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Ethiopia initiates steps toward nuclear energy infrastructure

BY YESUF ENDRIS

ADDIS ABABA - Ethiopia is taking substantive measures to establish the center for nuclear science and technology, the Innovation and Technology Minister said,

retreating the government's commitment to the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

The 35th African Regional Cooperative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology (AFRA) Technical Working

Group Meeting was held here yesterday.

In his opening remark, Innovation and Technology Minister Belete Molla (PhD) said that Ethiopia is exploring the potential

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Scholars call for effective outlay of nat'l budget

BY STAFF REPORTER

ADDIS ABABA - Economic scholars have called for appropriate spending of the draft national budget to improve livelihoods in the coming Ethiopian fiscal year.

Ethiopia's draft national budget for next year amounting to 971.2 billion Birr, which has a 21 percent increment compared to last year, has been referred to the parliament for approval.

Ethiopia has a growing economy

See Scholars call ... page 3



State to build lodge near Tiya World Heritage Site

BY BETELHEM BEDLU

ADDIS ABABA - With a vision to make the Central Ethiopia State a preferred tourist destination, a plan set to construct a lodge near the Tiya World Heritage Site, the State Chief said.

Central Ethiopia State's Chief Administrator Endashaw Tassew told the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) that efforts are underway to construct lodges and various infrastructural projects in tourist destinations located from Tiya to Aberecho 77 Mountain.

"To open the archaeological site for tourists, we need to have

See State to...page 3



Ethiopia emerges East Africa's leading FDI destination

BY BETELHEM BEDLU

ADDIS ABABA - Ethiopia has emerged as the leading destination for foreign direct investment (FDI) in East Africa, according to

the latest World Investment Report published by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD).

In the vibrant landscape of East Africa,

Ethiopia stands tall as a beacon of economic progress, the report stated.

See Ethiopia emerges... page 3

News



Yonas Adaye (PhD)

ENDC streamlining indigenous knowledge for inclusive dialogue

BY ASHENAFI ANIMUT

ADDIS ABABA – Incorporating home-grown knowledge and culture in the ongoing National Dialogue would be of a great significance towards attaining impactful and inclusive dialogue, the Ethiopian National Dialogue Commission (ENDC) said.

Speaking to local media, ENDC Commissioner Yonas Adaye (PhD) said the commission is aggressively working through streamlined home-grown knowledge, culture and inclusive dialogue frameworks including militants' issues to address any odds and realize lasting peace.

The commissioner has also mentioned that it is facilitating and employing all the way out to table any of the militants' issues based on their own consent either in the form of face-to-face or via their representatives.

According to him, the commission is making all the necessary preparations to hold agenda selection in other areas of the country in full-swing. It is also looking for a thorough agenda selection process at all levels across the country in accordance with its execution directive.

“The commission is currently undertaking participants' identification processes in Amhara State along with the communities comprising religious institutions, woreda administrators, lawyers, Idir, political parties among many other segments of the society,” he said.

In the same vein, it has deliberated chains of discussions with the Tigray State Interim Administrators, scholars, and civic associations and reached agreement to get involved in the National Dialogue process, the commissioner mentioned.

It was also indicated that the recently held agenda gathering process in the capital was concluded over the upper hand of participant's involvement.

Ministry foresees private sector's active engagement in housing dev't

BY MESERET BEHAILU

ADDIS ABABA - The government would create an enabling environment for private sectors to undertake sustainable and inclusive housing development, Ministry of Urban and Infrastructure (MoUI) disclosed.

MoUI Housing Development Lead Executive Officer, Tsegaye Moshie told *The Ethiopian Herald* that the government would provide the private sector with the needed support to have active involvement in building houses.

As to him, the Ministry has planned to build 4.4 million houses of which 80% of them will be constructed by the private sector in the coming ten years.

He added that the organization revised housing development strategy to shift from government to private oriented in order to benefit the middle and small income community.

Besides, he said, the government has given serious attention to approaching houses designed for rent, which is alternative to reduce housing challenges.

“Massive small approach which is building



Tsegaye Moshie

additional houses on landownership to encourage building houses bring remarkable outcome in Oromia State,” he noted.

He further stated that participating private sectors in building houses helps reducing government's cost and promotes sharing knowledge, experience, and technology in the sector.

Habitat for Humanity Ethiopia National Director and Representative to AU, Yitna Tekalign on his part said that his organization has been working with various institutions to address housing challenges in the years to come.



Yitna Tekalign

Yitna added that conducting research, working with institutions engaged in house building, policy improvement, and establishing plan is crucial to address housing constraints.

“Inclusive and sustainable housing development will encourage by reinovating the old shelters and building the new houses through using youth volunteer activities and making association and building empowerment,” he stated.

So far, Habitat for humanity Ethiopia reached over 800,000 citizens during the past three decades.

Borena boosts agricultural products, wins over drought

BY MESERET BEHAILU

ADDIS ABABA – Oromia State Agriculture Bureau announced that Borena Zone is started to provide various products to central market apart from completely solving drought problem.

Oromia State Agriculture Bureau Heads and other senior officials visited Borena Zone of agricultural development activities.

Up on the visiting, Oromia State Agriculture Bureau Deputy Head, Beriso Feyesa said that the zone was released from drought problem and was able to confirm its productivity. Therefore, it has been providing various products such as Teff, Cattle, and Goat to the central market.

As to Beriso, Oromia Agriculture Bureau has been carrying out various activities such as providing agriculture inputs and giving occupational training in order to boost agricultural products and productivity.

Borena's Zone Administer, Abduselam Wariwo on his part said that over

128,000 hectares of land are cultivated in the zone whilst expected maximum agricultural products from it.

He remembered that the zone is one of the pastoral areas and the community has been exposed to sever problems due to lack of adequate rain in the last five consecutive rainy seasons. As a result, the zone has received various humanitarian supports in the above stated periods.

Abduselam said, “over 7,000 quintals of teff and other products have been providing in the central market following various activities have been carried out. He said 10 out of 14 water dams started under the FINA project have been completed and put into service, which is a part of sustainable development work. The remains four water dams will be finalized in the end of June 2024.”

Borena Zone Agriculture Office Head, Jalala Dulecha on his part said that animals fodder has been sown on 1.2 million hectares and the produce is being put into the fodder bank. It is part of preventing further damage to the herdsmen and farmers when drought might be occurred in the future.



Abduselam Wariwo



Jalala Dulecha



Beriso Feyesa

News

Ethiopian wins Skytrax's best airline in Africa title

ADDIS ABABA- Ethiopian Airlines keeps its top spot as the Best Airline in Africa and three other categories at the 2024 SKYTRAX World Airlines Award.

Ethiopian took the crown for multiple other accolades with the Best Airline in Africa title for seven consecutive years.

Ethiopian has been honored with the titles for Best Airline in Africa for seven years in row, Best Business Class in Africa for six years in row, Best Economy Class in Africa for six years in row, and Best Economy Class Onboard Catering in Africa.

Sending his congratulatory message on the award, Mesfin Tasew, Ethiopian Airlines

Group CEO said: "We are pleased to have proudly received the prestigious Skytrax World Airlines 2024 award for the seventh consecutive year.

Ethiopian Airlines' unwavering dedication to customer-centric innovation has been pivotal to its success, he added.

"We remain at the forefront of the aviation industry by continually adopting cutting-edge technology to elevate our passengers' experience."

Edward Plaisted, CEO of Skytrax said, "We congratulate Ethiopian Airlines on winning this top award as Africa's Best Airline for a seventh successive year and this level of

consistency is a fabulous achievement that the Ethiopian Airlines management and staff should be very proud of."

The World Airline Awards are wholly independent and impartial, introduced in 1999 to provide a customer satisfaction study that is truly global.

Travelers across the world vote in the largest airline passenger satisfaction survey to determine the award winners.

The awards are referred to by media around the world as "the Oscars of the aviation industry".

These accolades, from the reputable

SKYTRAX World Airlines Award, showcase our commitment to sustainability in our business and the services we provide. They are dear prizes from our esteemed customers through their vote of confidence and an achievement realized through the hard work of all employees throughout the Ethiopian network.

Ethiopian Airlines Group (Ethiopian) is one of the fastest-growing airlines brand globally and the continent's largest airline brand. In its seventy-eight years of successful operations, Ethiopian has become one of the continent's leading carriers, unrivalled in efficiency and operational success, ENA reported.

State to...

standardized lodges. Thus, the project design of the lodge has been finalized."

Mentioning Tiya as one of the ancient tourism destinations in the country, the State Chief noted that activities are being put towards making the ongoing project a success. Moreover, the state administration has taken bold steps to create a sizable number of jobs for the youth and enable society to benefit from the rich natural resources.

Despite the state's immense natural resources and tourism potential, only little has been made in interpreting those potential to actual gain.

Endashaw further highlighted that apart from its archaeological site and natural resources, the Central Ethiopia State has a large number of tangible and intangible tourist attractions including the preserved values and cultures of the people of Hadiya, Gurage, Kembata and other nationalities in the surroundings.

Activities are proceeding not only to make the tourist sites convenient and up to the standard but also to improve the socioeconomic benefits of the society.

Since the archeological site is near the Capital Addis Ababa, it has a better chance to be visited, thus, more efforts would be geared to tap the tourism potential in the area fully, he emphasized.

Tiya is located in the Soddo District, Gurage Zone of the Central Ethiopia State and it is best known for its large stone pillars, many of which bear some form of decoration. The archeological site was designated a World Heritage Site in 1980, due to the unique nature of these monolithic monuments.

Ethiopia initiates steps...

of nuclear power for electricity generation and will establish an institute to sustainably manage the sector.

"We are investing in research and development, constructing the necessary infrastructure and developing policies and programs to support innovative business and entrepreneurs in all sectors. The Ministry of Innovation and Technology is hence dedicated to promoting the peaceful use of nuclear energy in creating robust and sustainable nuclear program."

The Minister further highlighted that the AFRA technical working group meeting is about uplifting the technical collaboration

amongst state parties, and the Intentional Atomic Energy Agency-IAEA. The IAEA is providing technical and financial as well as administrative supports in accordance with the procedures governing the provision of technical assistance to its member states.

Ethiopia has become a party to AFRA since its establishment in 1990 and has ever since been collaborating in key economic sectors including agriculture, food security, human health, water resource management, environment, industry and more recently in research through human resource development,

equipment procurements and donations, Belete remarked.

AFRA Chairperson Abdulhamid Mellah urged African countries to collaborate for the peaceful use of nuclear energy. "The implementation of nuclear energy will help hundred millions of Africans to get electricity."

The intra-African corporation is critical for the physical implementation of nuclear science and technology for peaceful means. Countries which are not members of the AFRA are expected to join hands with member states, the chairperson made the appeal.

Ethiopia emerges East...

Ethiopia was said to secure a staggering 3.3 billion USD in FDI in 2023, more than its neighbors Kenya and Uganda.

The Ethiopian Investment Commission (EIC), led by Chief Commissioner Hanna Araya sellasie, revealed that Ethiopia has already attracted three billion USD in the first 10 months of the fiscal year 2023/24.

According to the EIC data, China has played a pivotal role, accounting for nearly half of all FDI projects in

Ethiopia.

The EIC further disclosed that the nation's strategic embrace of public-private partnerships (PPP) has been the cornerstone of this economic milestone, with notable ventures like the UAE's AMEA Power investing 600 million USD in the Aysha wind power project.

Ethiopia has also opened its doors to foreign investment in digital payment systems. Last year, Safaricom Ethiopia, a subsidiary of the renowned Safaricom,

was granted the Payment Instrument Issuer License, propelling the number of M-Pesa users to a remarkable 3.1 million.

In January 2024, Safaricom Ethiopia announced that the number of M-Pesa users had nearly tripled in four months to 3.1 million, with transactions worth 115.3 million USD.

In comparison to last year's figures, UNCTAD's report reveals a 3% decrease in FDI inflows to Africa, totaling 53 USD billion.

Scholars call for...

and the budget increase is the manifestation of this, although it requires further study to have a comprehensive understanding of the increment in line with the existing inflation, believed Firezer Tilahun, Economics Lecturer at Haramaya University.

It is expected that the national budget to be increased over time considering the economic status and national plans. The rationale behind this is to facilitate basic infrastructures and fulfill the needs of the ever-increasing number of population, he said.

According to him, the government plays an important role in the overall development

of the country so the budget increase will help to achieve such development.

The major source of revenue of the government is from tax, loan and aid, Firezer said, adding that this forces to spend the budget wisely on investments designed to respond to the public needs in sectors such as education, health and other infrastructures.

He noted that infrastructural investment is crucial to boost and transform the economy and increase private sector engagement.

As to him, the proper expenditure of the budget on education, health and agriculture sectors would help to nurture healthy and competent citizens vibrant to bring change

and food self-sufficiency.

He stressed the need to expand investments that produce agricultural inputs valuable to increase productivity in the field.

The proper spending of the national budget on development projects brings economic development so that the nation requires strict budget monitoring and supporting mechanism, Firezer recommended.

Gondar University Economics Lecturer Yinges Alemu also expressed the need to inspect the efficient expenditure of the national budget.

Institutions ought to be committed to fully implement rules and regulations and

undertake every task as per the schedule to achieve the main purpose of the budget, he underlined.

He specifically said that a strong dedication is vital to wisely use the budget to improve productivity and reduce foreign debt.

According to Yinges, the government must also work on capacitating the manufacturing industry to substitute imports.

However, strong leadership is required to achieve the aforementioned purposes of the budget and improve the lives of citizens, he said, emphasizing that ensuring peace and security must get the prior attention to enable actors in the economic sector to move freely and do business.

Opinion

The transformative power of Ethiopia's Green Legacy Initiative

BY ADDISALEM MULAT

Taking the initiative of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD), the nation is engaged in a big drive to plant billions of tree seedlings. This is an excellent initiative. For political commitment, it cannot get any better. The enthusiasm generated is truly unbelievable. Overall, the effort in reforestation and afforestation has been very sporadic. For much of its long history, the forestry sector did not have much political commitment. The little effort conducted has not been backed by good background research and suffered from a lack of follow-up, according to sources.

Nevertheless, currently, the sector has gained good political commitment from high government officials – especially the Prime Minister. Anything that is espoused by high government officials has always a better chance of implementation. No leader of this country has ever been as engaged in tree planting as Prime Minister Abiy (PhD). It is a historical opportunity to seize. There are many reasons why this campaign is indispensable.

It is stated that the first of these is the fact that it has increased people's awareness of the benefits of environmental protection and tree planting. The motivation, gusto, and interest we observed, especially in the young have been phenomenal. We have seen people taking responsibility and planting tree seedlings in thousands in areas designated and provided by authorities. What is also good about the campaign is that it brought the importance of planting fruit trees.

"One interesting feature we observed was that some of the seedlings were bought from organized youth who have been nursing indigenous seedlings. This is very encouraging and promising. Raising indigenous seedlings is not an easy matter for that matter. And yet I have seen several young guys who presented indigenous seedlings in thousands. This is a very valuable engagement and means of livelihood for part of the youth."

It is learnt that the most critical point is bringing home the realization that Ethiopian's development is strongly dependent on what we do to protect our forests and afforest our degraded and barren landscapes. The survival of our dams, including and especially the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam, is inseparably tied to sustainable land management of the river basins and sustainable environmental protection.

The promise of GERD is dependent on what we do now in the Choke Mountains among others. Thus governmental and non-governmental institutions as well as citizens need to work in unison and coordination for sustainable development of our forest resources.

Ethiopia is strengthening efforts to promote national voluntarism engagements and community services for nation building,



Ministries said, unveiling plans to benefit about 50,000 people across the country.

The Ministry of Peace, Ministry of Women and Social Affairs and Ministry of Education made the joint press briefing in connection with the summer volunteerism program which is to be held under the theme of "Volunteerism and togetherness for Ethiopia's rise" as of 19 June.

Speaking at the occasion MoWSA State Minister Muna Ahmed recently said that the Ethiopian people in all walks of life have long been carrying out voluntarism programs on regular basis thereby enjoying notable socioeconomic development.

Since recently, the government has given prime attention to volunteerism engagements spearheading viable initiatives by identifying thematic areas including green legacy, house renovation, health, education among many other.

On his part, MoP State Minister Keireidin Tezera (PhD) stated that the initiative is an ideal soft power to bridge and address common gaps, revive common values and accelerate national development aspirations.

He added that it is also a critical scope to sustain togetherness, share common values, and solve common problems. To help this, the ministry has designed pillar trainings in areas of national identity. He has also underlined that the national voluntary community service is contributing a practical role in nation's peace building and strengthen social bond.

Nowadays, the Green Legacy Initiative has been winning the hearts and minds of all and Sundry at home and abroad.

The Ethiopian Ambassador to Pakistan, Jemal Beker along with Coordinator to the Prime Minister Office on Climate Change and Environmental Coordination has launched the "Ethio-Pakistan Fraternity under Green Legacy" initiative at Sialkot University, Pakistan.

In its press release sent recently to a local media, the embassy said that the Green Legacy Initiative will be instrumental for fostering fraternity between Ethiopia and Pakistan.

Ambassador Jemal and Coordinator to the Prime Minister Pakistan on Climate Change and Environmental Coordination Romina Khurshid Alam launched the initiative in presence of government officials, religious

community, businessmen, academia students, civil society and media, according to the press release.

The initiative was launched as part of collaboration among the embassy of Ethiopia, Pakistan's Ministry of Climate Change and the University of Sialkot, it was indicated.

More than 200 plants of different indigenous species were planted under the "Ethio-Pakistan Fraternity under Green Legacy" Initiative which was followed by a climate walk in the town which was participated by a large number of people.

At present, Ethiopia has embarked on an ambitious campaign of planting billions of trees every year in an effort to achieve a greener and cleaner environment and tackle the adverse effects of the climate crisis.

According to information obtained from the Government Communication Service (GCS), the country has planned to plant 6.3 billion seedlings in this year's plantation program. Out of the total amount some 25% will be planted at Abbay River water basin.

The country has planted over 32 billion seedlings as part of the initiative in all states of the country. Among the total planted seedlings, some 90% of the total well grown, as to the statement.

It is also indicated that the initiative has also been playing due role in creating jobs, enhancing animal fodder production, beekeeping, augmenting carbon sales, strengthening diplomatic engagements with neighboring countries.

Apart from addressing various implications of climate related pressing challenges, the initiative has become a means to ensure food security and garnering the green economy. The initiative has also contributed its due role towards garnering global attention and recognition.

The idea spearheaded by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed and his participation together with other high ranking officials and community members is inspirational. The explanations linking the massive plantation programs with afforestation, minifying the impacts of flash floods, and improving the livelihood of communities should be applauded. This will undoubtedly change the attitude of citizens to plant trees and appreciate the connection with increased biodiversity and ecosystem services they provide, as learnt from apiece.

It is learnt that there was an estimate that Ethiopia's forest coverage in the early 19th Century was about 40 percent. If we could attain that percentage at a national level, it would be great. But we should be cognizant of the fact that the current Ethiopian population is much higher and there is a need to consider that. However, the enormous enthusiasm and effort put into the plantations by the Prime Minister should be taken up by citizens across the country following the effect of coordination of regional governments up to the lowest government structure.

As Ethiopia has varied geology, topography, and climate, it will be important to plant mainly indigenous trees or shrubs or even introduced fruit trees that are adapted to grow and survive in those areas. What we plant in Addis or in areas with a similar topography and climate will be different from what we are planning to plant in Afar, Benishangul Gumuz, Gambella or other parts of the country. Such plans take time and relevant government and non-governmental institutions and communities should take appropriate measures to realize these efforts in the long term.

About 90.4% of planted trees during the fifth year's Green Legacy Initiatives (GLI) have already grown up, according to first round monitoring of plantations by Ministry of Agriculture (MoA).

MoA's Natural Resource Development, Conservation, Utilization, Biological Soil, Water Conservation and Combined Forest Farming Desk Head Befikadu Birhanu told in recent times the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) that the first round evaluation was undertaken to assess the success of plantation thus the success rate has been recorded as 90.4%. Mentioning that the evaluation is conducted twice a year, he said that this year's plantation success surpassed the previous years.

Previously, he said the plantation success used to be around 80%. As the community engagement and their sense of ownership to the initiative have now grown, the plantation success rate has tremendously increased over the years. Moreover, he emphasized that due attention has been given to protecting and caring for planted seedlings. To this end, various awareness raising activities have been carried out to sensitize the community.

Over 32 billion seedlings have been planted since the commencement of Green Legacy Initiatives (GLI). It was learnt that the planted seedlings have the capacity to withstand climate change apart from possessing multilayered economic benefits to the community.

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

Editorial

Enhancing women's representation, inspiring young girls

June 24th marks the International Day of Women in Diplomacy. The day was initiated by the United Nations General Assembly to recognize and celebrate women's achievements in the diplomatic sphere and international relations, to make their leadership more visible as well as to highlight the indispensable contributions of women in global diplomacy and inspire a new generation of female diplomats and leaders.

Thus, countries across the globe celebrate the International Day of Women in Diplomacy in June 24th with the aim to honor the invaluable contributions of women diplomats and inspire young girls.

Coming to the Ethiopian context, the country has a long-standing tradition of diplomatic relations dating back to the 4th century during the reign of King Ezana when King Ezana established diplomatic ties with the Roman Empire, marking Ethiopia's first recorded foreign relations. Before Common Era, Queen of Sheba also established ties with King Solomon of Jerusalem.

However, as historical chronicles indicated, the modern diplomatic foreign relations of Ethiopia began during the reign of Emperor Menelik II in 1907. On the wake of the victory of Adwa, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other ministerial systems were introduced as well. Since that time, Ethiopia's diplomatic relations have been growing from time to time in multilateral areas.

The involvement of Ethiopian women in the diplomacy and senior leadership positions has been making significant strides. From serving as diplomats and ambassadors to holding senior leadership positions in the government's levels of power, Ethiopian women can serve in positions that were once dominated and reserved for men including international diplomacy and foreign policy.

In turn, despite the long attached patriarchal norms as well as male dominated social and cultural values that favor men, several women can break the glass ceiling, demonstrate their unique potential, make names for themselves, and inspire young girls to pursue careers in diplomacy.

Among others, the first senior career ambassador Amb. Yodit Imru, who started working in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1953, in the department of International Relations and worked from Director General to Vice Minister. Also, Ambassador Kongit Sinegiorgis, the longest serving career ambassador in the Ethiopian diplomatic history and even in Africa contributed immensely to Ethiopia and Africa as well.

Likewise, Empresses Taytu Bitul, who was incomparable diplomat, an influential political figure and a stateswoman, and President Sahle-Work Zewde, a diplomat and politician who is also the first woman to hold office as President of Ethiopia since 2018 are also the other testimonies that show Ethiopian women active involvement in the spheres of diplomacy.

Currently, a number of Ethiopian women are taking part in the various positions, climbing in the ladder of leadership including at the ministerial levels, in the field of diplomacy, within the ranks of the Ethiopian National Defense Force (ENDF) among others. Confronting and disproving the stereotype, they are making differences, not to mention the impressive results they have registered.

According to the UN, women bring immense benefits to diplomacy. Their leadership styles, expertise and priorities broaden the scope of issues under consideration and the quality of outcomes. Additionally, women always give priority to nurturing lasting peace, driving positive change and development. They are also active actors in minimizing corruption, cementing agreements and reinforcing international relations.

In this regard, it is vital to increase women's representation at all streams and bring more women to the table, so that, build a more inclusive and equitable world.

Opinion

Horn prosperity requires sustained peace, stability, and cooperation

BY GIRMACHEW GASHAW

The Horn of Africa is a volatile region lacking political stability, sustainable peace, and security. Nearly all countries in the region are suffering from internal affairs such as war, diseases, drought, and other hardships, leading many citizens to unintended displacement in search of survival.

The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) was established to assist its member states in peace, security, agriculture, environment, economic cooperation, and social development. Since its foundation in 1986 as the Intergovernmental Authority on Drought and Desertification (IGADD), later renamed the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), it has faced the enormous task of resolving conflicts in the Horn of Africa.

Still, the Horn of Africa remains one of the most volatile regions on the continent, where internal civil wars have led to the total collapse of Somalia, the secession of Eritrea from Ethiopia, the ongoing border war between Eritrea and Ethiopia, as well as the polarization of Northern and Southern Sudanese advocating for Islamic and secular state conceptions respectively. Conflict in the region, as in other parts of Africa, is not only "internationalized", but it leads to what has been called "conflict triangulation."

Peace and security are fundamental issues that occupy the prime focus of IGAD. In this regard, it is working diligently to serve member states equally in order to achieve sustainable peace in the region. With a long history of success in peace and security initiatives, it has played a crucial role in peace processes in Sudan and Somalia, bringing together the federal government and regional states.

In Sudan, IGAD is facilitating peace negotiations between the two warring parties. Despite initial challenges, it remains committed to the peace process and is actively working towards a resolution.

Similarly, IGAD was involved in efforts during the Ethiopia-Eritrea War of 1998–2000, showcasing its role as a platform for cooperation on peace, security, infrastructure, regional integration, and the movement of people and capital in the region.

While progress has been slow in some areas, such as South Sudan, IGAD continues to push for the implementation of peace agreements and the conduct of elections to establish a government elected by the people. In Somalia, challenges persist with issues such as Al-Shabab and tensions between different

regions, requiring swift action from IGAD.

Despite criticisms, IGAD remains a vital regional organization that reflects the strength and stability of its members. By working together to promote peace, security, and development, IGAD can play a pivotal role in advancing the interests of East African countries on the continent and in the international community.

Addressing issues such as recurrent drought, which has had devastating effects on the region, requires coordinated efforts from governments and humanitarian organizations. The impact of drought on food security, livelihoods, and economic stability underscores the need for proactive measures to mitigate its effects and support affected populations.

However, challenges persist, such as delays in implementing peace agreements in South Sudan and ongoing conflicts in Somalia. In Ethiopia, recent conflicts have caused devastation, highlighting the urgent need for peace and security in the region. IGAD's effectiveness relies on the cooperation and stability of its member states.

Critics of IGAD fail to see that the organization reflects the health and stability of its members. To strengthen IGAD, member states must prioritize peace, security, and development. Collaboration and dialogue are essential to address regional challenges and promote stability.

Despite challenges like political instability, security concerns, and infrastructure deficiencies, recurrent droughts in East Africa have also contributed to instability, affecting millions of people and livestock.

The impact of drought, coupled with water shortages, has led to displacement, malnutrition, and economic losses. Educational institutions have also suffered, with many schools closing due to decreased attendance. IGAD has established platforms to address the impacts of drought and promote resilience in the region.

The region's longest drought period in 40 years has led to food insecurity, desert locusts, and conflicts over resources, floods, and other challenges. IGAD plays a critical role in addressing these issues and working towards sustainable peace and stability in East Africa.

In conclusion, sustained peace, stability, and cooperation are essential for the prosperity of East Africa. By prioritizing regional integration, economic growth, and humanitarian assistance, IGAD can contribute to a more secure and prosperous future for all countries in the region.

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The Ethiopian Herald

Business & Economy

Making growth pillars feed one another

BY ABEBE WOLDEGIORGIS

The three pillar sectors of the economy—agriculture, industry and services—play a pivotal role to achieve growth, and improve the livelihood of millions of citizens, provided that the practices are compounded with innovation.

Agriculture has provided employment opportunities to almost 80 percent of the labor force, contributes to foreign exchange earnings, and supplies food to the market at least at a subsistence level and raw materials to the manufacturing industry. The emerging manufacturing sector plays a pivotal role in creating job opportunity, attracting local and foreign investment, and boosting export as well as substituting imports. Transport, tourism, hotel and trade that fall under the service sector also play crucial role in creating job and generating income.

Solomon Zegeye is an economist and works as a consultant for various firms. This writer talked to him to get his views on the issues in question. He said currently agriculture contributes 45 percent to the nation's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). For the two digit economic growth that was registered in the past two successive decades, the sector has played a significant role. The application of modern agricultural inputs such as fertilizer, pest and herbicides are attributable to the increment of production.

He also said that though agriculture is the mainstay of the nation's economy, currently its contribution to the GDP is declining and this indicates that the nation is experiencing structural change and the contribution of manufacturing and service sectors to the GDP is growing.

The manufacturing and agricultural sectors feed on each other. Textile and garment, leather and shoes and agro-business are the backbone of the manufacturing sector. The textile industry essentially created job opportunity to thousands of citizens but nowadays, it is dependent on the importation of cotton. The sector supplies products mainly to the foreign markets and brings foreign currency to the national coffer.

The same goes to the leather and leather product sub sectors. The differences are the subsector gets most of the raw material supplies locally. The agro-business sub-sector also plays a key role in processing agricultural products and supplies the local market. Although it has the potential to transform the economy to a higher productivity rate, it is still at its infancy level. The sector is dependent on imported inputs such as spare parts and other shortcomings.

Currently, due to foreign currency crunch, opening letter of credit for securing currency is too much cumbersome. As a result, firms are forced to reduce their production volume.

The service sector is mostly characterized by hotels and entertainment is flourishing in the urban centers. It has created job opportunities for tens of thousands of citizens and heavily utilizes locally

produced agricultural products and created link with the sector.

Tourism is one of the service sectors which play a pivotal role in job creation and foreign currency earnings.

The government is aggressively working on the expansion of lodges and parks which can attract local and foreign visitors and allocated huge amount of money for the development of tourist sites. The availing of parks and animals zoo in the city further stimulates the sector.

As to Solomon, the successive Growth and Transformation Programs were implemented before the coming to power of the current reformist government. These had their weakness because then administration had tried to implement an imported economic plan that went beyond the national context.

As a result, it was unable to achieve structural change which was targeted to be achieved by 2020 GC.

As to him, the current 10 year perspective economic development plan introduced by the current government goes inline with the reality on the ground and has a potential to attain structural change. It is prepared based on the actor institutions implementing capacity in abottom up approach.

To lay the ground for industrialization, the agriculture sector must ensure the national food self-sufficiency so that citizens productivity and creativity will be enhanced which intern drive the economy on the right track. But if it is not, the nation will continue to import food and other agricultural products using its meager resource.

To attain sustainable development, the state of the nation macro-economy should be healthy. Some of the indicators of the macro economic situation of the nation are the total employment, national fiscal policy, government revenue and expenditure. In addition money supply, interest rate and the nation foreign currency earnings capacity are the backbone of the economy.

The fiscal aspect of the nation can also be mentioned as a major indicator of the macro economic status of the country. In addition, weather the total budget of the country is covered by local sources or not; and part of it covered by foreign loan or aid determines the healthiness of the economy. And weather the nation is financing its mega projects by local sources or not defines the characteristics of the macro economy.

However, as mentioned above though agriculture is the mainstay of the national economy, it is practiced in a subsistence manner, making it vulnerable to extreme climate variation. The ever-increasing population size has also led to land fragmentation. In addition to these, as farmers lack sense of ownership of land, raising productivity is a challenge.

Asked whether there are possibilities to overcome the problems and improve farming sector, Solomon said adopting

technology and utilizing more agricultural inputs can be taken as a way out.

He further said that countries which have predominantly arid areas proved the possibility of raising agricultural productivity through adopting better technology.

But as to Solomon, utilizing cutting-edge technology requires a huge amount of money which Ethiopia ill affords.

To achieve structural change, there need to be adequate planning. For instance, it behooves on policy makers to devise mechanism to shift the stranded rural labor force to urban centers. They need to be absorbed by other sectors such as manufacturing and service. Moving the labor force from farming to the non-farming activities also helps to establish extensive farm which utilizes modern farm inputs that helps raise productivity.

Currently, the cluster farming activities in rural areas have brought results in up surging productivity.

As to Solomon, in Ethiopia there is abundant natural resource which can be used as input to agriculture but due to the absence of finance, technology and skill, the nation is unable to tap the resources.

If the situation is changed for the better, the probability of ensuring food security in the future will be a low hanging fruit.

To that end, exploring and exploiting the water resources of the country is essential. The government endeavors in this regard is appreciable.

According to the report of the Ministry of Irrigation and Lowland, Ethiopia has only utilized 5 percent of its water resources for irrigation, and the arable land that can be used for extensive farming particularly found in the lowland parts of the country remained idle.

Modern irrigation farms were introduced to Ethiopia by Netherlanders in 1960s GC. Large extended farms were cultivated in the upper, middle and lower Awash River valley. Sugarcane used as input for sugar factory located in the Mattahara town which has still continued its production. In the lower Awash valley cotton plantation was cultivated and the product was supplied to local and export market but now it has ceased to exist. Large scale farms were also flourished in the north-western parts of the country in the areas of Humera and Mattama towns since 1960. The farms produced oil seeds and supply its products to local and foreign markets.

The dry season wheat irrigation farm cultivated by small-scale farmers through clustering system could bring tremendous result in meeting the local wheat demand. Some of the products also were exported to the neighboring countries and supplemented the nation's demand for a hard currency.

Such achievement can be taken as a showcase to the nation's capacity to ensure food security.

To lay the ground for industrialization, the agriculture sector must ensure the national food self-sufficiency so that citizens productivity and creativity will be enhanced which intern drive the economy on the right track

Art & Culture

The profound impact of 'Perfect Days'

BY KALKIDAN NEGASH

I often spend my leisure time watching movies at home. I grew up watching American films, and I can say my childhood is closely associated with them, as my mother was also a passionate cinephile.

While I may not be a big fan of Asian films, a movie like "Rush Hour" left me in a nostalgic haze. However, the recent Asian releases hitting the cinema market have been truly top-tier, and one such film, "Perfect Days," has made me rethink my preconceptions.

It's been a week since I watched this movie, and I can confidently say that I found it to be nothing short of perfect. The genre is drama, and the film is written by Wenders and Takuma Takasaki.

My friend described it as the "most depressing movie," but I beg to differ. This film is deeply personal and refreshingly beautiful, with impeccable cinematography.

The movie centers around the main character, Hiryama, a middle-aged toilet cleaner in Tokyo who leads a remarkably disciplined and structured life, taking great pride in his work, no matter what. The first 45 minutes of the film beautifully establish his daily routine, from waking up in his simple, well-organized apartment to driving his van to his job as a sanitation worker.

Through his relationship with his younger co-worker, Takashi, Hiryama is able to observe the differences between the younger generation and his own. The way he perceives Tokyo is truly unique, finding peace and reflection in the most mundane of places.

The movie explores the idea of finding solace in solitude, where Hiryama takes comfort in the simple pleasures of life, such as listening to thoughtful cassette music, reading books, and appreciating nature. It's a testament to the fact that true happiness can be found in the most humble of situations.



Watching this film felt like experiencing a whole new dimension within myself. It reminded me that no one can interrupt your inner peace once you've made peace with yourself. The movie beautifully captures the importance of living in the present, fully embracing one's existence and the ability to appreciate the beauty that surrounds us, just as Hiryama does so effortlessly.

The soundtrack of "Perfect Days" perfectly

complements the character and the story, seamlessly blending with the overall cinematic experience.

This is the kind of movie that leaves you contemplating your own life, not escaping from reality but fully embracing it. As Hiryama repeatedly tells his niece, "Next time, next time. Now is now" a simple yet profound statement that resonates long after the credits have rolled.

Misplaced mercy

BY ALEM HAILU G/KRISTOS

While walking
In his garden
One morning fine
Seeing a snake
He felt fear
Galloping down
His spine.
As a
Camouflaging trick
Attired a green silk
While zigzagging in
The grass thick
He should have
Squashed its skull
With a walking stick.
But he preferred
To walk away
"Let it there stay
I better
Keep it at bay."

When he
Came back home
At night
He learnt he has
Lost his son
That suffered
A snake's bite.

Misplaced mercy
Could backfire
To seek peace
With the snake
One must not tire,
For it will drag one
Into a quagmire
Obligating paying
A price higher.

Ask for mercy
An offender can't
It is also not right
Unless s/he
Is repentant.

Also forget not
"Strike before
You are struck!"
Could afford one
Prowess luck.

If
The aforementioned
Advice you got,
"Hit when
The iron is hot."

Modesty to
The heinous
And lazy
Is equally crazy.

If a human snake
Buy time
No doubt it will
Will commit
Further crime.

Friends Forever:

How a beloved sitcom helped a struggling student overcome adversity"

BY KALKIDAN NEGASH

"I'll be there for you, 'cause you're there for me too."

This is the iconic opening line of the famous sitcom TV series - Friends.

I was a second-year university student struggling with profound stress. It was a difficult time filled with loneliness and anxiety.

The only thing that helped me deal with this stress was watching movies throughout

the day and night. By default, I started watching the Friends TV series from the very first episode, and it helped transform my mood, the way I saw things, and even my outlook on the world. Eventually, it not only helped me get through that challenging period but also made me a more loving and caring person.

In my darkest, most desperate and lowest moments, this TV show was there for me, helping me overcome my depression. It gave me hope and a reason to look forward to life. It was like free therapy. I learned

many valuable lessons for my personal growth journey, particularly on how to tackle the problems I face in life and to fight until the very end.

For me, Friends was not just a sitcom, but a mentor show, where I was able to witness different aspects of life. I found humor, happiness, tears, and sadness in this show. I could even write a book about what this TV series meant to me.

Now, it's been three decades since this TV sitcom first aired, and yet it remains on many people's favorite TV show lists.

The characters' genuine camaraderie and support for one another is captivating. I believe having someone who has your back during your lowest moments is invaluable. Interestingly, they also tease each other constantly, without holding grudges, insecurities, or distress, and maintaining their close-knit friendship.

The credit for the show's enduring success and its positive impact on millions of people around the world, making the world a better place, goes to the talented cast.

Global Affairs

Turning the tide:

Health community turns to UNFCCC for inclusivity

There is a rapid realization that climate change is impacting health, which is why the recently adopted World Health Organization's Climate Change and Health Resolution is considered pivotal.

"Knowing that some of the difficulties we are currently facing are a result of climate change is assisting us in understanding which diseases are prevalent when it's dry or during heavy rains. That way, we can increase awareness of which of the diseases that commonly occur in Mandera, especially malaria, dengue fever, and cholera, are likely to spread depending on the season," are the sentiments of health assistants only identified as Nasra, Salima, Samlina and Ubah.

They are among over 100 Community Health Assistants (CHAs) from Mandera County in Kenya who are part of on-going country-wide training by Amref Health Africa to build capacity on essential skills to tackle health challenges.

This exemplifies the different layers of challenges that climate change creates for the health sector, not only altering disease spread and patterns but also complicating service delivery.

It is for this reason that at the just-ended 77th World Health Assembly (WHA 77) in Geneva, Switzerland, the 194 member states of the World Health Organization (WHO) adopted a historic resolution on Climate Change and Health.

The landmark decision marks a pivotal step in the global endeavor to protect communities from the diverse negative health impacts driven by climate change, as well as calling on the health sector to decarbonize.

The escalating climate crisis is a major driver of poor health outcomes, threatening to reverse five decades of progress in development, global health, and poverty reduction while exacerbating existing health disparities both between and within populations. The associated health damage costs are estimated to range between USD 2-4 billion annually by 2030. Regions with fragile health infrastructures, particularly in developing countries, will face the greatest challenges in coping without substantial assistance to bolster their preparedness and response capabilities.

"The movement to position health as 'the human face of climate change' has gained significant momentum with the adoption of this resolution, and I am profoundly optimistic about its transformative potential," said Dr. Githinji Gitahi, Group Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Amref Health Africa and the COP28 Climate and Health Envoy for Africa.

"This marks a pivotal moment where global leaders have formally acknowledged the urgent need to address the intertwined crises of environmental and public health with a unified, collaborative approach."



Community Health Assistants from Kenya

However, there is still some work to be undertaken, as health is not yet part of the mainstream agenda of climate negotiations at the global level. The health community has the daunting task of navigating its way into the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) processes for a comprehensive global agenda on climate and health.

It is worth noting, however, that there have been efforts at the global and regional levels, such as at COP26 in Glasgow, where the health community reached an important milestone in bringing human health to the forefront of climate change work, with initiatives to support countries in developing climate-resilient and low-carbon sustainable health systems.

At COP28, the Climate and Health Declaration articulated similar commitments, including pledges of financial support to the sector in support of climate and health actions.

At the 60th session of the UN Climate Change Subsidiary Bodies (SB60) in Bonn, Germany, the African constituency is seeking ways to actively engage in the discourse and ensure that Africa's interests in relation to the impacts of climate change on health are well noted.

During the preparatory meeting of the African Group of Negotiators prior to the SB60, AGN outgoing Chair, Zambia, raised the climate and health agenda and encouraged negotiators to take keen interest and actively engage in the climate and health discourse to set Africa's agenda, particularly in the Global Goal on Adaptation's UAE-Belem work program on indicators where health is one of the thematic targets.

"A crucial point for us to ponder under the UAE-Belem work program is the inclusion of health as one of the thematic targets. Instead of waiting for this agenda to be set by others, we should, as a group, be actively involved. The work program offers a window for us to input in terms of how health should be mainstreamed into climate negotiations. As AGN, we have the AAI,

which stands out as a shining example of our capacity to set our own agenda in these processes," said Dr. Alick Muvundika, representing Zambia, as outgoing Chair of the AGN.

Paragraph 9(c) of the GGA decision at COP28 urges Parties and invites non-Party stakeholders to pursue the objectives of the GGA and increase ambition and enhance adaptation action and support in order to accelerate swift action at scale and at all levels, from local to global, in alignment with other global frameworks, towards; attaining resilience against climate change-related health impacts, promoting climate-resilient health services, and significantly reducing climate-related morbidity and mortality, particularly in the most vulnerable communities.

In view of the decision, the health sector in Africa, led by Amref Health Africa and partners, is leading efforts in support of Africa's active engagement in the UAE-Belem Work program on indicators for the GGA framework, as well as general technical support for mainstreaming health in climate policies and plans.

During a meeting of African Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) with AGN Chair at the on-going SB60, Amref Health Africa Director for Population Health and Environment, Martin Muchangi, said climate change is complicating health interventions and delivery, adding that "the visible impacts highlight that health is the human face of climate change."

Muchangi briefed the AGN Chair on Amref's availability and readiness to support the group to ensure that the yet-to-be developed indicators and related metrics of the health thematic target in the GGA framework would be in line with Africa's aspirations in view of the continent's unique circumstances and vulnerability.

"Amref and partners stand ready to support and ensure that the impacts of climate change on health are systematically addressed through investments, capacity building, building strong and resilient health systems,

and ensuring that the voice of reason and science gets us where we want to be," added Muchangi.

And AGN Chair Ali Mohamed welcomed the World Health Organization (WHO) resolution on climate and health, saying it was a step in the right direction.

Ambassador Mohamed challenged CSOs to heavily invest in research for Africa's positions to be founded on well-grounded evidence, saying the continent continues grappling with climate-induced challenges, thereby worsening most countries' debt portfolios.

"I am aware of the climate and health agenda as the WHO passed a resolution last week. This is a welcome move amid the visible impacts of climate change on health. The impacts on infrastructure, water and all other sectors are ultimately on human health. For us, health is one of the thematic targets of the Global Goal on Adaptation and we are ready as a group to engage further on the matter," said the AGN Chair.

"My plea is for us, and I challenge you as CSOs to invest in research. Let's generate a formidable base of evidence, building on the existing evidence base of Africa's vulnerability and disproportionate impacts of climate change so that our arguments in these processes are well informed and clear," added ambassador Mohamed.

Amidst all this, a recent report by the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), titled "Building Africa's Resilience to Global Economic Shocks," indicates that climate shocks generally are highly correlated with the cyclical component of GDP growth and not with the long-term trend in Africa, which suggests that part of the volatility observed in growth emanates from climate-induced shocks.

With the situation already volatile, as highlighted, stakeholders continue to seek integrated interventions, including the mainstreaming of health in climate policies and plans.

SOURCE: INTER PRESS SERVICE

Law & Politics

Re-architecting global financial institutions

BY DANIEL ALEMAYEHU

Calls to alter the current international system have been loud and clear, especially from the global south, and the organs under scrutiny have predominantly been the financial institutions and the Security Council.

Criticized for becoming their financiers' weapon mainly, deliberate financial institutions are viewed as being unjust to borrowing countries.

The financial architecture of the world is as old as time and has been criticized by many parties as it has little or no room for those poor and developing nations to benefit and get fair service from the institutions. Countries in all continents, especially the African continent, call for the reforming of financial organs.

Global financial institutions have been widely seen as pawns of their financiers becoming biased towards developing nations and ill-treating borrowing nations. The injustice and unfair practices engulfing financial institutions have been forcing nations to find alternative means of finance. And the emergence of blocs like BRICS has already created options for nations to collaborate financially.

Developing countries like Ethiopia come under huge pressure to access finance as lenders come up with credits and loans with strings attached. And, joining the BRICS alliance brings lofty dividends not only to the nation but also to the bloc. Apart from striking a balance in the international system, the expansion of alternative international cooperation fosters trade.

Since the world changed its currency from gold reserves to US dollars, the financial structure of the globe has turned its face to another direction where debt is the key financial system.

Even major economic powerhouses of the world use debt to lead their states. Countries like the United States of America even have billions of debt. However, the essence of debt for those economic superpowers is completely different from those poor and developing nations.

Last April, African ministers and senior officials at the tenth session of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development (ARFSD-10) called for timely reform of the global financial institutions and architecture for sustainable development and financing for development in Africa.

This according to the ministers will be the unified African message to the Summit of the Future to be held in September 2024 in New York. The message, which comprises commitments aligned with Africa's priorities, is to be delivered as part of the planned pact of the future to be delivered at the Summit.

Recently, Ethiopia's application for membership in the New Development Bank (NDB) has received backing from the founding countries of the BRICS economic group

In their declaration on the effective delivery of sustainable, resilient and innovative solutions to reinforce the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 and to eradicate poverty in times of multiple crises released at the closing of ARFSD-10 in Addis Ababa, the ministers called upon the participants at the Summit of the Future to consider and adopt, as part of the planned pact of the future, the reforms for sustainable development and financing for development in Africa.

"The summit should ensure the timely reform of the global financial institutions and architecture to make them fit for purpose and able to serve the interests of Africa and developing countries elsewhere in the world," reads the declaration.

The declaration was agreed against the backdrop of the serious challenges being faced by African countries, including threats to inclusive, sustainable and resilient

growth posed by conflict and instability, inadequate sustainable financing, debt stress, illicit financial flows, profit shifting, climate change, the loss of biodiversity, land degradation and pollution and human rights violations.

The declaration calls for the need to ensure the existence of global financing mechanisms that give African and other developing countries access to adequate and equitable concessional financing and to affordable market-based resources to accelerate sustainable development. In addition, there is a need to reform international tax governance.

Delivering her closing remarks at the ARFSD-10, Hanan Morsy, Deputy Executive Secretary and Chief Economist of the Economic Commission for Africa, said Africa has an opportunity to reverse trends and accelerate action towards realizing the SDGs and the Africa We Want by ensuring access to basic social services, generating job creation, and putting in place social protection and safety nets to reduce vulnerabilities and inequalities.

She stressed that Africa cannot achieve the SDGs and Agenda 2063 without finances. The ministers expressed their concern at the serious challenges that African countries face in accessing climate finance and at the high cost that they pay to mobilize capital from the private sector for investment, despite the multiplicity of climate-related funds to finance climate projects in emerging economies and developing countries by 2030 to achieve the SDGs by 2030.

In what could be seen as a positive move, the emergence of BRICS and other organizations is enabling countries to explore new funding options.

Blocs like BRICS might act as alternative sources of funding due to their large portion of the worldwide population and the global economy. Recently, Ethiopia's application for membership in the New Development Bank (NDB) has received backing from the founding countries of the BRICS economic group.

On the occasion, BRICS Foreign Ministers included Ethiopia's perspectives, advocating for seamless integration of Ethiopia and other new members into BRICS and the New Development Bank.

The Foreign Minister of Ethiopia, Taye Atske Selassie, headed a high-level team that attended the BRICS Foreign Ministers' Forum.

MoFA Spokesperson Nebiyu Tedla (Amb.) told journalists that the founding members of BRICS, including Russia, China, and Brazil, have committed to supporting Ethiopia's bid for NDB membership.

"BRICS members will support Ethiopia's and other new entrant's aspiration to join the New Development Bank, as stated during the joint announcement following the summit's conclusion."

He also highlighted that the joint announcement directed Ethiopia and other new BRICS member states to receive support to join the NDB based on their financial capabilities.

Foreign Minister Taye reportedly emphasized Ethiopia's aspiration within the BRICS framework during the summit. "The ongoing geopolitical tensions among superpowers are affecting developing countries. Ethiopia believes in the need for a genuine global partnership. In this regard, the Foreign Minister urged BRICS members to craft constructive mechanisms to navigate these geopolitical challenges," Nebiyu elaborated.

Speaking of debt, Africa is experiencing the hardest time doing things with its finances. The continent indeed gets much of its finance from various donors including international financial institutions. Though such funds have the potential to fill some gaps for those nations, they also backfire their negative consequences on those borrowers.

Similarly, Taye Atske Selassie discussed with the Executive Secretary of the UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), Claver Gatete on strategic areas of importance.

Their discussion focused on strengthening collaboration between Ethiopia and ECA in strategic areas of importance defined by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, such as innovation, statistical data, social development and macroeconomic development.

On the occasion, Claver Gatete noted that ahead of the opening of 'Africa Hall in October 2024, the government of Ethiopia and ECA will collaborate on marketing and linking this iconic masterpiece to other strategic sites of historical, research and touristic importance – Africa Hall -An iconic spot to tell Africa's story.

With Ethiopia's leadership in the Financing for Development (FFD) agenda, the two dignitaries agreed on the importance of Africa's finance ministers in the FFD2025 preparations for meaningful financial traction and voice, ahead of the Summit of the Future, to be held in September 2024 under an overarching theme "Multilateral Solutions for a Better Tomorrow".

Their discussion also stressed the imperative for Africa's strong voice to be heard on Global Financial Architecture (GFA) reform.

The ECA Executive Secretary noted that high indebtedness is a bombshell on development, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and AU Agenda 2063 and the global economy. Concessional lending is not enough.

Gatete posted on X that: "Credit rating is impacting on affordable financing and investment grading." Failure to reform the GFA is not an option, the executive secretary underscored.

INTERNATIONAL News



Cattle keepers entering Rwanda from Tanzania at Rusumo border

Tanzania meat export surged significantly in 2023, Livestock ministry says

Tanzania's meat exports have seen a significant rise, jumping from 1,774.3 tonnes in 2022 to 14,701.2 tonnes in 2023, Minister of Livestock and Fisheries Abdallah Ulega said Monday.

Ulega said the growth in meat exports attributed to the government's efforts to revitalise the livestock sector, including a substantial increase in budget allocation for the sector, rising from Tsh32.1 billion (about \$12.2 million) in the 2021/2022 fiscal year to Tsh112 billion shillings

(about \$42.6 million) in the 2023/2024 fiscal year.

Speaking at the launch of the World Bank's The 21st Tanzania Economic Update Report in Dar es Salaam, which focuses on the livestock sector, Ulega said Tanzania's development of critical infrastructures is important for enhancing the transportation of livestock and related products to both domestic and international markets.

Furthermore, Ulega said Tanzania has undertaken major legal and regulatory

reforms aimed at creating a conducive business environment, facilitating the trade of livestock and livestock products while ensuring that the private sector operates in a favorable and predictable business climate.

According to the World Bank, Tanzania currently boasts a cattle population of 36.6 million, making it the second-largest cattle population in Africa after Ethiopia.

Source: The East African

AfDB puts Rwandan water project on notice

The African Development Bank (AfDB) has put on close watch a \$145.8 million water project in Rwanda due to procurement delays that have stalled the project.

The Rwanda Sustainable Water Supply and Sanitation project, which benefited from a \$122.9 million loan from the AfDB, now risks seeing the exit of the Pan-African lender, which has now categorised it as a "potentially problematic project".

The bank has so far disbursed to the Water and Sanitation Corporation of Rwanda – the implementing agency – only 15.5 percent of the loan amount, and its exit from the project could plunge it into financial difficulties and jeopardise its success.

"The main challenge under this programme is the long delays in the preparation of feasibility and design studies by the consultants and contract management," the bank noted in an implementation progress report for the project published on June 17.

"The programme is red flagged because of slow procurement and low disbursement," it added.

Source: The east African

Botswana Is Africa's Top Mining Destination

Botswana has once again emerged as the top mining jurisdiction from both global and African perspective having ranked in the top 10 of best mining destination in the world and number one jurisdiction in Africa, according to the 2023 Fraser Institute Annual Survey of Mining Companies.

The Fraser Institute's Mining Survey is an informal survey that attempts to assess the perceptions of mining company executives about various optimal and sub-optimal public policies that might affect the hospitality of a jurisdiction to mining investment.

The Canadian-based think tank, Fraiser Institute, said Utah ranked first this year with the highest Policy Perception Index (PPI) score of 100, moving up from fourth place in the 2022 report. It also stated that Saskatchewan took the second spot that was held by Botswana in 2022.

Fraser Institute added that along with Utah and Saskatchewan, the top 10 ranked jurisdictions are Manitoba, Botswana, Nevada, Quebec, Arizona, Finland, Wyoming, and Alberta.

The United States and Canada have the most



jurisdictions (4 each) in the top 10 followed by Africa (1) and Europe (1). Overall, the survey highlighted that Botswana is the highest ranked jurisdiction in Africa based on policy, ranking 4th (of 86) on the PPI in 2023. "Botswana's lower PPI score this year (-5.6 points) reflects increasing concerns about skilled labour (+15 points), infrastructure (+9 points), its geological

database (+9 points) and uncertainty concerning protected areas (+9 points)," said the researchers.

It also said this year, Botswana dropped several places in the Investment Attractiveness Index and ranks 15th (out of 86) after ranking among the top 10 jurisdictions last year. Fraser Institute researchers indicated that Morocco is the

second most attractive jurisdiction in Africa for both overall investment and policy only. The survey also said Morocco's PPI score increased by a little over 6 points and it now ranks 12th (of 86) this year, climbing

several spots from 17th (of 62) in 2022. "Investors expressed decreased concerns about uncertainty over the administration and enforcement of existing regulations (-40 points), political stability (-20 points), the country's legal system (-11 points), and uncertainty concerning disputed land claims (-11 points)," observed the survey.

In addition, the survey said South Africa's policy score increased by almost 11 points. However, its position dropped somewhat, and it ranks 64th out of 86 jurisdictions after ranking 53rd out of 62 in 2022. The survey said Zimbabwe, one of the lowest-ranked African jurisdictions on policy (78th out of 86) and one of the least attractive jurisdictions for mining investment globally (81st out of 86), experienced a 24-point increase in its policy score this year.

Source: The east African

Planet Earth

Ethiopia's exemplary deed to withstand climate change

BY GIRMACHEW GASHAW

Recognizing the severity of climate change's impact, Ethiopia has been taking various measures to withstand the growing effects of climate change. Nowadays, Africa, in general, and East African countries are facing natural disasters due to climate change, resulting in the residents of the continent bearing the consequences. Despite the fact that large industries of the western countries are emitting carbons, they are not contributing to the efforts to mitigate climate change.

In recent years, Ethiopia has emerged as a beacon of hope in the global fight against climate change through its ambitious Green Legacy Initiative. Launched in 2019 under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, this initiative aims to combat environmental degradation and deforestation by planting billions of trees across the country. Ethiopia's commitment to reforestation not only addresses local environmental challenges but also sets a significant example for the rest of the world in sustainable development and climate action.

Over the past five years, Ethiopia has successfully planted an astonishing 32 billion tree seedlings across the country. This extensive reforestation effort has been instrumental in restoring degraded landscapes, mitigating the impacts of climate change, and preserving the nation's rich biodiversity. Impressively, 90% of these planted seedlings have effectively grown, demonstrating the initiative's tangible impact on the environment.

In a display of unprecedented commitment, Ethiopia set a world record last year by planting 566 million tree seedlings in a single day. This extraordinary achievement not only highlighted Ethiopia's dedication to environmental sustainability but also garnered international attention and support for its reforestation efforts.

The success of the Green Legacy Initiative is rooted in its inclusive and community-driven approach. During the first phase of the initiative, an astounding 20 million people actively participated in tree-planting activities, showcasing widespread grassroots engagement and environmental stewardship. As Ethiopia enters the second phase of the initiative, plans are underway to plant an additional 25 billion tree seedlings, aiming to further expand forest cover and enhance ecosystem resilience.

In 2024, Ethiopia has set a target to plant 7.5 billion tree seedlings, marking another significant step towards achieving its reforestation goals. Looking ahead, the country aims to reach an ambitious milestone of 50 billion planted tree seedlings by the end of the next two years. This forward-looking strategy underscores Ethiopia's steadfast commitment to environmental conservation and sustainable development, positioning the nation as a global leader in climate action.

Of the seedlings planted in the fifth round of the Green Legacy Initiative of Ethiopia, the growing level has reached 90 percent, according to the Ministry of Agriculture.



Fekadu Berhanu, the Head of the Ecosystem Soil Water Conservation and Communal Agriculture Desk at the Ministry of Natural Resources Development, Protection, and Utilization, told Ethiopia Press Agency that the Ministry has completed the first phase of evaluation on the development of seedlings. Accordingly, the seedlings' development level has reached 90.4 percent.

Indicating that such evaluations are conducted twice a year, the director added that this year's development level is significantly higher than in previous years. The level of progress is increasing year by year; in the previous assessment, the seedling development level did not exceed the 80s. The society's sense of belongingness is a significant reason for the increase.

Serious tasks have been undertaken in the care and treatment of the seedlings, leading to an improvement in their development level.

Ethiopia's Green Legacy Initiative, a national reforestation program, is preparing to plant more than 6.5 billion tree seedlings this upcoming planting season, according to Adefres Worku, the Coordinator of the Initiative's Technical Committee.

The program has already mapped 504,000 hectares of land out of the 1.8 million hectares where soil and water conservation efforts have been undertaken to prepare the sites for planting. This massive reforestation effort is part of Ethiopia's broader strategy to address deforestation and ensure food security.

Data from 2000 to 2013 indicates that the country was losing an average of 92,000 hectares of forest cover annually. However, the Green Legacy Initiative aims to reverse this trend by preventing further degradation and increasing the nation's forest cover.

Beyond environmental protection, the initiative highlights the multifaceted benefits of the program, such as creating job opportunities in nurseries, as well as in sectors like animal husbandry, beekeeping, poultry farming, and fruit and vegetable production.

The initiative is also expected to bolster Ethiopia's international standing as a

leader in climate change mitigation. Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed's administration is spearheading the Green Legacy Initiative, building on the lessons learned from previous years.

The program has inspired neighboring countries, and plans are underway to launch the initiative on a weekly and monthly basis with the participation of Ethiopian citizens. Furthermore, the government has submitted a request to the Guinness Book of World Records to recognize the initiative's ambitious goal of mass tree planting, where millions of Ethiopians are expected to participate.

The Green Legacy Initiative is poised to deliver multifaceted benefits to Ethiopia's economy, society, diplomacy, and overall efforts to combat the impacts of climate change.

Ethiopia's Green Legacy Initiative has become a critical demonstration in the efforts to withstand climate change impacts, and many international organizations have witnessed the aforementioned truth. Agnes Kijazi, the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) Director for the Regional Office for Africa (RAF), is one of them.

Kijazi told local media that climate change is a global threat, as African countries are being severely tested. Regarding Ethiopia's continued efforts in the Green Legacy program, she said that the Green Legacy Initiative is resulting in a remarkable outcome to mitigate the impacts of climate change.

Ethiopia's Green Legacy development is a clear manifestation of resisting the climate-induced impacts, she said, stressing the need for global collaboration to resolve the problem in a sustainable manner.

"I would like to appreciate and congratulate the government of Ethiopia for this action of planting trees. The more trees you have, the more carbon you will take from the atmosphere.

Ethiopia is doing a very good job in planting these trees, and we encourage other members in Africa to do the same. We have a number of countries that are planting trees, but they can also learn how Ethiopia

is doing."

The Director stated that the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) Regional Office for Africa is supporting countries on the continent to develop a strong early warning system.

"For Africa, what we are doing now as WMO to support members in Africa is to make sure that we have very good early warning services. Having early warning services is a way to adapt for people to know that disaster is coming. So, we are enhancing early warning services as part of adaptation to these challenges of climate change."

Fetene Teshome, the Director General of the Ethiopian Meteorology Institute (EMI), noted that the Green Legacy program is being carried out with special attention as a developmental framework that enables mitigating the impacts of climate change.

The Green Legacy program is instrumental in preventing climate change and maintaining a sustainable ecosystem as Ethiopia's forest coverage has recently reached 23.6 percent, according to Ethiopian Forest Development.

As Ethiopia continues to lead by example, the 2024 launch of the Green Legacy Initiative reinforces the country's role as a global leader in environmental stewardship and underscores the urgency of collective action in addressing climate challenges worldwide.

Apart from ecological benefits, such as improved soil fertility and enhanced water retention, the Green Legacy Initiative has also generated socio-economic opportunities for millions of Ethiopians. Reforestation efforts have created jobs in rural communities, particularly benefiting women and youth, and contributed to poverty reduction and economic growth.

Ethiopia's Green Legacy Initiative serves as a beacon of hope and inspiration for the world, demonstrating the transformative power of collective action in addressing global environmental challenges. By scaling up tree-planting efforts and fostering partnerships, Ethiopia continues to pave the way towards a greener, more sustainable future for its people and the planet as a whole.