



The Ethiopian Herald

Vol. LXXX No 243 20 JUNE 2024 - Sene 13, 2016

Thursday

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Voluntarism ushers Ethiopia's dev't aspiration: Deputy Premier

• Summer voluntarism program worth 26 bln Birr

BY STAFF REPORTER

ADDIS ABABA- Voluntarism is the main instrument to drive Ethiopia's development and prosperity aspiration, the Deputy Prime Minister said, adding that it is also a way for citizens to build their country.

The Ethiopian 2016 Summer Voluntary Service Movement Forum was held yesterday in the presence of Deputy Prime Minister Temesgen Tiruneh and other high-level government officials.

Speaking at the occasion, the Deputy Premier also stated that voluntary service is a major tool for common development and prosperity in countries that are rich in diversity, including Ethiopia. "Voluntary service is a way for citizens to build their country with a combined energy, knowledge, and skills."

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Kassie Yimam

Aviation University aims to global outreach

BY TSEGAYE TILAHUN

ADDIS ABABA-The Ethiopian Aviation University, an affiliate of the Ethiopian Airlines Group, revealed a desire to scale up the aviation professionals' training and reach different airlines globally.

Approached by The Ethiopian Herald, the University Vice President Kassie Yimam stated that

See Aviation... Page 3



Experts outline combating financial crimes to ensure stability

BY STAFF REPORTER

ADDIS ABABA - Overcoming financial crimes, including money laundering and terrorism financing required to ensure national stability, professionals in the field said.

See Experts outline ... Page 3

Horticulture success hinges on gov't commitment

• Ethiopia doubles last year's production

BY GIRMACHEW GASHAW

BISHOFTU-The leadership's continued support for horticulture farming is entitled to the promising success witnessed in the area, the Government Communication Service (GCS) said.

The GCS, in cooperation with the Ethiopian Horticulture Producers and Exporters Association (EHPEA), held on Tuesday an awareness raising horticultural farms' visit to media practitioners.

Addressing the gathering, GCS State Minister Selamawit Kassa mentioned that the visited farms are the manifestation of

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Enhancing role in BRICS bloc to advance national priorities

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Tapping renewable energy sources for building climate resilient economy

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From two generations, a tale of two Ethiopian pianists

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Sultan Wali (PhD)

Off-Grid energy expansion lights up hopes in remote areas

BY YESUF ENDRIS

ADDIS ABABA- The government is spearheading a plan to expand off-grid energy sources, aiming to provide electricity to 35 percent of the population by 2030, so stated Ministry of Water and Energy.

Water and Energy State Minister, Sultan Wali (PhD) said that this initiative is part of a broader strategy to meet the nation's full power demand within the next decades.

According to him, 65 percent of Ethiopia's future electricity supply will come from the national grid, with off-grid alternatives covering the remaining 35 percent.

The need for off-grid solutions arises from the challenging geographical and settlement patterns, which complicate the installation of national grid infrastructure, he indicated.

Ethiopia possesses a substantial potential for energy generation, estimated at 45 GW, sufficient to meet Africa's demand. This includes untapped resources in hydroelectric, wind, geothermal, and solar energy, which together could generate 150 GW, he stated.

However, realizing this potential requires significant investment and capital. The government is currently focusing on expanding off-grid systems and upgrading transmission infrastructures to enhance energy reliability, he emphasized.

"Effective power supply depends not only on generation but also on transmission systems, the State Minister noted. "Addis Ababa, for example, does not suffer from power shortages; the city's transmission system frequently faces damages and failures. This highlights the critical need for improvements in transmission infrastructure nationwide," he added.

Currently, Ethiopia generates only 5.4 KW, far below its potential. The government's long-term vision focuses on exploiting the potential rather than sustaining the existing capacity, aiming to make Ethiopia one of major global energy supplier.

"Our vision extends beyond domestic needs; we aspire to be a leading energy supplier on the world stage. Underscoring Ethiopia's commitment to an energy-secure future supported by sustainable and diversified power alternatives, the nation plans to well expand the subsector."

Institution to stage 6th Nat'l math's competition

BY ASHENAFI ANIMUT

ADDIS ABABA - The home-grown institution, My Soroban Ethiopia is undertaking preparations to conduct the 2024 final national Mathematics subject competition for four consecutive days as of August 4.

The program, organized by My Soroban Ethiopia in partnership with '1 Dekika', is slated to be held from 4-7 August 2024 under the theme of "Cleverness rewards" at the Millennium Hall with the attendance of senior government officials, students' families and other stakeholders.

In a press briefing held last Thursday, Institution General Manager Kebede Atnafu said that this is an ideal platform to reshape the misconceived mindset, stimulate the students in the subject matter and show the beauty of Mathematics.

The competition is aimed at breaking down the wrong attitude towards the subject, empowering and recognizing students and enabling finalists compete in the continental and international level, Kebede underscored.

Citing countries' experience and the recent phenomenon of the program to Ethiopia, he remarked that, "If the program is well-streamlined and supported, it will have multifaceted contributions to nation's



development."

Thus far, the competition has taken place at school, town and city levels in grades ranging from three to twelve grades based on their respective regional instructional media, Kebede stated.

Appreciating education bureaus and institutions for their unwavering technical and facility supports, he emphasized that the program would also help promote innovation and technology, and produce influential engineers and innovators.

It was indicated that finalists out of 300,000 students drawn from 2,000 schools will be involved in the completion. So far, about 30,000 examiners have also been involved in the course of competition.

Accordingly, award prizes are prepared for winning competitors both in kind and cash

with the amount of 4 million Birr.

At the occasion, the institution officially assigned Comedian Bethelhem Getachew as a volunteer ambassador for the program to facilitate awareness creation, advocacy and other engagements.

The Volunteer Ambassador underscored that supporting and strengthening the program would have generational value and promote cultural diplomacy.

"The program will be featuring exhibitions embracing school materials, cultural exchanges, recreational programs among many others," she added.

My Soroban (abacus) Ethiopia was established in 2013 with a view of changing the wrong perception and mindsets about the subject matter and strengthening student's Mathematical skill.

Ethiopia, Russia deepening judicial cooperation

BY FIKADU BELAY

ADDIS ABABA - In a significant move, the Ethiopian and Russian Supreme Courts have agreed to strengthen cooperation in legal matters.

The President of the Ethiopian Supreme Court, Tewodros Mihret signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the President of the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation, Irina Kondozova during a bilateral consultation to elevate collaboration across various sectors, including the judiciary.

The agreement facilitates joint efforts in education, training, information and communication technology (ICT), as well as technology and capacity building within the courts.

Tewodros and his delegation are participating in the Justice Forum of the BRICS member states, which takes place in Sochi, Russia from 19 to 21 June 2024.

The forum brings together the Presidents of the Supreme Courts of Russia, the United Arab Emirates, China, South Africa, India, Egypt, and Iran, including the President of the Federal Supreme Court of Ethiopia.

The primary objective of the forum is to establish a common understanding and consensus on the development of the judicial systems of the BRICS countries based on the principles and rules of international law,



it was learned.

Since assuming BRICS membership last January, Ethiopia has been formed

strong partnership with member countries in various areas including politics and diplomacy, economy, socio-cultural and people-to-people ties.

Arbaminch launches 200 mln. Birr worth corridor development

ADDIS ABABA- Arbaminch city, which borders two of Ethiopia's largest Rift Valley lakes, has launched over 200-million Birr Corridor Development aimed at making it clean, beautiful, livable, and attractive to tourists.

Arbaminch Municipality Manager, Gedamu Shambel told ENA that activities are underway to make the city clean, beautiful, and liveable to its residents as well as attractive to tourists.

The city manager revealed that the ongoing Corridor Development will enable Arbaminch city to promote its natural resources, cultural and historical tourist attractions.

According to him, the project is being carried out by involving the public.

Gedamu further stated that Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed's initiative has been unveiled to construct modern and clean cities with a strong emphasis on community involvement.

The development activities include 15 kilometers of roadside terrazzo paving, 4 kilometers of park development, and cleaning of roads and drainage canals, the manager added.

When the ongoing works are completed, Arbaminch city will be more attractive to tourism and investment.

He elaborated that the 10-year master plan of the city emphasizes the development of 30

percent for housing, 30 percent for industry, and 40 percent for green area.

The Government of Ethiopia initially introduced the Corridor Development project in Addis Ababa with the view of uplifting the image of the city by meeting international smart city standards.

In the capital Addis Ababa, the scope of work encompasses revitalizing slum areas of the city, enhancing living conditions for residents, fulfilling infrastructure such as integrated drainage systems and utility infrastructure, expanding roads to accommodate rising traffic, creating spacious pedestrian walkways, restoring heritage sites, and upgrading buildings to align with the city's esthetic standards, ENA reported.

Horticulture...

the government's prime attention to the sector and its unwavering support to horticulture companies.

Noting the sector yielded 344 million quintals during the past 10 months of the current fiscal year, Selamawit indicated that the performance is exceeding the plan by 26 million quintals. Compared with last year same period, the current performance has a 222 million quintals increment.

"The result indicates the special attention given by the government to inspire private investor's involvement in the sector. This shows the possibility of maximizing production by providing increased assistance to businesses."

Previously, there were various grievances related to service provision, including the provision of land, which remains a concern

for investors.

The State Minister further noted that many investors are keen to increase their businesses and request increased amount of foreign currency supply to purchase inputs for production and land. "From the field visit, we understood that the sector generates a significant amount of hard currency by producing flowers and vegetables on a plot of land."

Indicating the requirement of different infrastructure including seamless logistics and power supply for the efficient horticulture farming, she pointed out that the government has shown special concern for the sector by providing attractive incentives.

One of the business community's primary grievances was the delay of horticulture products in ports, which has been reduced

from 12 days to 9, and efforts are yet underway to further minimize it.

Selamawit also expressed appreciation for investors' courage and enthusiasm for the sector's development and Ethiopia's economic progress.

The various technologies applied in the horticulture sector can also be utilized in the *Yelemat Tirufat* projects, which are implemented in every household with a small plot of land. Indeed, the horticulture sector is effective in utilizing a small number of people and a small plot of land.

The government has given prime attention for the horticulture sector, the State Minister noted, adding that initiatives like the Green Legacy are going parallel to this with a vision of ensuring food security by planting a number of seedlings.

Aviation...

they are ready to expanding the training and supplying qualified professionals for different countries of the world notably to Africa, the Middle East and Asia. By doing this, the university aims to fulfill the growing demand for aviation professionals.

The university, which has been serving many African countries through training, has also the plan to reach different countries that aim to open new airliners and expand their existing services. Consequently, the institute has been satisfying the different operators' request to aviation professionals' capacity building programs, Kassie added.

"After COVID-19, the aviation industry has been reaching its peak at continental and international levels, and the university has been working to enhance its capacity and to capitalize on the African countries' huge demand for aviation training."

The VP further highlighted that the university has been signing agreements with various countries to train aviation professionals. For instance, recently, it inked an agreement with Niger, Gabon, and others to train the aviation professionals. "Having its own workshop makes the university unique and preferable training center in the aviation world. The training is directly aligned theory

with practices."

Owning various facilities, the university has boosted its capacity and prioritized to fulfill Ethiopian's and other African countries' demand for aviation excellence. It has also been exerting efforts to support the African aviation industry through professionals' training and supply, he remarked.

Recently, the university graduated some 787 aviation professionals including international trainees from eight African countries and one from Asia. Moreover, the university graduated some 2,965 students this fiscal year, it was learned.

Voluntarism ushers...

Mentioning the pressing problems of the community that have been solved by voluntary services in the past, Temesgen indicated that millions will be supported this summer. "It is necessary to participate in voluntary works in a country with a small budget. Every citizen who thinks that Ethiopia is not getting what it deserves should participate in voluntarism."

Women and Social Affairs Minister Ergoge Tesfaye (PhD) pointed out that volunteering is a way to promote compassion and empathy, which are common values.

This year's summer volunteerism program will provide services in 14 fields, and it is expected to provide services worth 26 billion Birr.

The minister also noted that the service is a power to solve the society's pressing problems and ensure fair and sustainable development.

Voluntary service concerns all sections of society and providing health support, fighting sexual assaults, supporting violence victims, and combating illegal human trafficking are major issues included

in the program.

The program was jointly organized by the Ministry of Peace, the Ministry of Women and Social Affairs and the Ministry of Education, and about 20,000 university students will go to different states to provide the voluntary service, Ergoge (PhD) remarked.

Democracy System Building Coordination Center Head with the Rank of Deputy Prime Minister Adem Farah and Education Minister Birhanu Nega (Professor) were also in attendance of the forum.

Experts outline...

Haramaya University Economics Lecturer Asst. Professor Habtamu Legesse believed that money laundering, corruption, contraband and other financial crimes are affecting Ethiopia's economic growth.

He stressed that money laundering reduces government's ability to control inflation and monitor the existing currency notes in the economy.

According to him, an increase in financial crime intensifies currency fluctuation. And this crime disrupts government's activity of money supply and transaction supervision plus collecting tax.

Habtamu mentioned that money laundering defames the reputation of financial institutions thereby affect their partnership with international organizations. It also upsets the country's financial system and causes economic and political instability.

Individuals and institutions involved in this activity have a huge but negative role in the political and economic stability of the country since the individuals might use the finance to import unnecessary products including armaments that harm citizens, he stated.

Terrorism is among the major global challenges that threaten world countries and many of the terrorism activities are being perpetuated using illegally obtained financial asset, Habtamu explained.

Ethiopia's Financial Intelligence Service works to prevent money laundering through collecting, documenting, and analyzing information regarding money laundering and related illegal activities.

The Institute Public Relations and Communication Executive Officer Endale Assefa expressed that perpetrators involve in money laundering to legalize their illicit financial asset obtained through corruption, tax evasion, black market and human trafficking.

These crimes usually conducted by ingenious and infamous culprits to attain instant wealth which make the misdeed difficult to be controlled, he said.

The Service is working with various financial organizations and security apparatuses to prevent the crime, he added.

Ethiopia, according to Endale, is working to overcome this challenge through ratifying a legal framework endorsed to control money laundering and financing terrorism.

Accordingly, he mentioned that the proclamation stipulates a 10 to 15 years of incarceration as well as confiscation of the asset to punish individuals who involve, attempt, support, and facilitate the crime.

Recently, the Council of Ministers has ruled an anti-money laundering and combating terrorism financing draft law to the parliament for ratification.

Opinion

Enhancing role in BRICS bloc to advance national priorities

BY ADDISALEM MULAT

It is learnt that in the preamble of the Declaration, it is stated that one of the three main pillars of BRICS is to strengthen “political and security” cooperation. It also opposes unilateral actions and promotes multilateralism. The Declaration stated about the reform of the United Nations and to make the Security Council representatives and mentioned Brazil, India, and South Africa “to play a greater role in international affairs, in particular in the United Nations, including its Security Council”.

The Declaration has also underlined the significance of the peaceful resolution of international disputes and conflicts through diplomatic means including “dialogue, negotiations, consultations, mediation and good offices. This 15th Summit is historical in its decisions. Article 91 of the Declaration stated that BRICS members have “decided to invite the Argentine Republic, the Arab Republic of Egypt, the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates to become full members of BRICS from January 1, 2024”.

President Ramaphosa of South Africa, the current chair of BRICS, announced the joining of the six countries. Even if about 42 countries have shown interest in being part of the BRICS, only six of them could join the partnership. There are various comments about the new BRICS+. Some Western media called the BRICS+ group as an anti-dollar group in the de-dollarization process. Others say the member states of the group have more disagreements and historical rivalries than harmony and cooperation, according to sources.

It is also indicated that in explaining this matter many mentioned the disagreements between Saudi Arabia and Iran for their regional hegemony and religious sect competition; Ethiopia and Egypt on the Nile River; China and India on border issues; Brazil and Argentina on the geopolitical competition, UAE and Iran on the territorial dispute over three islands- Abu Musa, Lesser Tunb and Greater Tunb; the rise of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt as a threat to Saudi Arabia and the UAE. This has ignited discussions about the political ramifications among member states of BRICS+6.

BRICS+ has also proven that developing nations have a lot of common agendas to work on. It is also showing that the IMF and World Bank are not the sole sources of funds. BRICS Development Bank can be a source of finance for big projects in the Global South. There is no arm-twisting like that of the IMF and World Bank that requests structural adjustments and other attached strings so as to provide finance.

Speaking to the Ethiopian Press Agency

(EPA), Addis Ababa University Political Science and International Relations Prof. Yacob Arsano recently stated that Ethiopia’s accession into the group is a manifestation of its growing diplomatic influence.

Cognizant of the fact that many nations with large GDP are knocking the doors of the BRICS for long, Ethiopia’s entry is a great political and diplomatic achievement. On the other hand, Ethiopia’s noble place in Africa’s history, its large and young population and immense natural resources have put it in a better position to join the group.

Also, BRICS member states convinced that their close partnership with Ethiopia would play a vital role to bring lasting peace and stability in the volatile Horn of Africa.

BRICS constitutes 40 percent of the world population and many countries in the Global South are looking to join the bloc of emerging economies for fair share access to finance.

The bloc membership would help Ethiopia to register holistic growth based on mutual benefits and fairness as well as to have stable politics. The membership is not meant to be out of the influence of Western powers for once and for all. It requires Ethiopia to follow a neutral stand and fair diplomatic principle with all countries.

Since strengthening the unity of Ethiopians plays a key role in increasing diplomatic acceptance in the international arena, addressing current internal problems should be a priority issue. BRICS members accepted Ethiopia’s request by recognizing its capacity to solve and manage internal problems at large.

Ethiopia has taken various measures to enhance its active role in the BRICS bloc in line with its national development priorities, said Foreign Affairs Minister Ambassador Taye Atskeselassie.

Addressing BRICS Foreign Ministers Meeting, Foreign Affairs Minister Amb. Taye said that Ethiopia greatly values its BRICS membership and it has taken various measures to enhance its active role in the BRICS family in line with its national development priorities.

The Ambassador stressed the urgent need to retool multilateral institutional and an increased development financing and debt relief in order to address and accommodate the legitimate interests of developing nations.

As the most pressing transnational issues cannot be addressed by any single institutions alone, renewed and genuine global partnership is not a choice, but a necessity. The importance of promoting collective solutions rooted in effective multilateralism and putting development at the center of the global discourse were given emphasis.

He also reaffirmed Ethiopia’s resolve to the collective pursuit of peace and progress, inclusive and sustainable development, as well as effective multilateralism.

It is recalled that the second meeting of Ethiopia’s BRICS Plus National Ministerial Steering Committee took place on May 23, 2024 aiming at evaluating and providing direction on Ethiopia’s involvement in BRICS activities.

Ethiopia’s active participation in the BRICS will help the country effectively address pressing issues, according to information obtained from Sputnik Africa.

As to the information, participants of the meeting expressed that cooperation with other BRICS nations can ensure Addis Ababa’s successful implementation of national development goals and expand the capabilities and connections of Ethiopian diplomacy.

They also outlined a strategy for Ethiopia’s participation in BRICS and reviewed the implementation of the memorandum of understanding signed by Addis Ababa with the bloc.

Ethiopia’s MP, Dina Mufti said that BRICS would be crucial for Ethiopia’s efforts to expand its global diplomatic relations and enhance economic cooperation. The bloc is expected to bring benefits to the East African country in terms of trade, tourism, financial support, and technology.

Ethiopia’s participation in BRICS has also opened up more opportunities for space exploration. During a meeting of the heads of BRICS space agencies in Moscow, Yuri Borisov, head of the Russian state space corporation Roscosmos, announced that Russia and Ethiopia would sign memoranda of cooperation to develop a space exploration road map, as to Sputnik Africa.

Apart from cementing global partnership, Ethiopia’s BRICS entry clears the way to advance in trade, tourism, technology and other areas. The remark came while Ambassador Dina Mufti unveiling his research findings in relation to Ethiopia’s BRICS membership, possible virtues and challenges in the presence of diplomats, scholars and other personalities in the area.

The carrier diplomat recently remarked that having a strategic geopolitical partner and immense natural resources, Ethiopia would reap more benefits from the membership through its unwavering efforts and endeavors.

In addition to promoting international partnerships, the membership would also bring massive market investment, resource flows, experience sharing, technology access, and strong bilateral ties with member countries that has been working in various fields.

Remarking the similarity between South-South cooperation and the bloc, he

said, sovereignty, joint investment and partnership are among many other normative principles of the global south. The country’s benefit from the bloc lays on the basis of principles of equality, sovereignty and non-interference. It also promotes not only resources but also geo-political influence.

Moreover, the members are coming with new guidelines to address the possible challenges related to sanctions, climate change, macroeconomic shocks, and financial volatility among others.

Mentioning the already undertaken joint substantive and result-oriented works, the Russian Ambassador to Ethiopia Evgeny Terekhin on his part stated that this cooperation will bring practical benefits to all member countries of the intergovernmental organization.

BRICS cooperation in the field of politics and security is free of ideological bias and double standards but is based on respect for the sovereignty of member states and the principle of non-interference in their domestic affairs.

Ambassador Evgeny reaffirmed his country’s commitment to work closely with partners to deepen cooperation in the field of digital economy, information and communication technologies and innovations.

The diplomats urged the member countries to step up multifaceted cooperation to overcome possible challenges.

Ethiopia’s official entry into the BRICS economic bloc has ignited optimism among civil society organizations (CSOs) and think tanks heralding a potentially transformative phase for the country’s global engagement.

Ethiopian Civil Society Organizations Council President Nigusu Legese (PhD) in recent times said Ethiopia’s accession into the BRICS opens up new opportunities for the country to cooperate with the bloc’s members not only on economic affairs but also in humanitarian and democracy building.

Relations with key global players of BRICS members such as Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa are a crucial juncture for Ethiopia to diversify its humanitarian and development partners. He; however, cautioned the Ethiopian government should not be inclined to undermine its partnership with the Western world.

BRICS is not something that stands against others. In fact, it supports institutional integrity among countries having South-South cooperation policies. On the other hand, Ethiopia is receiving a higher amount of humanitarian aid from Western agencies and countries. Therefore, joining the BRICS does not mean rejecting the West.

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

Editorial

Ethiopia's commendable role in promoting peace in Africa, the Horn Region

On a continent frequently affected by conflict and instability, Ethiopia has become a symbol of hope and a key player in the quest for peace and stability, especially in the Horn of Africa. The country's active involvement in peacekeeping, mediation, and regional diplomacy highlights its dedication to nurturing a more peaceful and cooperative African continent.

Ethiopia's importance in African geopolitics stems from its history and strategic position. As the only African nation that successfully resisted colonialism, Ethiopia enjoys a unique moral authority and respect among its peers. This historical background has enabled it to play a crucial role in regional politics. The Horn of Africa, including Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Somalia, and parts of Sudan and Kenya, is an area beset with complex conflicts and political instability. Therefore, Ethiopia's stability and diplomatic efforts are vital to the overall stability of this strategically important region. Ethiopia is among the largest contributors to United Nations peacekeeping missions worldwide. Ethiopian peacekeepers have been sent to some of the most challenging conflict zones, such as South Sudan, Darfur, and Abyei. Their professionalism and commitment have earned international praise, boosting Ethiopia's reputation as a dependable peacekeeping force. In South Sudan, Ethiopian troops have played a significant role in protecting civilians and providing humanitarian aid, greatly helping to alleviate the humanitarian crisis there.

In addition to its peacekeeping contributions, Ethiopia has been a major player in mediating conflicts within the Horn of Africa. The nation's capital, Addis Ababa, is home to the African Union (AU) headquarters, making it a center for diplomatic activities and peace negotiations. Ethiopia's leadership has been crucial in mediating the South Sudanese civil war, assisting in the negotiation of several peace agreements despite the challenges and setbacks involved.

In Somalia, Ethiopia has been essential in efforts to stabilize the country and counter the threat from extremist groups like Al-Shabaab. Ethiopian troops, as part of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), have been key in reclaiming territories from militants and aiding the Somali government's efforts to rebuild state institutions. Ethiopia's strategy for peace goes beyond military and diplomatic efforts, encompassing economic diplomacy aimed at regional integration. By investing in infrastructure projects that improve connectivity, such as roads and railways linking neighboring countries, Ethiopia is promoting economic interdependence, which is crucial for long-term peace and stability.

Looking ahead, Ethiopia's ongoing success in fostering peace will rely on its ability to resolve internal conflicts through inclusive dialogue and political reform. The international community's support in terms of diplomatic backing and development aid will also be essential. Strengthening institutions like the African Union and enhancing cooperation with other regional powers will boost Ethiopia's capacity to lead peace initiatives effectively.

Ethiopia's role in maintaining peace in Africa, particularly in the Horn region, is both commendable and indispensable. Its contributions to peacekeeping, mediation, and regional integration are a clear demonstration of its commitment to a stable and prosperous Africa. By continuing to address its internal challenges and promote regional cooperation, Ethiopia can maintain its leadership in peace efforts and inspire other African nations to follow suit. The global community must acknowledge and support Ethiopia's efforts, ensuring that its vision of peace and stability in Africa becomes a lasting reality.

Opinion

Ethiopia's power supply effort brings mutual benefits for Africans

BY EPHREM ANDARGACHEW

Ethiopia's efforts to provide energy benefit the region.

The countries in the Horn of Africa region are working together to ensure economic integration by promoting regional cooperation and collaboration to enhance economic development, trade, and investment opportunities.

The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), which aims to foster economic cooperation and integration among its member nations, has been actively working towards ensuring economic integration in the region. Efforts in the region are also supported by the African Union.

Despite challenges such as political instability, security concerns, and infrastructure deficiencies, there is potential for increased commerce, investment, and regional growth through stronger economic ties.

Efforts to enhance economic integration in the Horn of Africa include the construction of transportation infrastructure, trade facilitation measures, and the promotion of regional economic policies by these countries. These efforts aim to create a more connected and successful economic environment in the region. However, all of these efforts would be futile without a reliable source of energy.

Considering these factors, Ethiopia, one of the largest and most populous countries in the Horn of Africa, plays a significant role in economic integration in the region by sharing electricity with neighboring countries. Ethiopia's economic policies and actions also have a substantial impact on regional economic dynamics.

Specifically, the government has focused on securing energy cooperation. Ethiopia's vast hydropower potential makes it a key provider of electricity to surrounding countries. Ethiopia aims to provide electricity to the region through projects like the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam, while also promoting economic integration through shared resources. It is crucial to consider why energy supply is so vital in the Horn region.

Ethiopia's contribution to energy cooperation is a critical aspect of strengthening economic integration in the Horn of Africa. The country's abundant hydropower resources and ambitious energy projects have the potential to transform the regional energy landscape and contribute to greater economic integration.

For example, a report from the Ethiopian Electric Power (EEP) shows that Ethiopia earned 47.5 million USD in the first half of the fiscal year by supplying power to neighboring countries. EEP plans to export 1.82 gigawatt hours of power to Djibouti, Sudan, and Kenya for a total of 66.27 million US dollars. This demonstrates how

Besides, Ethiopia's energy supply is also vital in the Horn region since Ethiopia can play a role of balance for the region by ensuring electric power system interconnection with neighboring countries.

There is a huge commitment from Ethiopia to the renewable energy sector. Ethiopia has enormous renewable energy potential, mostly hydroelectric. If you look at the country's electricity mix, hydropower accounts for more than 90 percent. So Ethiopia has the potential to play a significant role in maintaining regional equilibrium.

Besides, the country has already been implementing interconnection with neighboring countries like Sudan, Kenya, and Djibouti. So, through Ethiopia, they will balance the intermittence of renewable energy-based power that will come from other countries. Hence, Ethiopia has indeed been playing a leading role in creating energy ties with neighboring countries as the country is successfully supplying energy to its neighboring countries of Sudan, Djibouti, and Kenya.

This is a crucial aspect for mutual growth and economic integration since Ethiopia's national energy goals are aligned with Africa and global energy cooperation. The government is operating in accordance with African energy frameworks that assure both relevance and long-term sustainability. Because Ethiopia's initiatives to supply energy to neighboring countries will promote economic cooperation and develop connections with them.

Furthermore, Ethiopia's energy supply is crucial in the Horn region as it can act as a balancing factor by establishing electric power system connections with neighboring countries. The country has already implemented interconnections with Sudan, Kenya, and Djibouti, showing its commitment to regional energy cooperation.

Ethiopia's initiatives are essential in ensuring regional energy security and promoting economic growth through energy cooperation. By exporting power and creating jobs, Ethiopia can benefit economically while providing cheap and reliable energy to neighboring countries to support their industrial and economic development.

In conclusion, Ethiopia's efforts to promote energy cooperation are highly beneficial to the region. By ensuring electric power system connections with neighboring countries, Ethiopia can promote regional balance and advance economic integration in the Horn of Africa, leading to greater energy security, infrastructural development, and economic growth.

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



The Ethiopian Herald

Established in 1943

Published daily except Mondays
By The Ethiopian Press Agency

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Tel. 011-126-42-22
Fax. 251-011-156-98-62
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The Ethiopian Herald

Business & Economy

Tapping renewable energy sources for building climate resilient economy

BY ABEBE WOLDEGIORGIS

Ethiopia is one of the agrarian economies in the world. The sector employs more than 75% of the labor force, supplies food to the urban consumers, provides inputs to agro-industries, contributes to foreign currency earning and supports the government endeavor for ensuring food security.

However, it is characterized by traditional way of farming utilize animal and human labor, less agricultural inputs and moreover, it is vulnerable to climate change and global warming.

When agriculture is hit by climate change the whole economy also will be disrupted because it is a back bone.

Global warming induced by emission gas released by the industrial countries critically impacts developing countries agriculture sector in general and Ethiopia in particular.

When rain fails agricultural yields decreased and left farmers to survive in foreign food aid. They also might face displacement. Due to drought water points will be dried up, the rivers water volume will be decreased as the result, irrigation farms, and dams will face shortage of water and cripples their production capacity. When hydropower dams generate electric power below the average level due to shortage of water, the electric supply to the manufacturing sector is reduced which again results in low output and creates scarcity of products in the market.

To the other extreme when over flooding occurs due to heavy rain induced by climate change, agricultural and energy sectors also will be affected.

Though Ethiopia's contribution to the global warming and climate change is insignificant for global warming and climate change, it is critically suffer from the brunt of global warming.

In fact, the majority of the population in Ethiopia resided in the rural part is heavily dependent on bio mass energy for household purpose derived from the clearance of vegetation cover, cutting trees and deforestation.

Such practice again poses soil erosion, land degradation and creates ecosystem imbalance, flood during rainy season in which inhibits the flow of water to underground and ultimately results in low agricultural yield.

The utilization of bio mass energy not only endangered the environment and the ecosystem at large but also it is a major health risk due to in house pollution. According to the recent report of the Ministry of Health, in house pollution is proved that it is the number one factor for child mortality due to respirational defect.

The government long ago, to reduce the clearance of vegetation cover and cutting trees in the rural parts for house old energy purposes, supplies energy saving



Some of wind farms in Ethiopia

stoves which deduct the rate of cutting trees and supplies solar panels to the rural population. It also gave literacy education on how to utilize energy saving stoves and solar devices. The involvement of private sector in this venture has been immense. In addition, it continued its rural electrification scheme generated from hydropower.

To withstand global warming and climate change and attain sustainable development, the government launched Climate Resilient Green Economy (CRGE) in 2007.

Among the various measures that have been taken to meet the goal are developing renewable energy sources, enhancing proper waste management efforts and afforestation campaign on the yearly base during the rainy season can be mentioned.

The Green legacy initiative launched by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PHD) six years ago focusing of tree planting played pivotal role in advancing building Climate Resilient Green Economy. Afforestation enabled balancing the ecosystem, protect soil erosion and land degradation, facilitate water percolation to underground water which is the source of water points, streams and rivers. In addition, it plays pivotal role in carbon sequestration and boost carbon trading which enhance the nation foreign currency garnering capacity.

In the last 20 years, a number of electric power dams including the ongoing construction of Abbay Dam being eyeing its accomplishment. Wind farms are also constructed by foreign investment. Solar panels have been distributed in many parts of the country and in this regard the role of the private sector is immense. The geothermal exploration projects in the place known as Alutolangano in Oromya region by foreign companies are undergoing for the last 15 years.

The exploitation of renewable energy helps the nation to save the badly needed hard currency allocated for the importation of carbon based petroleum oil which poses environmental hazardous effect.

According to the African Energy Chamber recent report Ethiopia's Minister of Water and Energy Habtamu Itefa Geleta will speak at the African Energy Week (AEW): Invest in African Energy 2024 conference

- scheduled for November 4-8 in Cape Town. The event is the biggest of its kind in Africa and the participation of Minister Geleta underscores Ethiopia's commitment to advancing its energy sector through significant investments and strategic international partnerships.

Ethiopia's current installed power generation capacity is measured at 5.2 GW, with plans in place to increase this figure to 17 GW within the next decade. While renewable energy constitutes a primary energy source for the country, the confirmation of seven trillion cubic feet of natural gas in the Ogaden Basin by the government in 2022 has opened up new investment avenues for energy companies. A largely undeveloped sector, natural gas stands to transform both the country and broader region's energy matrix. During the AEW: Invest in African Energy conference, Minister Geleta will unpack the country's potential in this area, engaging with investors and regional counterparts.

Ethiopia has the potential to generate over 60 GW of electricity from hydroelectric, wind, solar and geothermal sources. Hydropower remains the dominant source in the country, contributing over 90% of the country's electricity, exemplified by projects like the 6 GW Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam and the 2.1 GW Koysa Hydro Power dam by the Omo River. In January 2024, the dam was 94% complete, and once operational, it will become the largest hydroelectric power plant in Africa.

Meanwhile, Ethiopia's wind sector is growing with projects such as the Ashegoda and Adama wind farms - generating more than 350 MW in total. The state-owned Ethiopia Electric Power (EEP) signed a \$600 million deal in December 2023 for a new 300 MW wind farm in the eastern Somali region with UAE-based project developer Asia-Pacific Middle East and Africa /AMEA/ Power. In the solar industry, the EEP signed an agreement with the International Finance Corporation to advice on developing up to 500 MW of solar power under the World Bank's Scaling Solar program - an initiative that supports solar expansion worldwide. The government views private sector collaboration as a catalyst for project

development and companies are invited to join the market through public-private partnerships and independent power producer programs.

Alongside wind and solar, the country's geothermal potential is estimated at over 10 GW. There is a projected \$35 billion investment pipeline planned for Ethiopia and Kenya to develop geothermal in the East African Rift, highlighting the potential in this area. By 2050, these two countries are expected to produce 90% of the planned 13 GW of geothermal energy in Africa.

Meanwhile, the African Development Bank (AfDB) recently allocated \$8 million this month to support Ethiopia's Renewable Energy and Agriculture Modalities mini-grid program, developed in collaboration with the Global Alliance for People and Planet and key Ethiopian government bodies. This initiative aims to integrate mini-grids with agribusiness operations, with up to 50% of the program's funding sourced from the AfDB-managed Sustainable Energy Fund for Africa, providing concessional loans, grants and risk mitigation. Additionally, the AfDB has approved a \$104 million grant for a transmission project aimed at enhancing Ethiopia's electricity supply. The project involves constructing 157 km of transmission lines and associated substations near the cities of Harar, Jijiga, and Fafem.

"Ethiopia is taking a proactive stance in fostering sustainable energy development and collaboration with international stakeholders. The country is leading a just energy transition, prioritizing the development of all available energy resources. Offering a wealth of opportunity for natural gas and renewable energy players alike, Ethiopia stands to play a central role in meeting East Africa's demand for energy in the long-term," states NJ Ayuk, Executive Chairman of the African Energy Chamber.

During AEW: Invest in Africa Energy 2024, Minister Geleta will participate in high-level panel discussions and spotlight sessions, showcasing Ethiopia's investment potential and highlighting the government's proactive approach towards sustainable energy development.

Art & Culture

From two generations, a tale of two Ethiopian pianists

BY MULUGETA GUDETA

The piano as a music type or genre has a relatively long history in Ethiopia. If we take the first Ethiopian female pianist, Emahoy Tsege-Mariam Gebrou, as a point of reference, we realize that she has been composing and playing piano pieces starting from the early years of the 20th century. Emahoy Tsege-Mariam was 100 years old as she was born in 1923 and died in March 2023. Modern critics have described her music as “melodic blues piano with rhythmically complex phrasing.” Piano was certainly known in Ethiopia before that period although the relevant information is not readily available.

Girma Yifrasheva on the other hand is a more recent phenomenon as he was born in October 1967 in Addis and was educated at the Bulgarian State Conservatory of Music and started his career by playing the traditional krar, which is a stringed instrument played mostly solo or in a band. Although Girma is little known here in his native country, he is now an internationally acclaimed pianist whose skills are displayed at prestigious Western or American classical music venues like Carnegie Hall where he has presented his productions. He and Mulatu Astatke are the most internationally admired modern musicians in Ethiopia.

A lot is written about Girma in the foreign press. According to Music Africa, a website specializing in African music, “Girma Yifrasheva has now become a worthy new torchbearer of African pianism. His highly personalized approach to the piano likens him to Ethiopian composer Emahoy Tsege Mariam while his use of Ethiopian pentatonic scale within Western art Music format places his compositions in conversation with more academically minded work.” Girma’s albums include works like “the Shepherd with the Flute”, “Elilta”, “Meleya Keleme” and “Chewata”. He is no doubt one of the most illustrious composers alongside the likes Ashenafi Kebede in Ethiopian classical music.

It is important to note here the link between Emahoy Tsege Mariam’s style and Girma’s inspiration from it. As indicated in the quotation above, there is an organic link between the two remarkable musicians whose lives and works did not converge in time and space but retain the taste of one common origin, which is Ethiopian by identity and African by extension. Girma plays Ethiopian piano compositions to Western audiences, and this has not prevented him from displaying his talent or earning worldwide appreciation simply because music is a universal language. Music has such magic within it that we enjoy melodies without even knowing which country they come from, what their source is, or what genre of music they are.

For this reason, music, including piano, is often described as “an art concerned with combining vocal or instrumental sounds for beauty of form or emotional expression, usually according to cultural standards of rhythm, melody, and, in most Western music, harmony. Both the simple folk song and the complex electronic composition belong to the same activity, music. Both are



humanly engineered; both are conceptual and auditory, and these factors have been present in music of all styles and all periods of history, throughout the world.”

Ethiopian piano compositions have all the hallmarks of their origin while they continue to move the hearts and souls of music lovers from one end of the world to the other. That is also the magic that has made those composers artistically immortal at the same time turning them into sources of inspiration for musicians from another generation.

Last week, a friend of mine on a visit to the United States gave me a buzz to tell me that he was going to visit Grma Yifrasheva, perhaps the best-known contemporary Ethiopian pianist who was in town preparing for a concert. It was a long time since I heard about Girma, the lone pianist much like Mulatu Astatke, the inventor if not pioneer of Ethio-Jazz music, the first of its kind in Africa. I asked my friend whether Girma was living in the US. He told me that he is based at home in Addis at the Yared music where he is acting as its director not on a full-time basis but just as a freelancer, to use a term from journalism.

I referred to his official biography to check whether this was true and what I discovered was a surprise to me. Girma is referred to as a ‘self-employed’ person. He has no permanent employment, and he is often flying between his home in Addis to various destinations in Europe and America. So, Girma is currently in the US for a concert and that is terrific indeed. Ethiopians are no doubt finding a rare opportunity to listen to their acclaimed pianist, who has already made his country and Africa proud.

Piano both as an instrument and a style is not an Ethiopian or African music genre or instrument. It was rather imported from the West and blended with local melodies and the result is fantastic, like so many musical instruments that were first discovered and played in Europe. Even in the Western context, piano is an elite music, that was the exclusive domain or privilege of the aristocratic classes in the last few centuries.

In Ethiopia on the contrary, piano is less known by the public and less practiced by professionals for many reasons. First, it is not an easy-to-play musical instrument as it consists of a bulky table-like body and several keys that are put together to create sounds as soon as you touch the keys with your fingers. A more sophisticated definition of the piano is, “a keyboard instrument that produces sounds by striking strings with hammer, characterized by its large range and ability to play chord freely.”

The second reason for the piano’s relative obscurity and failure to capture the popular imagination in Ethiopia may be its price. According to available information, “the first pianos were too expensive for even the wealthy to own them. Even now, a piano is considered a very cumbersome and expensive instrument that cannot be available to a large number of people anywhere in the world. In Ethiopia, the average price of a modern Yamaha keyboard piano is estimated to be 26, 500 birr. This is not the big piano but a hand-held one which is small in size and limited in its functions.

“Piano was invented in Padua, Italy, by renowned harpsichord maker Bartolomeo Cristofori in the 1700s, the piano was initially called the gravicembalo col piano e forte, or “harpsichord that plays soft and loud” and looked almost like a piano. The full name of piano is “pianoforte”.

To this very day, Piano both as a musical instrument and a genre of music, (i.e. jazz-piano for instance) is not well known or popular in Ethiopia. Unlike Guitar, saxophone or drums, piano is considered a bit of an ‘elite musical instrument’ that was confined within small circles of music connoisseurs and practitioners.

As we said above, piano was introduced to Ethiopia rather early in the last century, but we still have a few players relative to other

musicians who play different instruments. In almost a century, this country has produced only two or three prominent pianists deserving international acclaim. The new generation of young musicians might be intimidated by the absence of more pianists who could give them greater inspiration to join the music school and major in piano.

One alternative is to promote the piano both as a musical instrument and as a music genre. The fact that the piano cannot be easily affordable may be one hurdle although alternatives could be explored to produce the instrument here in Ethiopia. Piano is made from bamboo that can be planted here and provides the raw material for its production. The other alternative is to import cheaper brands of pianos that might be available in Chinese markets for instance. The love for music should also be developed among young people who display talent and musical inclinations in their earlier years.

It is to be recalled that the old and now-defunct imperial-era Ethiopian school curriculum included music as an independent subject to be given at many schools across the nation. However, during periods allocated for music study, youngsters would gather in their classes and sing songs and sometimes dance to their own melodies. It was rather a period of recreation that quickly degenerated into chaos and cacophony. That was not of course a productive or creative way of teaching music.

Nowadays there are better opportunities to study music. However, young people may be reluctant to join Yared Music School, the only official music school in the country, simply because there are no job opportunities after they graduate. You may remember the one-time popular group of young women who studied at Yared and were playing violin at hotels and restaurants because they could not get sponsors or employers. Musicians should not however face such a destiny of public and official neglect because this might hurt the development of arts and music in particular.

Music cannot be a universal language before becoming a national language that unites us, delights us, and moves us to enjoy the feeling of calm and ecstasy, in a world filled with chaos, sound, and fury.

Indepth



Nyando climate-smart villages are home to a mix of technologies tailored to boost farmers' ability to adapt to climate change, manage risks and build resilience. These technologies will in turn improve livelihoods & incomes. Credit: S.Kilungu (CCAFS)

Transforming African food systems from the ground up

All news is local, they say. The same is true of innovations—those many new technologies, policies, and practices that steadily stream from research to enhance our lives.

It is in specific regions, cultures, and locales across the Global South that innovations for agricultural development first get taken up and adapted to meet people's needs. Or not. Only by understanding that all innovations are local can innovators meet the diverse needs of diverse peoples.

From the library and laboratory to the farm and kitchen

Acknowledging that dreaming up innovative solutions is the easy part, and that delivering innovations to real people facing real problems is the hard part, CGIAR – the world's largest publicly funded agrifood research network – put “innovation scaling” at the heart of its Regional Integrated Initiatives (RIIs).

CGIAR's six RIIs are operating in six regions: Latin America, West and Central Africa, East and Southern Africa, Central and West Asia and North Africa, Southeast Asia, and the Asian Mega Deltas. Commencing in 2022 and operating through 2024, these RIIs are working with over 750 local public and private partners and research centres to help transform these regions' agrifood systems. Serving as CGIAR's “living labs”, the RIIs support more local organizations to adapt, apply, validate, and scale solutions from many disciplines and to integrate these into local programs and platforms. By building local capacities, the RIIs are empowering “last-mile stakeholders” to apply, adapt, and use the innovations, to take ownership of them, and to lead the innovation process as it evolves over time.

The context is decisive

With a strong foundation laid in their first two years of operation, these RIIs offer big

With a strong foundation laid in their first two years of operation, these RIIs offer big opportunities for upscaling engagement in more local food systems

opportunities for upscaling engagement in more local food systems, crowding in investments, and uniting efforts in specific locales. With a wealth of local partners offering local experience, these initiatives provide granular insights that can help to transform conventional “hit-and-run” agrifood systems projects into enduring solutions to specific high-order problems. For example, through technical and business support from CGIAR's Food Systems Accelerator, Zambian fruit processing company Forest Africa has developed a non-dairy milk from the fruit of the baobab tree that provides economic benefits to local communities while helping to avoid deforestation.

In particular, the six RIIs and their partners

are maximizing impact by focusing on innovations at mature levels of readiness, employing digital agroclimatic advisory tools and services, strengthening local capacity in agrifood system development, and providing relevant policies and regulations with evidenced-based recommendations. For example, by partnering with the popular “Shamba Shape Up” farm makeover reality TV show in Kenya, CGIAR has helped bring proven innovations to more than eight million viewers every week.

In 2023 alone, these RIIs enhanced regional and local agrifood systems with 577 reports and papers, 341 products and events strengthening local agrifood system capacities, 198 new innovations, and 31 policy changes.

The Ukama Ustawi Initiative

With a new CGIAR portfolio (2025–2030) now under development, CGIAR's RII on Diversification in East and Southern Africa, led by the International Water Management Institute (IWMI) and co-implemented with 154 other partners, is a model for how CGIAR and its many partners can play a larger role in scaling as well as developing agrifood innovations for the continent.

Given the byname Ukama Ustawi (a blending respectively of Southern Africa's Shona word for “partnership” with East Africa's Swahili word for “well-being”), this Initiative works in a dozen African countries with local food producers and agribusiness dealers, innovators, and influencers. Our partners are invaluable in helping us both to overcome obstacles to scaling research-based innovations and to avoid any unintended consequences of their adoption.

Innovating the “how”

Parts of what makes Ukama Ustawi unique are the ever evolving and participatory ways in which it works.

A regular series of vibrant rural share fairs and virtual field trips allows for the exchange of knowledge, ideas, experiences and expertise—flowing not only from farmer to farmer but also, importantly, from farmer to village elders, to scientists, to government officials, and to donor agents. These deliberately “immersive” physical fairs and virtual field trips not only accelerate and widen farmer-farmer learning, but also bring the world of smallholder farming to decision-makers, who meet the farmers, hear their stories, and experience their challenges—directly and in real time.

Innovations are also being accelerated through award competitions promoting “scaling-ready” agricultural innovations in the region. Through the CGIAR Food System Accelerator, Ukama Ustawi supports innovation scaling through agribusinesses that receive substantial support to help them diversify their maize cropping into more nutritious agricultural products and systems. Each local agribusiness is matched with suitable mentors from CGIAR and elsewhere and provided with tailored technical as well as financial assistance. In 2023, this matchmaking resulted in initial financial commitments exceeding US\$11 million for the 10 selected agribusinesses. Ukama Ustawi also initiated an annual competition for research groups to apply for Scaling Fund grants. Three winning research initiatives were each awarded US\$125,000 in 2024.

CGIAR's RIIs are certainly where the rubber hits the road, and with the new CGIAR reorganization now under way, it is an opportune time to take this more local innovation scaling work to new levels of productive partnerships for billions of productive people.

SOURCE: INTER PRESS SERVICE

Law & Politics

A perfect execution

BY FITSUM GETACHEW

Anyone who goes around in Addis Ababa today will note something exceptionally special, something not usual going on with impressive intensity and continuity. They will notice that there are so many tracks carrying all sorts of building materials and unloading them around all the places along the main busy roads where there seem to be extensive construction sites, along all the principal roads and avenues of the city, mostly among the quarters situated along the old city and its environs. They see scores of young people engaged in handling all these extensive construction activities such as widening the roads by doing away with old houses using heavy-duty trucks, putting down shops which were constructed too close to the main roads just along the edges preventing the easy movement of pedestrians.

They see scores of loaders, excavators and other heavy-duty construction trucks engaged in helping put down the unwanted houses and walls soon and taking away the rubles to the Lorries that are stationed by their sides to clear the sites. They see all sorts of piles of construction materials including hills of stone, bricks, sand pebbles, and iron rods, fine sand and huge tubes made of cement to be buried under the soil so that they serve as sewerages. They see ceramics for the sidewalks and piles of grass brought from other places and meant to be planted along the roadsides. They see people very busy going about the various phases of the construction and engaged in their own specific home works given them by their immediate supervisors. There are those who deal with the burying of the tubes underground while side by side there are the drivers of the camions taking away the debris from the dismantled old houses.

There are those who plant the grass on the piles of soil already prepared for the same purpose. Then there are those who keep the pedestrians and traffic away from the sites so that they do not create any inconvenience to the labourers. Here you see uniformed law enforcement and traffic police that direct people in their movements. Above all what one does not fail to observe is the sense of urgency and purpose, the sense of coordination with which all these activities are being carried out simultaneously.

We have been informed by the city authorities that the work continues all day round without interruption and proceeds throughout the night as well as engaging people in shifts. That is why we see so much progress in the realization of the project visible by the day and keeping pace with the timeframe already set. We have heard many times in the past that one of the failures of all previous administrations was the failure to complete projects on time with the quality required. We have observed that projects in our country have almost always taken more time than planned and more resources than originally earmarked.

What is even worse has been abandoning the project without completing it due to

a number of reasons such as total lack of finance or even owing to new developments that make the project not as relevant and hence not required. For instance, we have come across huge national projects such as the sugar factories that were promised to be completed in a few years but have for years continued to go on unfinished. We have seen how fertilizer plants were initiated by not finishing on time. We have even seen the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam, GERD which was initially meant to be completed within a few years of its launch and yet it lagged under construction for years with little notable progress due to multiple problems related to the capacity of those who were entrusted with some of the construction works that had to do with hydroelectric dams, the required expertise to run the project and the lack of strict supervision and follow up by the relevant responsible authorities.

It was thanks to the newly reformed administration that many of those mega projects were revisited and checked to advance with new impetus and a sense of purpose and urgency. Now after checking with the accounts and the exact stage of the projects many have been restructured and redesigned while for instance the GERD has been subjected to a serious review of how it was being carried out and now it has come to the completion stage of 96%. Now that there is enough water in the reservoir more turbines are to be used to generate more electric power which will give a new impetus to the export of power.

The Corridor Development Project in Addis is one of those projects with which the current government is being identified. We see that project management and administration have become a trademark of this government and the guidance at the highest levels takes full credit for that. Efficiency of project management and completion is one way of gauging a government and the public can now have more trust in its leaders and would be inclined to contribute their share to see their dreams realized.

We have seen so many new projects conceived, developed and realized under this administration that even those who are critics of the same are ready to admit and admire. Addis as the capital city of Africa and seat to scores of important international agencies is now being blessed by all of the renovations that are underway changing practically the image of the city and making it not only a better place to live in and work but also be a huge tourist attraction for people coming from abroad both for leisure as well as work.

The amount of green area is growing by the day with not only planting trees but also grass and flowers along all the roads with the sidewalks very comfortably prepared for pedestrians. Addis was notoriously considered as not very comfortable or friendly with its pedestrians due to the scarcity of sidewalks reserved for them and still less for people with disabilities. However, with the new Corridor Development Project all these amenities are being taken care of because they are a part

of the project. There are bound to be spaces reserved for cyclists and for wheelchairs besides pedestrians.

We all know that the Green Legacy Initiative that was launched some five years ago is now reaching the planting of more than thirty billion seedlings with the addition of this year's trees. It is also known that this huge project is part of the attempt to combat climate change and keep the environment clean and safe for residents all over the country and there are already remarkable changes with the greening of areas which were previously full of dusty and dry places deprived of any sort of vegetation. For this year more than six billion tree saplings are prepared, according to the relevant authorities in the Ministry of Agriculture and within a couple of years the huge objective of planting fifty billion tree seedlings will be attained.

A sort of green revolution has been going on in the country over the past five years and people are now well aware that planting trees and various other forms of vegetation pays in the long run. These days in Addis we can observe that along with the expansion of the roads labourers are seen planting new trees that are already grown up and brought from other places. We see others planting and taking care of the planted mattresses of grass all along the streets throughout the roads' sides by watering them.

These are all activities that are being carried out every day and every night with laborers working twenty-four. Progress is visible by the day. Today you see a part of the city streets freed from the old constructions and roadsides, tomorrow you see the replacement with new landscape, new pavements and new mattresses of green grass.

In the beginning, when the first demolitions were noted around the old neighborhood commonly known as Piassa and its environs, people were making all sorts of positive conjectures that this was a good move because the old houses around that neighborhood were practically unlivable and it was only because people would not know where to begin from scratch to build a new house or rent one because their economic resources are very limited. Most of the people living there were low-income families some even depending on the informal trade and spent what they managed to earn on a daily basis with hardly anything for another day. It is a very precarious situation but they have lived in this manner for ages and not had any alternative.

Then some people began to be afraid or anxious hearing the stories circulating that the entire neighborhood was to be demolished and a new one to be constructed in a modern way. The inhabitants were contacted and called for a meeting with the municipal authorities to explain to them what the administration had in mind. They were told that they would be given new replacements depending on their real status in relation to the houses. Thousands were relocated to new places and liberated

from the dilapidated houses that lacked basic sanitation services. Some were heard saying that it was as if they were reborn and were grateful to the city administration for these changes. But later on, they were to see that the project was more than one that was limited to the Piassa area.

Ever since the completion of the Adwa Victory Memorial which in its right is a huge project that has transformed the neighborhood and the city centre giving it a new grace and beauty, many people have thought that it was because of this project that the houses around Piassa were being demolished and replaced etc. However, the municipality made it clear that it was a new extensive project that would involve many quarters of Addis well beyond Piassa and it was called the Corridor Development Project.

Many neighborhoods began to be demolished, especially at the sides of the main roads of the city such as the one going from Piassa to Arat Kilo and then to Megegnagna to CMC as well as the one that begins from Mexico Square to Sar Bet etc. The one that begins around CMC and goes to the quarter known as Summit, people began to realize that the project was very extensive and affected practically every quarter around the central areas of the city.

All the principal avenues of the city were involved in the Corridor Development Project and it was all begun practically at the same time and preceded very fast with apparently every construction material available including the required personnel. The management and supervision staff was also prepared so that the entire project is being supervised and monitored constantly. Many have said that a new culture of work is being developed and a sense of purpose as well.

This is of course unprecedented in the lifeline of the city. There has never been any kind of project in the city of this magnitude and intensity involving so many people and so many quarters simultaneously. Addis has been visibly full of extensive construction sites in practically every quarter for the past several years. Still, they are mostly huge business entrepreneurs who are engaged in real estate development and building their own residences. Many times we see multistory buildings that could be used for offices, businesses and apartments for residential purposes. In fact, if one opens their TV sets they will see that there are so many advertisements luring new clients to buy these houses at reduced prices etc. and the competition seems quite stiff. One can say that lately there has been a particular boom in the construction industry in the city. But the newly introduced Corridor Development Project seems to have totally transformed Addis and many would not even recognize it once this specific project is complete within a few months. However, the authorities have said that this would not be the end and feeling satisfied is dangerous because a sense of easy gratification does not lead to better and more extensive projects. In other words, there are many more to come including in other cities in the country.

Women in Focus



Farmer Amarech Woldehawariat

“Each time a woman stands up for herself, she stands up for all women”

BY STAFF REPORTER

The Ethiopian government, with the aim to ensure the equal participation and benefits of women has put in place various strategies and policies and implemented various activities accordingly.

Among these strategies and programs devised to benefit rural women who are dependent on agricultural products and detached them from poverty, the agricultural development program is the one.

Even though the program aims to benefit all sections of the society, it gives due attention to women, who constitute the highest number of the population but are economically disadvantaged.

It also allows rural mothers to generate their own income as their counterparts, subsidize their economy and raise their families. Among the states practicing this strategy, The Central Ethiopia Stat is the one.

And one of the development initiatives that the State’s Administration is practicing to benefit women in a short period of time, ‘Ye lemat Tirufat’ and the ‘30-40-30 Fruit and Vegetable Initiative’ are at the first row.

These development initiatives, apart from increasing productivity in a short period of time, can help families in ensuring food security, to get the required nutritious food and benefit economically.

Taking this into consideration, the State’s Administration is giving special attention and support to women, for the reason that women are the main victims of food shortages and economic deprivation.

As a result, many mothers have been able to benefit from the program, support themselves and their children and improve their lives by averting the challenges caused by shortage of food, according to information gathered from the State’s Administration.

Recently, a group of journalists from the Ethiopian Press Agency had paid a field visit to Kembata Zone, one of the areas in the Central Ethiopia State of Ethiopia where the agricultural development program has been carried out aggressively.

And the crew had a chance to visit the house of Amarech Woldehawariat, who has succeeded in the program in the zone and becomes a role model for others.

As usual, Amarech was busy with her farming activities. In her life, she has gone through a number of challenges to raise her children and manage the lives of her families as a single mom. However, she never loses hope or gives up. Rather, she is a model for the community of Zato Shodera, Kembata Zone, where she was born, raised, got married and spent good and bad moments. “She is a heroine,” the villagers flatter her in a manner demonstrating her strength and commitment. She is even considered as a role model for many of the women who stayed at home due to problems and the pressure of their spouses.

“When my husband left me, there was nothing to eat in my house; I didn’t have any assets that enabled me to raise my children,” she said, trying to look behind her past.

Owing to this, she was compelled to look for the helping hands of others so as to put food on the table. Understanding Amarech’s and her family’s problem, her

uncle sold her a breed heifer at a discounted price. “Even though my uncle gave me that heifer, which was a little bigger than a chicken, to pay him in two rounds, I was worried because I didn’t have any money at the time. However, putting my trust in God, I bought it,” she said.

Then, she started working day in day out to pay off the debt of the heifers. She began taking care of the fruits, avocado and other fruits she planted in her garden. Her God never let her down, instead blessed her. She picked 100 kilos of avocados from a single branch of a single tree and sold it. Then, she proudly paid one part of her uncle’s debt from the 500 birr she gained from the sale of avocados. Within less than a week, she can fully pay her loan.

Concurrently, on the small plot of land she had, she expanded her farming activities supported by agricultural experts and planted vegetables, fruits, coffee and enset-false bananas.

“I did not want to simply sit at home because I am a woman; I have been working day and night to save the life of my family as my mind did not accept the idea of sitting idly and waiting for the support of others. Seeing my efforts, my God helped me. He did not let me down.”

Joining hands with her elder child, she increased the number of her cattle to six in a short period of time. Likewise, by supplying dairy products to the local community, she can generate income, send her children to school and consume nutritious food. What is more, she can transform her grass thatched mud hut into a corrugated iron house.

Now, Amarech is known in her village for

sharing her good experiences to others and helping single mothers who raise children on their own.

“What is the point if I keep trying to improve and change merely my life? It doesn’t make sense. The country will not also grow. I believe that single mothers like me should get out of poverty and improve their lives through generating their own income, I will help them in every way I can. Taking my experience as an instance, I will show them the process that makes them productive. When this is possible, the lives of individual citizens will be improved and the country will also grow,” she remarked.

Amarech’s commitment and devotion is also gaining recognition among agricultural experts and Kebele’s administrators going beyond her area.

Amarech has a plan to expand her business. However, the space she has now does not allow to work as planned. Currently, she has asked the Kebele administration to give her a place so that to realize her future dreams.

Needless to say women are the foundation of a strong economy. Especially with the effort exerted to increase agricultural production and productivity as well as for the success and effectiveness of the government’s development goal of the agricultural sector, enhancing the participation of rural women and utilizing their potential is of critical importance.

To this end, building the capacity of rural women, dealing with every obstacle that may hinder them from reaching their fullest potential should be a matter that needs to be addressed accordingly.

Society

Protecting children's rights, ensuring a safe and secure future

BY MENGISTEAB TESHOME

Promoting the protection and the well-being of children is becoming a pressing concern among countries of the world, as children are at the higher risk than others and unable to fully protect themselves due to their physical, psychological and cognitive immaturity which in their later years pose undesirable effects as well as could hold back a country's national development

To the contrary, in countries where the rights of children are protected, and their health, education and well-being are ensured, their ability to contribute to their respective community and their country as future citizens is immense leading the country to prosperity.

According to Child Right Advocacy and Development Desk Head with the Ministry of Women and Social Affairs Belete Dagne, the Ethiopian government through the Ministry of Women and Social Affairs is working diligently with various Ministries such as Education, Health, and Justice, as well as development partners including the National Disaster Risk Management Commission of Ethiopia (EDRMC) to ensure the rights and protection of children.

In an exclusive interview with *The Ethiopian Herald*, Belete said that Ethiopia ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Children in 1991. It has also incorporated the provision on the rights of children in its constitution to promote and guarantee every child rights. Accordingly, the government has been executing various activities to ensure the protection and promotion of the rights and welfare of children. Further, it has developed a child policy that guides the efforts in safeguarding children's rights.

The Ministry is also working focusing on cultivating a culture of civic responsibility and preventing child rights violations, as well as running rehabilitation centers to assist victims of violence to recover from the trauma. It is also working to empower the community and stakeholders, to support the effort because ensuring children's rights is a cornerstone of nation-building.

To translate the plan, the Ministry has established Child Rights Committees that are in charge of monitoring and reporting any form of child rights abuse to the law enforcement.

In a bid to build a long-lasting system, the Ministry has been working with the Ministry of Education and the National Election Board of Ethiopia (NEBE) as well as relevant bodies in establishing children's parliament to facilitating the participation of children at all levels, to let them gain experience, enable them to voice and advocate for their own concerns, and stand



up for the rights of children.

The ultimate goal of the children's parliament is to voice the children's concern at local and international platforms and protect their rights. Moreover it will let them experience the power of democracy as well as the values of Ethiopia.

In an effort to enhance awareness regarding children rights and mobilize resources, the Ministry held a number of events at different occasions on the International Children's Rights Day and African Children's Rights Day as well as in other relevant instances, he added.

The Child Development Training and Research Center (CDTRC), non-profit organization, Deputy General Manager Amberbir Tamire also said that emphasizing on the children's safety is an issue that should not be ignored or undervalued as they are the valuable asset who can decide the fate of the country. Thus, investing in children, protecting them from any form of abuse and upholding their rights, is a responsibility of all.

"We should build a protective environment that could support children's development, health, education, and well-being, and their ability to become productive members of society."

Amberbir acknowledges that there is a significant gap between the demand and supply for ensuring children's protection. "We know Ethiopia experienced droughts and conflicts that consumed the life of many and resulted in beefing up internal displaced persons and forced students to drop out of schools. All variables ascribed above affect the wellbeing of children."

To bridge that gap, it is high time to reinforce collaborative approaches with the Ministry of Women and Social Affairs, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, and Ministry of Justice to align efforts and ensure child protection.

Moreover, enhancing productive work with regional states and authorities is important to establish and enforce child protection policies and protocols.

In the same way, partnering with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and civil society groups that specialize and work in child rights, child protection and child welfare, is vital to draw lessons and exploit knowledge and skills, he underlined.

According to him, the issue of protecting children's rights is about the perpetuation of generation, and stakeholders should act in line with their duties and responsibilities. Amberbir suggested that public and private institutions should collaborate to improve the provision of health and education services to children.

He also commended the efforts by public institutions in opening daycare centers to enable mothers to engage in productive economic activities, which contributes to the well-being of children.

A prudent collaboration with educational institutions is instrumental in developing comprehensive child safeguarding curricula and training programs. The collaboration along with healthcare service providers, including hospitals, clinics, and pediatricians, should be well organized. Moreover, works to ensure prompt medical and psychological support for child victims need to be further strengthened.

Regarding the role of media, Amberbir emphasized the need for content producers to review their programs, and ensure that they engaged skilled professionals specializing in children development and behavior. He also warned the proliferation of harmful content on social media and the need for adults to help children avoid excessive exposure to electronic devices. Putting in place strong law enforcement measures is also crucial to ensure justice, fairness, and transparency in addressing children's issues, Amberbir accentuated.

He also highlighted the need for the involvement of religious institutions, as the issue of children's rights is not the sole responsibility of a single institution.

As to him, the involvement of religious institutions in addressing the challenges faced by children is not as such visible. In the Ethiopian context, religious institutions often have significant influence on their respective communities. Through their acceptance, they could actively engage in advocating for children's rights, raise public awareness, mobilize resources, and promote community's participation to safeguard the wellbeing and rights of children.

"I strongly believe that religious institutions can play a constructive role in instilling the core values and ethics of the community and developing a sense of civic responsibility."

In this regard, working with religious institutions and sensitizing them with the necessary knowledge and tools to identify, prevent, and respond to child protection issues should be the area of action because religious fathers are capable enough to influence the behavior of individuals across the board, he opined.



Published Weekly in Collaboration with Haramaya University

HU establishes PDMA Ethiopia second to Egypt in Africa

BY DIRRIBA TESHOME

Product Development and Management Association (PDMA) Ethiopia is one of the new 2023/24 initiatives at Haramaya University (HU). It is the first in Ethiopia and second in Africa, preceded by Egypt.

PDMA Ethiopia is initiated and established at HU Haramaya Institute of Technology (HiT) as a center-Product Development and Management Center. It is to support HU strategic activities (pillars) including its journey towards autonomy and Technology Lead Industry National Development Policy through Innovation and Entrepreneurship Developments.

HU Institute of Technology Managing Director and PDMA Ethiopia President, Engineer Hamza Ahmednuur, told The Ethiopian Herald the association is essential to put problem solving innovations into practice. "Engineering and Technology without Innovation and Entrepreneurship is nothing."

Researching, Engineering, Re-engineering, and adopting problem solving innovative technologies, outreaching and commercializing innovative research outcomes, create and link innovators worldwide are among the central goals of PDMA, Eng. Hamza specified adding: "PDMA body of knowledge and Innovation. Our chapter is supported by the consistent and enthusiastic commitment of many people."

Serving the chapter in their many roles, the individuals listed below work to bring programming to PDMA members and the product development and management community. The leadership team is dedicated to the success of the Ethiopia Chapter and is eager to hear suggestions and comments, he noted.



Prof. Mengistu Urge-HU Vice President for Academic Affairs Certifying Eng. Hamza-PDMA

PDMA Ethiopia is being led by Board of Administration whose Chairman is Haramaya University Vice President for Research and Community Engagement, Dr. Yesihak Yusuf.

It also has Vice Board Chairman, President, President Secretary, Vice President – Administration and Development, Director – Programs, ICT and Communications, Director – Human Resource Management and Development, and Nominations/Membership, Director – Finance, Marketing and Sponsorship, Vice President- Academic, Research and Community Engagement, Director – Research, Innovation, Re-engineering and Entrepreneurship Development, and Director – Community Engagement.

Furthermore, he has disclosed the main activities of some of the board positions. The Board Chairman and the Vice are typically recruited from the pool of former

board presidents or from executive leadership of local organizations. They support the current chapter president and board officers and provide feedback and advice on chapter initiatives and activities.

Equally, the President is responsible for the success of the chapter in all aspects; Administration and Development activities, terms of balanced budget, quality programs, and advancement of chapter initiatives and leadership; academic, research and community engagement, university industry linkage and technology transfer or commercialize problem solving innovative research outputs/products, internationalization activities and national development policies through innovative technology and entrepreneurship developments.

And the Secretary of the board assists the president in all aspects to ensure success of the chapter in terms of balanced budget, quality programs, and advancement

of chapter initiatives and leadership. He/she also establishes the chapter budget, monitoring chapter expenses and revenues to ensure a balanced budget, including securing chapter sponsors. Maintains board meeting minutes.

As well, the Vice President – Administration and Development assists the president with administration and development activities, and is Responsible for the overall administration and development activities leading directors under office. And Director – Programs, ICT and Communications leads the Programming Committee; responsible for planning and execution of quality programming, including topic, speaker selection, format, venue, logistics and other general services.

He/she also leads the Marketing Committee and is responsible for marketing strategies and communications, including managing the website and use of social media, to ensure growth and retention of chapter membership and robust attendance at chapter programs. Managing the website and social media to ensure growth and retention of chapter membership and robust attendance at chapter programs are under this director.

Director – HRMD and Nominations/ Membership leads the human resources and Nominations Committee and is responsible for identifying and recruiting new chapter board members besides developing professional network to enable recruitment.

The rest positions have their own specific responsibilities besides the shared ones while the Board Members have to assist PDMA in board activities as directed by the president and officers.

South Africa's Ramaphosa vows 'new era' at inauguration

South Africa has begun a "new era", President Cyril Ramaphosa announced as he was sworn in for a second full term in office.

He remains in office even though his party, the African National Congress (ANC), failed to secure a majority in parliament during last month's election.

The ANC subsequently made a deal with its long-time rival Democratic Alliance (DA) and other parties to form a coalition government.

Mr Ramaphosa hailed this government during his inauguration speech, but also warned that unless it addressed deep inequalities, the country could become unstable.

"Through the ballots that they have cast, the people of South Africa have made plain their expectation that the leaders of our country should work together," President Ramaphosa, 71, said solemnly.

"They have directed their representatives to put aside animosity and dissent, to abandon narrow interests, and to pursue together only that which benefits the nation."

They included the leaders of Nigeria, Angola, Zimbabwe, Congo-Brazzaville, and Eswatini, and gathered in the Nelson Mandela Amphitheatre outside the Union Building in Pretoria.

A huge crowd gathered outside the official seat of government, waving national flags.

Under a sharp blue winter sky, the Chief

Justice Raymond Zondo, administered the oath of office.

"I swear I will be faithful to the Republic of South Africa... I will obey, observe and uphold the constitution and all other laws of the republic," the president said.

A band then played the national anthem. The rendition was followed by a 21-gun salute and a fly-past by army helicopters.

The ANC, which has governed since the end of the racist system of apartheid in 1994, lost its majority for the first time after the 29 May election produced no outright winner.

The party got 40% of the vote, a drop of 17 percentage points, and it lost 70 seats in parliament.

However lawmakers re-elected Mr Ramaphosa after the ANC made a power-sharing arrangement with the pro-business DA - who came second in the poll with 22% - and three smaller parties.

The ANC's main new governing partner, the free-market DA, is ideologically at odds with the party's social welfare traditions, and seen by many as catering to the interests of the white minority, which it denies.

But the two political opponents are focused on a common agenda of fixing the country's infrastructure, providing basic services such as water and power, and creating jobs.

The coalition is a move to the political centre, because the ANC's left-wing

and populist breakaway parties rejected the invitation to join a national unity government.

Mr Ramaphosa told South Africans the coalition was committed to reversing inequalities and growing the economy. He also warned that the country was riven with deep divisions between the haves and have-nots.

Despite progress, "our society remains deeply unequal and highly polarized," he said. "There are toxic cleavages and an incipient social fragmentation that can easily turn into instability."

And he warned against "those who seek to stand in our way, to inflame tensions" and "undermine our institutions." They will not succeed because South Africans are resolute, he said.

Mr Ramaphosa did not say to whom he was referring. But the uMkhonto weSizwe (MK) party formed six months ago by former President Jacob Zuma didn't attend what it called the "farcical" inauguration.

The party, which won 15% of votes and obtained 58 parliamentary seats, also boycotted parliament's first sitting last Friday.

It has since joined a counter-coalition of opposition parties, vowing to oppose the policies of what Mr Zuma described as an "unholy alliance" between black and white elites to benefit the markets, not the people.

It "must be crushed before it finds its feet," he said, "in the streets, in the courts and in

parliament."

MK has said its protests would be peaceful. But there have been fears that Mr Zuma's stance would trigger violence among his supporters, who carried out deadly riots in July 2021 when he was jailed for refusing to give evidence at a public inquiry into corruption during his administration.

Mr Ramaphosa is expected to appoint a cabinet in the coming days, which is to include the the DA and three other smaller parties. Together, the coalition accounts for 68% of seats in parliament.

The president is then expected to formally set out the policies aimed at rescuing the flailing economy.

There are many challenges ahead to navigate. They include potential ideological disagreements within the coalition, unhappiness from ANC elements on the left, and the risk of political opposition becoming volatile.

But many South Africans want it to succeed.

"This is a moment when we must choose to either move forward together," Mr Ramaphosa said "or risk losing all we have built."

The former trade unionist and business tycoon first became president in 2018 when his predecessor, Mr Zuma, was forced to resign because of corruption allegations. Mr Zuma has repeatedly denied any wrongdoing.

Source BBC