa's Parliament to open on July 18 – President

South African President Cyril Ramaphosa said Friday that Parliament will open for its next term on July 18 as he remains locked in negotiations with other parties to form a Cabinet well before then amid rifts in the new governing coalition.

The talks to seal the final details of a multi-party government and appoint a Cabinet have been going on for two weeks and have been marked by disagreements between Ramaphosa's African National Congress and the Democratic Alliance, the second biggest party, over how to divide up ministerial positions and portfolios.

Correspondence between the two former political foes has been leaked, showing the tensions.

In one of the letters, Ramaphosa wrote to DA leader John Steenhuisen accusing his party of "moving the goalposts" by increasing its demand from six Cabinet positions to eight, and thereby jeopardizing the coalition agreement. The DA says the ANC had reneged on a promise to allow it to take control of the important Department of Trade and Industry.

Ramaphosa and Steenhuisen have also had face-to-face meetings in recent days.

The issues underline the warnings from analysts that a coalition bringing the ANC and DA together to govern Africa's most industrialized country would be complicated. The ANC had been the ruling party and the DA the main opposition and its fiercest critic for more than 20 years before the May 29 election that created an unprecedented situation



for South African politics. They have starkly different ideologies.

The ANC lost its dominance and the parliamentary majority it had held ever since the end of the apartheid system of white minority rule in 1994 in last month's election and has been forced to share power for the first time. It won 40% of the vote and the DA 21%.

Although eight smaller parties have also joined the coalition, which is being called a government of national unity, the ANC and the DA are the key players and its success relies on them finding common ground.

South African media has reported that the DA may be on the verge of walking away from the power-sharing agreement, but ANC Secretary-General Fikile Mbalula one of his party's lead negotiators moved to dispel that Friday by writing on social media site X that the parties were

"almost done" with the final agreement. "It will be done as promised," he added, and would be "in the best interests of all South Africans."

South Africa's currency and investor confidence strengthened after the ANC and DA signed a preliminary agreement to work together in a coalition on June 14. That deal also allowed Ramaphosa to be reelected by lawmakers for a second term as president just hours later with cross-party support.

Both parties had said the coalition would be a new era of political unity that would help solve the country's vast socioeconomic problems, which include some of the highest rates of inequality and unemployment in the world. But the delay in announcing a Cabinet and a new government getting to work has eroded some of the optimism.

Source: Africanews

South African researchers test use of nuclear technology to curb rhino poaching

Researchers in South Africa have injected radioactive material into the horns of 20 rhinos as part of a research project aimed at reducing poaching.

The idea is that radiation detectors already in place at national borders would detect the horns and help authorities arrest poachers and traffickers.

The research, which has included the participation of veterinarians and nuclear experts, begins with the animal being tranquillized before a hole is drilled into its horn and the nuclear material carefully inserted. This week, researchers at the University of the Witwatersrand's Radiation and Health Physics Unit in South Africa injected 20 live rhinos with these isotopes. They hope the process can be replicated to save other wild species vulnerable to poaching — like elephants and pangolins.

"We are doing this because it makes it significantly easier to intercept these horns as they are being trafficked over international borders because there is a global network of radiation monitors that have been designed to prevent nuclear terrorism," said Professor James Larkin, who heads the project. "And we're piggybacking on the back of that."

According to figures from the International Union for Conservation of Nature, an international conservation body, the global rhino population stood at around 500,000 at the beginning of the 20th century. It now stands at around 27,000 due to continued demand for rhino horns on the black market.

South Africa has the largest population of rhinos with an estimated 16,000, making it a hotspot with over 500 rhinos killed yearly.

The country experienced a significant decline in rhino poaching around 2020 at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, but the numbers increased when virus lockdown restrictions were eased.

"We've got to do something new and something different to reduce poaching. You know, you'll see the figures they've already started going up," said Larkin. "During Covid, they all went down but post Covid we are now starting to see those numbers go up again."

While the idea has received support from some in the industry, the researchers have had to jump many ethical hurdles posed by critics of their methodology.

Pelham Jones, chairperson of the Private Rhino Owners Association, is among the critics of the proposed method and doubts that it would effectively deter poachers and traffickers.

"(Poachers) have worked out other ways of moving rhino horn out of the country, out of the continent or off the continent, not through traditional border crossings," he said. "They bypass the border crossings because they know that is the area of the highest risk of confiscation or interception."

Professor Nithaya Chetty, dean of the science faculty at Witwatersrand, said the dosage of the radioactivity is very low and its potential negative impact on the animal was tested extensively.

Source: Africanews

Verbatim and Caption



Ethiopia projects 8.3 percent economic growth for next year,

- *Fitsum Assefa (PhD), Minister of Planning and Development*

Ethiopia aims to achieve an 8.3 percent economic growth in the 2017 Ethiopian fiscal year. Based on the main macroeconomic sector performances over the past 10 months, indicators suggest a 7.9 percent economic growth for the current fiscal year.

For the 2017 fiscal year, the national economy is projected to grow by 8.3 percent. This target considers current capacity and future potential. Extensive preparations are made from policy reforms to budgeting.

Draft Asset Recovery Bill aligns with int'l practice,

- *Justice Minister Gedion Timothiwos (PhD)*



The Draft Asset Recovery Proclamation that is referred to the House of People's Representatives aligns with international laws and constitutional mandates concerning economic crimes.

The magnitude and complexity of economic crimes are growing at an alarming rate. The adoption of legislation to tackle such crime has become the order of the day before the situation has caused irreversible damage.

It is a legal framework that enables the government to track, seize, and recover assets obtained through illicit and illegal means including those transferred locally and internationally. Such illegally-accumulated assets are often hidden through complex financial networks.

Ethiopia expands clean water access to 72 million citizens,

- *State Minister of MoWE Ambassador Asfaw Dingamo*

Ethiopia is striving to develop the national coverage of access to clean water for its people. So far, Ethiopia registers a significant achievement in providing access to clean drinking water. Currently, more than 72 million citizens have access to clean water. The national coverage of clean drinking water has now reached over 72 million citizens. Recently completed projects have further enhanced the country's capacity to provide clean water.



Incorporating indigenous knowledge significant for ND,

- *ENDC Commissioner Yonas Adaye (PhD)*

Incorporating home-grown knowledge and culture in the ongoing National Dialogue (NG) would be of a great significance towards attaining impactful and inclusive dialogue.

Considering the invaluable role for the national dialogue, ENDC is aggressively working through streamlined home-grown knowledge, culture and inclusive dialogue frameworks including militants' issues to address any odds and realize lasting peace in Ethiopia.



Home-grown approach vital for successful Nat'l Dialogue,

- *Oyvind Aadland (PhD), international communication expert*

Traditional Ethiopian institutions should play a vital role in fostering the National Dialogue of Ethiopia and taking ownership of the reconciliation process.

The focus of the National Dialogue should be on a process owned by each segment of society, rooted in traditional Ethiopian institutions. By engaging every segment of society and focusing on contribution rather than imposition, Ethiopia can build a peaceful and hopeful future for its young population.

In this regard, home-grown approaches and traditions are vital to achieve the goal of the National Dialogue.

