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Premier comforts grieving families of landslide victims

BY STAFF REPORTER

ADDIS ABABA— Prime Minister Abiy

Ahmed condoled with families and relatives of victims of the landslide in Geze Gofa Woreda of Gofa Zone in South Ethiopia State.

First Lady Zinash Tayachew and other Senior government officials accompanied the Prime Minister in his condolence visit to families of the victims yesterday.

Gov't commits
to continuing support,
Rehabilitation in Gofa

- UAE donates 85 ton food, non-food items for Gofa district

BY BETELHEM BEDLU

ADDIS ABABA— The government is committed to providing the necessary support as well as rehabilitate the people that have been affected by

See Gov't commits ... page 4

Ethiopia expects reform on Int'l climate financing

BY YESUF ENDRIS

As the Fourth Financing for Development Conference approaches, developing countries, including Ethiopia, have been voicing strong calls for reforms of international funding mechanisms. At the first preparatory conference for FfD4, which concluded last Friday, Ethiopia argued that current climate financing systems are inadequate to address the growing climate crisis.

Many participants of the preparatory conference, including the United Nations Deputy Secretary-General, Amina Mohammed, emphasized the need for new approaches that would enable more equitable and effective financial support for countries combating climate change.

The upcoming main conference on
See Ethiopia expects ... page 4



Int'l community expresses condolence, support over landslide in Ethiopia

BY STAFF REPORTER

ADDIS ABABA — Countries and international organizations have extended condolences and support on the life loss

induced by landslide occurred in southern Ethiopia, as the country is in a three-day national mourning.

Following the occurrence of a landslide in Gofa Zone of South Ethiopia state that took

the life of over 200 people, the country is mourning the death of citizens for three days since Saturday. Accordingly, international organizations and countries

See Int'l community expresses... page 4



ESL earns over 57 bln Birr in last FY

• Registers over eight bln Birr profit

ADDIS ABABA- The Ethiopian Shipping and Logistics (ESL) said it has secured some 57.14 billion Birr of its plan of collecting 51.6 billion Birr during the last Ethiopian Fiscal Year (FY).

During his recent press briefing, ESL Chief Executive Officer Beriso Amelo(PhD) mentioned that ESL has earned over 8 billion Birr profit before tax exceeding its plan 6.70 billion Birr profit by 132percent.

With regard to its foreign currency earnings, he said ESL was able to collect some 420.67million USD surpassing its plan of collecting 356.02 million USD.

Apart from its ten ships, ESL CEO highlighted that they have bought two boats that are already arrived at Bahirdar (LakeTana) from Djibouti port; while planning to purchase around six ships.

ESL has set a plan to increase its earnings from 57.14 billion Birr to 70.64 billion Birr in this budget year. Moreover, it is planned to increase its profit from 8 billion Birr to 9.20 billion Birr.

Increasing number of containers from 13,635 to 28,184, enhancing container terminal capacity from 63.73 ton to 66.13ton, as well as improving multimodal transported vehicle to 444 is part of the major plan of the coming year.

Similarly, ESL has planned to increase number of passengers transported by sea and improve sea cargo to 126,000 and 15,000 ton respectively, as to him. There is also a plan to increase Unimodal export cargo from 381,545ton to 392,800ton.

While enhancing capacity of transportation of cargo, inland transportation and generation of foreign currency through cross trade are part of the best performance, he said obstacles of ship's movement due to red sea crisis, decrease in the volume of multimodal cargo, and delay of transporting empty containers due to decreasing turnaround of rail transport, are among the major challenges witnessed in the budget year.

The CEO further highlighted that instability in some parts of the country remained a major challenge in the sector.

AFLEX promoting national consensus via empowering leadership

BY TSEGAYE TILAHUN

ADDIS ABABA –Leadership training has enabled Ethiopia promote harmony and social justice, African Leadership Excellence Academy (AFLEX) said citing the role it is playing in promoting national consensus through empowering local leaders.

Academy Deputy President Wondiye Legesse (PhD) told the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) that the AFLEX has been playing a critical role by empowering and shaping leaders' political culture and attitude to promote national consensus.

In the just ended Ethiopian fiscal year, it has provided skill building training to over 5, 000 high and mid level local leaders as well as Africans, he expressed.

The training courses would boost leadership competence preparing curriculum, he said adding that AFLEX has been also partnering with various institutions to



Wondiye Legesse (PhD)

develop skill and knowledge depending on interest of institutions.

The Academy has been drafting some 38 education programs to train African and local leaders, Wondiye said mentioning that the works are focusing on correcting wrong narratives of local leaders to consolidate national consensus.

Moreover, the Academy's training service has been not only saving leader's training cost abroad, it has been contributing to generate foreign exchange earnings, he added.

Furthermore, the AFLEX is committed to expand and modernize its training to contribute to overcome country's shortage of foreign exchange. In the just ended fiscal year, it trained 110 South Sudanese leaders in two rounds, he stated.

The Deputy President believed that the Academy's effort to develop African leaders' competency has been playing a critical role to ensure good governance in the African continent.

AFLEX's leadership excellence training has multifaceted national, regional and continental benefits in build democratic system and ensuring good governance. It would contribute nearby investors to engage in infrastructure development activities as well as it encourages them to invest thereby, he noted.



Participating PWDs in Nat'l Dialogue indispensable for inclusivity: ENDC

BY MESERET BEHAILU

ADAMA –Ethiopia is taking significant measures to participate Persons With Disabilities (PWDs) in the National Dialogue that has been taking place to resolve its multifaceted problems, Ethiopian National Dialogue Commission (ENDC) said.

The Commission in collaboration with the Federation of Ethiopian Associations of Persons With Disabilities (FEAPD), has organized a two-day discussion forum under the theme "Our Agenda for Tomorrow."

On the occasion, ENDC Chief Commissioner Prof. Mesfin Araya said that the commission has been carrying out various activities to ensure national consensus withstanding many challenges.

According to him, PWDs should be part of the National Dialogue to bring the expected result for lasting peace and national development.

"That is why the commission has received their requests and organized the two days discussion program aiming at realizing national consensus and common goals," he said.

He further stated that dialogue is the only option to realize the national interest so that the ENDC is striving to achieve this objective and make consultation a culture among the people.

Prof. Mesfin also underlined that all concerned bodies should play their part to realize fruitful outcome in National Dialogue process.

The FEAPD Director General Abayneh Gojo on his part said that participating PWDs in the discussion makes the National Dialogue a unique platform that resolve country's problems with joint efforts.

He believed that the ENDC is undertaking an inclusive and participatory National Dialogue to overcome historic, social, economic and political discords.

Abayneh also pledged his Federation's support to promote commission's activities through contributing agendas for lasting peace and reconciliation.

If the nation needs to conduct a meaningful National Dialogue, PWDs should be part of the process and contribute their part as this segment of the society is vulnerable to difficulties in the time of conflict and natural disaster, he stressed.

Editorial

Opinion

An all-out support, research, preemptive measures, sensitization works are called for

Though Ethiopia's being owner of multifaceted natural gifts that benefit its people, it is occasionally hit by drought that comes in tandem with dry season as well as floods and landslides that attend rainy seasons with heavy downpours. As such, at times, citizens are witnessed sustaining injuries and property destruction. The 1985 famine and the DireDewa flood with heavy death tolls are indelibly printed in the minds of citizens as big examples of natural disasters in Ethiopia. They did show Ethiopians fast humanitarian gestures and conviction of standing united even in rainy days. They as well had brought to the limelight the country's disaster prevention capabilities and how it should be strengthened.

Lately, in a landslide that occurred in the southern part of Ethiopia, (Gofa Zone Geze Gofa Wereda) the aforementioned natural tragedy has occurred. The calamity has saddened and shocked many Ethiopians. The Ethiopian government has expressed condolence and wished solace to the bereaved. The government has established a committee closely headed by the PM so as to extend all necessary help such as food, medicine and utensils to displaced and injured people quickly and accurately. Exhuming the bodies of victims from the disaster sites, it is letting them a proper burial. The House of Peoples Representatives has declared a national three-day mourning period starting from Friday. The House has made clear it is expressing its sorrow and support in various ways. As per the decision the national flag of Ethiopia is flying at half-mast in all regions of the country, in Ethiopian ships, in Ethiopian embassies and consulates till Monday.

In response to the disaster the swift and tangible measures the government is taking must be consolidated. For this to take shape, an all-out temporarily and permanent troubleshooting task is called for. For those displaced from their abode a day-to-day support is obligatory until they get themselves back on their feet. Though the support from Ethiopians so far is commendable there is a lot to be desired. As this case is a humanitarian issue triggered by a natural disaster that could surface indiscriminately across the global, a philanthropic global support is exigent. A helping hand is expected from the global community too.

As part of the repercussions preemptive measures of disasters, studies must be conducted to pinpoint areas to consecutive landslides so as to fens them off from inhabitants. Also the muscle and readiness must be there to quickly rescue people and avoid further hustles victims may undergo.

In areas where such disasters are possible, physical soil and water conservation works are recommendable. Towards the translation of this into actions, mindful the grotesqueness of the scenario, all stakeholders must be on their toes. Aside from relocating victims, ways must be sought to get them out of the trauma. Apart from the financial, food, medicine support, help from psychological experts is due.

A sensitization work on the cause and prevention task of similar disasters is a must-do than crying over spilt milk. When disasters strike apt response is also necessary from concerned bodies.

Soothing words are coming from all directions as the news has got a global coverage

The EAL Group: ultra-modern global air transport and the pace setter for pan Africanism in aviation services

BY SOLOMON DIBABA

Ethiopian Airlines Group(EAG) is Africa's largest and fastest-growing airline, with rich history that dates back to its establishment on December 21, 1945.

Ethiopian Airlines was founded on December 21, 1945, through collaboration between Emperor Haile Selassie and the American airline TWA (Trans World Airlines). The airline aimed to become a symbol of modernization and progress in Ethiopia.

The inaugural flight took place on April 8, 1946, with a five-seater Douglas C-47 Skytrain, connecting Addis Ababa to Cairo via Asmara. Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, Ethiopian Airlines expanded its fleet and route network, acquiring Douglas DC-3s and DC-6s and introducing flights to Nairobi, Khartoum, and Bombay (now Mumbai).

In the early 1960s, the airline entered the jet age by acquiring Boeing 720s, making it the first African airline to operate jet aircraft. The fleet further expanded in the 1970s and 1980s with the addition of Boeing 727s, 737s, and 767s. Despite some difficulties related to regime changes over the last 50 years, Ethiopian Airlines continued to grow and modernize its operations.

In 2011, Ethiopian Airlines joined Star Alliance, the world's largest global airline alliance, enhancing its connectivity and global reach.

Ethiopian Airlines has achieved numerous milestones and garnered several accolades over its history, establishing itself as a leading airline in Africa and a significant player in the global aviation industry.

Ethiopian Airlines Group boasts one of the youngest and most modern fleets in the industry, including Boeing 787 Dreamliners, Airbus A350s, and Boeing 777s. The airline operates over 120 international destinations across five continents and more than 60 domestic destinations, making it one of the most extensive networks in Africa.

Ethiopian Airlines Group has received several Skytrax World Airline Awards, including "Best Airline in Africa" and "Best Business Class in Africa." The airline has been consistently recognized by the African Airlines Association (AFRAA) for its operational excellence and contributions to the African aviation industry. It is to be recalled that recently the airline was globally certified as the safest airline in Africa and the world as well.

Ethiopian Airlines Group was the first African airline to operate the Boeing 787 Dreamliner. The airline was also the first in Africa to introduce the Airbus A350 XWB into its fleet. Ethiopian Airlines Group operates one of the largest cargo networks in Africa, with state-of-the-art facilities and services that include the transportation of perishable goods, pharmaceuticals, and live animals.

The airline has established the Ethiopian Aviation Academy, one of the leading aviation training centers in Africa, and operates comprehensive Maintenance, Repair, and Overhaul (MRO) services.

Ethiopian Airlines has a comprehensive training program that covers various aspects of aviation, ensuring that their employees are well-prepared for their roles. Here are some of the key training programs offered by Ethiopian Airlines. Ethiopian Airlines operates its own aviation academy, offering ab initio (initial) pilot training programs that lead to a commercial pilot license. This includes both theoretical and practical training. Pilots undergo type rating training for specific aircraft models, ensuring they are qualified to operate various types of aircraft within the fleet. Ethiopian Airlines Group does not train only Ethiopian pilots but provides such training services for future pilots across Africa.

New cabin crew members receive comprehensive training covering safety procedures, customer service, first aid, and emergency response. Cabin crew members undergo regular recurrent training to refresh their skills and stay updated with the latest safety and service protocols. Ethiopian Airlines offers extensive training for aircraft maintenance technicians, including courses on avionics, airframe, and power plant systems.

The airline provides specialized training for aircraft engineers, covering advanced topics in aircraft systems and maintenance practices. Training programs for flight dispatchers, operations control officers, and load controllers are conducted to ensure efficient and safe flight operations. Training for ground handling staff includes baggage handling, ramp operations, and customer service.

Ethiopian Airlines offers programs aimed at developing leadership and management skills among its employees. Training programs focus on quality assurance, safety management systems (SMS), and regulatory compliance. Training in customer service excellence is provided to ensure that all frontline staff delivers high-quality service to passengers.

Programs include training on cultural sensitivity and effective communication to enhance the passenger experience. Ethiopian Airlines Group is a gender affirmative company on its pilot training program. Today more than 40 female pilots are operating flights with the highest level of professionalism as jet aircraft commanders and on flight engineers.

The airline utilizes digital learning platforms to provide flexible and accessible training for its employees. Innovative training methods, such as virtual reality (VR), are employed for realistic simulation of various scenarios. Ethiopian Airlines partners with international aviation training organizations to enhance its training programs and maintain global standards. The airline offers scholarships and internship programs for aspiring aviation professionals.

Ethiopian Airlines Group has consistently reported strong financial performance, often posting profits in an industry that is known for its volatility. The airline has implemented various sustainability initiatives, including fuel-efficient fleet operations and a commitment to reducing carbon emissions to reduce the effects of climate change.

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



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Selamawit Kassa

Gov't commits...

the landslide that occurred in Geze Gofa District of South Ethiopia State, according to Government Communication Service (GCS).

Briefing the media regarding the ongoing support in the area, GCS State Minister Selamawit Kassa mentioned that around 60 million Birr in kind and financial support has been provided so far.

Addis Ababa city administration, states, partners, Banks, NGOs, public figures, celebrities as well as investors have contributed to the aforementioned support in kind and in cash.

She said that United Arab Emirates (UAE) has donated over 85ton of food and non-food items to the people affected by the landslide in Geze Gofa District.

"UAE has remained to be a good friend of Ethiopia in good and bad times. The government of Ethiopia values the relation and expresses its gratitude for the unwavering support to the country," she underscored.

So far, GCS disclosed that around 231 people have lost their lives, adding that, while the rescue team is in search of the bodies of 18 people who are said to have gone missing through the house to house search made by the team.

Moreover, some 500 people have been displaced due to the incident while around 6,000people are identified as the most vulnerable to similar situation.

As to her, the Federal Disaster Prevention Task Force has conducted a survey in two districts to identify most vulnerable areas. Of the 14,000people who live in the districts, the survey pointed out that around 6,000people in 4 areas need due attention and needs to be placed under temporary shelter.

Emphasizing that the government will further continue its support, the State Minister mentioned that the search of the bodies will continue along with the necessary support.

Prime Minister AbiyAhmed(PhD), First Lady ZinashTayachew and other senior officials have paid their respects in person to the families and community of victims of the Gofa Zone landslides which claimed the lives of a confirmed 231 people so far.

As per to the culture of the Gofa Zone, they have planted seedlings in the memory of those who lost their lives in the tragic incident.

Int'l community expresses..

are extending condolences and pledging support in rescuing and rehabilitating works.

The UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres expressed that he is deeply saddened by the loss of more than 200 lives in the south of Ethiopia following landslides triggered by heavy rains. He extended his sincere condolences to the families of the victims and to the people and Government of Ethiopia.

He posted on X that the UN and its partners are working closely with the government, evaluating the humanitarian situation to determine the extent of the damage and assess the humanitarian needs of the affected population. UN agencies are dispatching food, nutrition, health and other critical supplies to help people affected by the landslides.

"I'm deeply saddened by the loss of more than 200 lives in the south of Ethiopia following landslides triggered by heavy rains. UN agencies are dispatching food, nutrition, health and other critical supplies to help affected people," he wrote in a message posted on X on 25 July 2024.

Meanwhile the African Union through the chairperson of its commission expressed condolences and support rescue and rehabilitation efforts.

"Our hearts and prayers are with the families of the more than 231 community members who tragically lost their lives in devastating landslides following heavy rains in southern



Ethiopia's Gofa district. We stand in strong solidarity with the people and Government of Ethiopia as rescue efforts continue to find the missing and assist the displaced," AU's Commission Chairperson Moussa FakiMahamat posted on X on Jul 23, 2024.

Similarly, the European Union (EU) has also expressed sadness on the life lost because of the natural disaster and pledged support victim families. In a recent bilateral meeting with Planning and Development Minister Fitsum Assefa, EU International Partnership (INTPA) Director for Sustainable Finance Antti Karhunen, expressed readiness to help Ethiopia rescuing missed ones and rehabilitating displaced citizens because of the incident.

The director has expressed her sorrow over the recent loss of life in the landslide that occurred in Gofa Zone. The European Union is ready to offer financial assistance and has been coordinating with the committee established by the Federal Disaster Management Commission, she said.

Meanwhile, China has expressed sadness to the human and material loss caused by the landslide and promised support to Ethiopia. In a regular press conference held on 24 July 2024, Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Mao Ning said that the massive mudslide in Ethiopia have resulted in grave deaths and injuries and property loss so that China extends its sincere sympathies over the disaster and deep condolences for the victims.

As an all-weather strategic partners, China and Ethiopia always support each other in trying times and share weal and woe together, she said, adding that China stands ready to do what it can to assist the rescue and reconstruction in light of Ethiopia's needs.

Russia also expressed sympathy and support to Ethiopia regarding the natural disaster. Russian President Vladimir Putin extended deep condolences to Ethiopians over the tragic consequences of landslides in southern part of the country.



Ethiopia expects...

Financing for Development, scheduled to be held in Spain, is expected to advocate for crucial reforms and reshaping of financial funding to better serve developing countries affected by climate change, which is believed to be caused predominantly by developed nations.

United Nations Economic Commission Executive Secretary Claver Gatete strongly called for reforms within international financial institutions, criticizing them for their unbalanced contributions. He stated that the world has almost adequate resources to fight climate change but needs to distribute them fairly. "The international financial architecture created nearly 80 years ago needs to be reformed to respond to the most pressing challenges of African countries in a more effective and inclusive manner."

As one of the developing countries contributing less to the crisis, Ethiopia has criticized developed countries for their reluctance to fund environmental

projects. For example, the Green Legacy Initiative (GLI), through which Ethiopia has been planting billions of trees each year, has not received financial support from international funders, according to the Foreign Minister, TayeAtsekeselassie's speech on the opening the Ffd4 first preoperational conference.

Finance Minister Ahmed Shide also told journalists that Ethiopia expects better platforms to address the continuing financial constraints hindering developmental programs, including environmental conservation projects.

Ethiopian Ambassador to the United Nations, TesfayeYilama, also stated that Ethiopia expects meaningful decisions from the Spain conference of Ffd4. He emphasized that Ethiopia is not arguing solely for its interests. Developing countries, particularly in Africa, are victims of the international sovereign debt system, and developmental projects, including environmental ones, are affected

by a financial system that contradicts global missions.

Developing countries have similar complaints. Financial institutions like the IMF were founded by countries that won World War II. Developing countries now demanding funds are not represented in organizations like the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. The engagement of developing countries in these organizations is minimal or nonexistent. Consequently, decisions to fund developmental projects are based on the free will of funding countries.

Ongoing discussions under the framework of the United Nations' agencies are expected to bring some solutions, as the number of countries arguing for fair financing is growing.

Upcoming sessions of the preparatory committee will be held in the U.S., New York in December 2024, as well as in February and April 2025, according to UN report.

Opinion

Viable roadmap for addressing polarization, forging cohesive path

BY ADDISALEM MULAT

The Ethiopian government established National Dialogue Commission to build a 'common ground' among groups and citizens for dialogues on issues that matter in the course of its nation-building process, avert vicious circle of conflicts, and repair hostilities of various kinds through public dialogue and reconciliation processes with whole inclusive and participatory approach, according to an article.

The article goes on to say this ancient and 'never-colonized' African nation, internally, has gone through a 'breaking and making' perspective to nation-building episodes that challenged and misrepresented its authentic indigenous African statehood, contrary to its legacy in history. Obviously, the ideological fragmentation in the last half century of the country can be attributed to the manifestation of post-colonial and cold war political residuals.

It is further stated that whatever the cause, it is the most promising decision for Ethiopia to revisit its political history and craft its way forward for peace, stability, and prosperity given the sociopolitical context and the unresolved political ideologies polarizing and fragmenting the political landscape of this East African nation.

Establishing the National Dialogue Commission is not a unique experience for countries like Ethiopia, during and post-crisis situations, to seize such an approach to heal from the adverse consequences of the vicious circle of conflicts while dealing with the core causes of the same and securing peace and justice to the required levels.

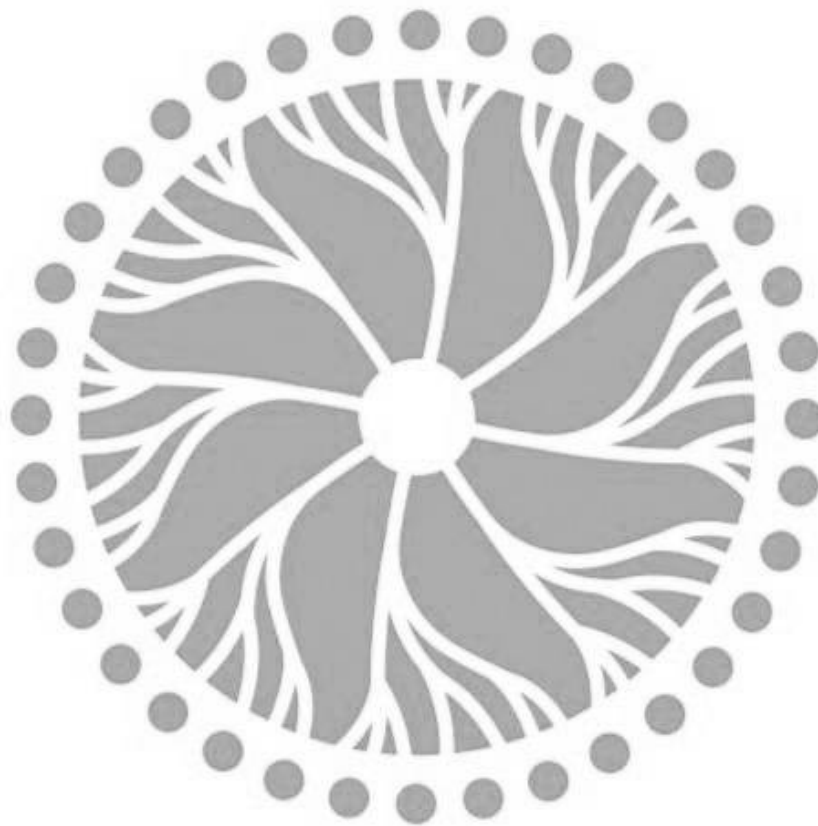
The Ethiopian National Dialogue Commission (ENDC) has announced that the agenda-gathering phase will be carried out in three regions, with city administration just around the corner.

ENDC Chief Commissioner, Professor Mesfin Araya recently emphasized that pastoralists, farmers and persons with disabilities must have the right to decide the future of their nation regardless of their educational or professional backgrounds. "They should not be left out of the National Dialogue process and other activities," he asserted.

He highlighted that an inclusive and participatory National Dialogue is crucial for resolving existing problems, addressing historical traumas through reconciliation and forgiveness, and deciding the nation's future. He noted that while elites, elders, or politicians typically decide on Ethiopia's direction, it is imperative for all people to have equal rights in this process.

The National Dialogue is open to youths, individuals with disabilities, and women, allowing them to discuss and decide on the nation's future. Prof. Mesfin added that Ethiopian people must understand, help, and listen to each other during the dialogue exercising their equal rights.

The Chief Commissioner underscored the significant role of youth in deciding the country's future and development. By participating in the national dialogue, youths can contribute to creating a conducive and peaceful environment. Since its inception, the ENDC has been striving to conduct an inclusive National Dialogue with active participation



from youth, people with disabilities, and women. According to the commission's establishment proclamation, all Ethiopian citizens are encouraged to participate equally in the dialogue designed to provide solutions to the nation's problems, Mesfin said.

In his press briefing, the Chief Commissioner said that the commission has already finalized the process of identifying participants in ten regions and two city administrations. The commission is also anticipated to complete the agenda gathering process in the remaining regions before 5th September 2024.

According to the Chief Commissioner, over the past two and half years, the Ethiopian National Dialogue Commission has carried out tremendous preparation activities in various phases to conduct a nationwide consultation with a view to addressing Ethiopia's multiple political challenges. He recalled that the process of agenda gathering in Addis Ababa was held successfully in the presence of participants drawn from 119 Woredas and over 2000 participants including various stakeholders.

Following the launch of the national dialogue in the capital in May 2024, the top agenda items on the table have been identified and refined. "We learned a lot from the Addis Ababa agenda gathering process," he said, adding that this lesson will be implemented during agenda gathering in the regions."

The agenda gathering process is continued where all segments of the society give their willingness for discussion on the agenda, Mesfin pointed out. Noting that various activities have been carried out to ensure participation of all stakeholders, the commissioner indicated that similar activities will be intensified in other parts of the country.

University Assistant Professor of Intercultural Communication Anteneh Tsegaye (PhD) in the recent past stated that those countries followed exclusive elite-based national dialogue have not been successful.

"For example, the national dialogue in Iraq

failed because it did not involve the majority of the population and focused only on scholars," he said, adding that most of the time, national dialogues that center exclusively on elites are unsuccessful.

The academician also insisted that the expected national dialogue in Ethiopia must be inclusive and involve the public at all structural level and brings significant actors like civil society leaders to the stage as inclusiveness is the central element during national dialogue.

Media outlets and journalists must play their part for an all-inclusive national dialogue ensuring that all voices are heard, he further stressed. There should be no topics that are not raised and discussed during the national dialogue; he said adding that it is up to the public to set agendas for discussion through the commission (the Ethiopian National Dialogue Commission).

"Recently, agendas are being set up through the media. This is not fair. Let us give the chance to the general public", he also explained.

As to the scholar, the national dialogue in Benin has been successful as the media organizations and journalists in the country had done a lot of work on the importance of the dialogue and other related issues by convincing influential persons and the public.

On the contrary, the national dialogue in Sudan failed because the media were severely controlled by the government and did not play their role properly, he added.

Speaking to local media, ENDC Commissioner Yonas Adaye (PhD) said lately that the commission is 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, 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.

ENDC Commissioner in the recent past told the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) that the commission considers commencing participants' identification in the two states whereby the security challenge has been largely resolved. In addition to the two states, four zones in the Central Ethiopia State have not yet been reached by the commission and it is working to commence operation there.

The ENDC has been covering Afar, Sidama, South West Ethiopia, Gambella, Benishangul-Gumuz, and most parts of the Oromia state so far. However, it is still not able to hold participants identification in Amhara and Tigray states. For that reason, the commission has attempted to commence similar activities in these two states especially in areas with relative peace.

Yonas cited the Global Peace Index (GPI) report that Benin, Kenya, and Tunisia have capitalized on the relative peace in parts of the country to save the whole nation from collateral damage. "Those countries are benchmarks to our ability to transform our country to enduring peace and unity."

He further stated that the ENDC held fruitful discussions with Ethiopian Diasporas residing in different parts of the world through various channels. On the basis thereof, the commission gained significant input from the Diaspora community, which helped it conduct a successful national dialogue.

"The commission has made consolidated efforts to ensure the inclusiveness of the dialogue and incorporate all segments of the society that are still in demand of representation."

Prof. Ahmed Zakaria, a historian, with respect to the issue said Ethiopia is experimenting with a new avenue to solve its quandary through dialogue. Besides, the country is big and diverse with mammoth experiences. Within communities, there is a lot of wisdom that we are going to share and solve our major national problems for better development, progress, and peace.

Ethiopia would be in a better position to discuss soberly and identify its problems by next year. Not only identifying problems, through the national dialogue Ethiopia can find medicine to solve its major national problems.

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

Business & Economy

Incredible expedition from manual to 5G dominance

BY LAKACHEW ATINAFU

The invention of the telephone was considered as superstitious matter as one turns the page of history and chronology about the sector's development. It is also a recent memory that people used to broadcast message standing in the nearby mountains to herald or mourn for relatives. Here is an article on the evolution of Ethio Telecom and its success in the telecommunications sector.

Documents unveiled that over the past two decades, the Ethiopian telecommunications landscape has undergone a remarkable transformation, with Ethio Telecom leading the charge. What was once a manually-operated, state-owned monopoly has blossomed into a highly capable, technologically-advanced service provider that has become the competent across Africa?

Ethio Telecom, formerly known as the Ethiopian Telecommunications Corporation (ETC), was established in 1894 under the reign of Emperor Menelik II. In its early days, the network relied on manual switching and routing, with operators physically connecting calls through a series of cables and switchboards. This labor-intensive process limited the network's capacity and service quality.

"When I first joined Ethio Telecom in the 1990s, we were still using these large mechanical switchboards to route calls," recalls Yared Tsegaye, a veteran engineer who has witnessed the company's evolution firsthand. "It was an arduous task, and our ability to scale the network was severely constrained."

The turn of the century marked a pivotal moment for Ethio Telecom. Recognizing the need to modernize its infrastructure, the company embarked on an ambitious digital transformation journey, investing heavily in network upgrades and the deployment of cutting-edge technologies.

"We knew we had to make a radical shift if we were to keep up with the growing demand for reliable, high-speed telecommunications services," Birhanu Regassa, Ethio Telecom's Chief Technology Officer said. "With the support of our government and strategic partners, we began transitioning our network to fully digital, IP-based systems."

Over the following decades, Ethio Telecom systematically upgraded its network, migrating from analog to digital switching, implementing fiber-optic backbones, and rolling out 2G, 3G, and 4G cellular technologies. This modernization not only improved service quality and coverage but also laid the foundation for future advancements, according to documents.

In 2022, Ethio Telecom made headlines when it became the first operator in Africa to launch a commercial 5G network. This milestone achievement underscored the



company's technical capabilities and its unwavering commitment to providing its customers with cutting-edge connectivity documents further said.

Ethio Telecom's evolution has had a profound impact on Ethiopia's social and economic development. By expanding access to reliable, high-speed internet and mobile services, the company has empowered citizens, businesses, and government agencies to unlock new opportunities and drive progress.

"Ethio Telecom has been a vital catalyst for Ethiopia's digital transformation," Yared Tsegaye said. "From telemedicine and e-government to mobile banking and Internet of Things (IoT) applications, our network has become the backbone that supports the country's transition to a more connected, technologically-advanced society."

As Ethio Telecom continues to innovate and push the boundaries of what's possible, the future of Ethiopia's telecommunications landscape looks brighter than ever before. With its impressive journey from manual operations to 5G dominance, the company has set a new standard for excellence in the African telecommunications industry.

State-owned Ethio telecom generated an impressive 93.7 billion Birr in revenue for the year 2023/2024, marking a 21.7% increase compared with the previous year.

This revenue surge, an increase of 16.7 billion Birr, achieved 103.6% of the company's targets in all key metrics, it was learned.

CEO of the company, Frehiwot Tamiru presented the company's annual business performance, revealing that net profit reached 21.79 billion Birr, reflecting a 20.9% growth from the previous year, achieving 108.7% of the target. The company also generated a total of 198 million USD from foreign exchange, a 20.7% increase, achieving 117.5% of its target.

Frehiwot noted significant savings

of over 4.5 billion Birr during the budget year, achieving 134% of the target. The company's unaudited report shows that Earnings before Interest, Tax, Depreciation, and Amortization (EBITDA) reached 42.44 billion Birr, a rate of 47%, achieving 102.4% of the target.

Ethio telecom transacted 1.81 trillion birr through telebirr during the budget year, with a total of 2.55 trillion Birr transacted since its launch in May 2021. The company expanded its customer base to 78.3 million, achieving 100.4% of its target, and telebirr subscribers reached 47.5 million, capturing 45.7% of Ethiopia's mobile money service users.

According to the CEO, the company's telecom coverage reached 99.2%, with geographic coverage at 85% and tele-density at 71%. Ethio telecom ranked 2nd among African operators and 17th globally. The company paid 29.76 billion Birr in taxes, 9.97 billion Birr in government dividends, and 3.4 billion Birr in foreign loans for previously held telecom expansion projects.

Frehiwot attributed the success to the commitment and effort of the company's leadership and employees. Efforts were made to enhance the capacity and coverage of telecom and digital infrastructure, including the expansion of 4G and 3G networks at numerous sites.

The 4G network now extends to an additional 124 cities and districts, increasing accessible 4G cities to 424, and the number of 5G stations has risen to 189.

Ethio Telecom, the state-owned telecommunications company in Ethiopia, has played a significant role in the transformation of the banking and financial sectors in the country. Here are some of the key contributions of Ethio Telecom to this transformation:

Improved Telecommunications Infrastructure: Ethio Telecom has been investing heavily in upgrading and expanding the country's telecommunications infrastructure,

including the deployment of high-speed internet and mobile networks. This has enabled banks and financial institutions to adopt and implement various digital financial services, such as mobile banking, internet banking, and electronic payment systems.

Mobile Money Services: Ethio Telecom's mobile money service, known as M-Birr, has been a game-changer in the financial sector. M-Birr allows users to perform a variety of financial transactions, such as money transfers, bill payments, and mobile top-ups, using their mobile phones. This service has significantly increased financial inclusion, particularly in rural and underserved areas.

Integration with Banking Systems: Ethio Telecom has worked closely with banks and financial institutions to integrate its telecommunications' services with their banking systems. This integration has enabled seamless transactions, improved efficiency, and reduced the need for physical branch visits, contributing to the overall digitalization of the financial sector.

Promoting Digital Literacy: Ethio Telecom has been actively involved in promoting digital literacy and financial education among the general population. This has helped to increase the adoption and usage of digital financial services, particularly in regions with limited access to traditional banking services.

Enabling Fintech Startups: The improved telecommunications' infrastructure and services provided by Ethio Telecom have fostered the growth of fintech startups in the country. These startups have been able to leverage the telecom's capabilities to develop innovative financial solutions and services, further transforming the banking and financial sectors.

Overall, Ethio Telecom's contributions have been instrumental in driving the digital transformation of the banking and financial sectors in Ethiopia, enhancing financial inclusion, improving service delivery, and fostering the growth of the fintech ecosystem.

Planet Earth

Urban agriculture can address food insecurity if it utilizes clean water

BY FIKADU BELAY

Ethiopia has long faced with food insecurity, with a significant portion of the population lacking reliable access to adequate, nutritious food. However, in recent years, the country has made strides in addressing this challenge through innovative urban agriculture initiatives. These projects have sought to leverage the untapped potential of Ethiopia's urban centers to produce food and alleviate poverty and the burden on rural farming communities.

At the forefront of this movement are community-driven urban garden programs, which transform underutilized public spaces and private plots within cities into vibrant hubs of food production. By empowering local residents to cultivate their own fruits, vegetables, and herbs, these initiatives not only enhance household food security but also foster a sense of community and self-reliance.

Under these initiatives, the people are able to produce high yields of diverse crops within the boundaries of the city. By integrating renewable energy sources and water-efficient systems, they demonstrate the potential for sustainable, climate-smart food production in an urban setting.

Beyond cultivation, Ethiopian urban agriculture also encompasses innovative food distribution and processing models. These community-supported agriculture programs aim to bridge the gap between urban producers and consumers, ensuring that freshly harvested goods reach that in need. Meanwhile, small-scale food processing facilities enable the transformation of perishable items into shelf-stable products, reducing waste and increasing food security.

This initiative helps to end the rapid urbanization and population growth in many developing countries that have led to food insecurity and low incomes. However, the practice of urban agriculture often relies on the use of polluted water sources, which can have significant detrimental impacts on both human health and the environment.

The use of contaminated water for irrigation in urban agricultural settings can introduce a wide range of pathogens, heavy metals, and other toxic substances into the food chain. Consuming crops irrigated with polluted water can expose urban residents, especially the most vulnerable populations, to serious health risks such as gastrointestinal illnesses, heavy metal poisoning, and other chronic diseases.

According to some scholars, the rivers in the city are frequently polluted with harmful chemicals and industrial waste from nearby factories. The polluted rivers also receive large amounts of untreated sewage from residential areas, leading to a high level of disease spread in societies. This has serious implications for the city's



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ecosystem and the health of its residents.

The experts emphasized that agricultural products grown using irrigation water from these polluted rivers pose a significant health risk. The produce may be contaminated with hazardous chemicals

and microbes, making it unsafe for consumption. This is a major concern, as urban agriculture is becoming increasingly popular as a way to address food security in the city.

Addis Ababa University Ethiopian Water Resources Institute lecturer and researcher, Taye Alemayehu, discusses the critical issues of environmental protection and water pollution prevention in Ethiopia.

He stated that the demand for water is increasing as living standards and the population of citizens grows. This is especially prevalent in the lowland areas of the country, where conflicts between herdsmen are escalating in relation to water and cattle grazing.

He noted that even though there are relatively few industries in Ethiopia, these factories are being used to drain rivers, causing danger to citizens and animals. He stated that there should be strict control and regulation over the factories and hotels situated in the vicinity of lakes.

Despite Ethiopia's abundant water resources, Taye stated that 97% of the country's total water resources are being extracted and taken out of the country, leaving citizens to suffer from a lack of water. He stressed the importance of carrying out environmental protection initiatives in a scientific manner to ensure their effectiveness.

Eskedar Awugichew, the Executive Director of Eco-Justice Ethiopia, emphasized the importance of building an invulnerable lifestyle by utilizing indigenous knowledge, instead of solely relying on external actions to prevent climate change.

The Director-General stated that the pursuit of economic development without a proper understanding of environmental protection is harming the country. He mentioned that every citizen should be aware of environmental protection laws and actively advocate for their rights.

Beyond the direct health impacts, the use of polluted water in urban agriculture can also degrade the surrounding environment. Pollutants from irrigation runoff can contaminate local water bodies, soil, and air, disrupting ecosystems and reducing biodiversity. This can have far-reaching

consequences for the overall sustainability and livability of urban areas.

According to Taye, the youth should take the initiative in addressing climate change and environmental protection issues. He acknowledged that many water bodies are being destroyed due to irresponsible activities undertaken in the past few decades.

Servi Global's Deputy Country Director, Tariku Negash, highlighted that more than 45% of Ethiopia's population is youth, and this demographic should contribute to the country's development and the world at large. He explained that Servi Global is working on climate change, education, youth mental health, and other areas by organizing over 2,000 youth to gain understanding about various national and international issues.

He pointed out that the activities carried out by Servi Global's Green Legacy program can serve as a model for other countries. He emphasized the importance of making the youth understand the impact of climate change on citizens, rather than seeing it as a matter of modernity and entertainment.

Addressing the challenges posed by the use of polluted water in urban agriculture requires a multifaceted approach involving improved water treatment, enhanced monitoring and regulation, and the promotion of alternative, safer irrigation practices. Developing a deeper understanding of these complex issues is crucial to ensuring that urban food production remains a viable and sustainable solution for growing cities.

Furthermore, Ethiopia faces critical challenges in terms of environmental protection and water pollution prevention. Experts emphasize the need for strict regulations, youth engagement, and a scientific approach to address these issues effectively. The efforts underscore the importance of balancing economic development with environmental sustainability to ensure the well-being of Ethiopia's citizens and the preservation of its natural resources.

Besides, the experts emphasize that the government must prioritize the clean-up of the river systems and the overall urban environment before encouraging the expansion of agricultural production within the city limits. Comprehensive measures are needed to address the root causes of river pollution and ensure the safety of locally grown food.

Through the collective impact of these diverse urban agriculture projects, Ethiopia is steadily making progress in its quest for national food security. As the country continues to urbanize, these innovative approaches hold the promise of transforming cities into vibrant, self-sustaining food hubs - a crucial step in the country's journey towards a more food-secure future.

Art & Culture

Is Africa rising or slumbering? A few points for introspection

BY MULUGETA GUDETA

At the launching of OAU in 1961, Emperor Haile Selassie had made a visionary statement. “His welcoming address struck the keynotes of compromise and unity that guided the proceedings, thus: It was the duty and privilege of the delegates to rouse the slumbering Giant of Africa, not to the nationalism of Europe of the nineteenth century, not to regional consciousness, but to the vision of a single African brotherhood bending its united efforts towards the achievement of a greater and nobler goal. While we agree that the ultimate destiny of this continent lies in political union, we must at the same time recognize that the obstacles to be overcome in its achievement are at once numerous and formidable.”

Do we remember the days, weeks, and months when the call for the rise of Africa, embedded in the motto “Africa Rising” as a continent, was echoing not only in the corridors of authority but also in the streets of Africa and the black Diaspora in general? Do we remember that the new vision was born of or coincided with the transition from the Organization of African Unity to the new African Union? That was not certainly a time of coincidence, but something that was born of the boundless hopes and dreams of Africans who saw in that transition an opportunity to live their visions for the first time since the decolonization process took place, and the call for independence was replaced with the call for the complete political, economic, and social emancipation of our continent from growing poverty, rampant corruption, fratricidal conflicts, and spiritual bankruptcies.

As such it was a noble and visionary call. It was a timely call at a time when the rest of the world was forgetting or ignoring Africans as hopeless people who were condemned to look for crumbs from the tables of the rich nations and wait until their salvation would be postponed until they are mature enough to properly administer the donation as and aids that were sent to alleviate their hunger and not to make them feel full or put an end to their hungers and sufferings.

“Africa Rising!” was indeed a great slogan, a reflection of hope, although it was not clear at that time or even now whether Africa is rising or sleeping on the laurels of the victories it scored against colonialism. “Africa Rising!” was indeed a simple and powerful vision, a call for action, and an expression of the resilience and optimism of more than one billion people whose dreams were fading and whose existence was in jeopardy. Off course, the call for Africa to rise was a call for a holistic approach that first started with a radical diagnosis of the political, economic, and social ills from which the people of Africa were subjugated.

When the call for Africa to rise was made by politicians of all hues and colors, Africa was not sleeping. It was rather trying to wake up and had lost its direction or did

not know which direction to take in order to launch its program of deep reforms of its political systems. Politically, speaking, democracy in Africa was either totally absent or distorted and made dysfunctional and dividing lines between dictatorship and electoral politics were made dim and indistinct. Military coups were rampant and most of the coup makers disguised their unconstitutional actions in glittering democratic rhetoric.

Africa had indeed to rise from this kind of political brokenness and the absence of confidence in a possible redemption from outside the continent. Africa had to rise from its political slumber and elite control. African rising! Wad a call to rise against political stagnation and dysfunction. And it was to the point.

Africa was also slumbering on the other no less important front, which is economical in nature. When the motto was turned into a collective call for action, Africans were living with and trying to appease the demons of poverty, famines, joblessness and hopelessness. African agriculture produced less food than it was needed by the fast-growing population. The industrial sector in Africa had not even started to take baby steps and unemployment was rampant and the average annual incomes of most Africans were plummeting.

The fate of the average African families had worsened due to the population explosion and the crisis in the farm sector and in industry thereby darkening the prospects of educational opportunities and the chance to rise in society. African economic integration remained more a myth than a reality. Nationalism was rampant and African solidarity still remained on paper. A shared language did not expedite progress. “A shared language, although it provides for to deepen inter-state relations in any regional structure. Language barriers hindered trade which then slowed down Regional Integration schemes whilst language similarities failed to boost trade which is an essential component of Regional Integration.”

Socially, the traditional African rural communities had never seen their conditions improving and their traditions were under ceaseless attacks from foreign cultural and the foreign media that was portraying the continent a still dark one. The traditional values of hundreds of millions of Africans and their genuine aspirations for progress based on their traditions were neglected if not undermined by adverse foreign influences and domestic forces out of tune with the aspirations of most Africans. A social crisis had reached a severity unbearable to most Africans across the continent.

At the time of the announcement of the now overlooked or neglected “Africa Rising!” slogan, African culture was marginalized and overlooked and the ruling ideology that colonial cultural pundits inculcated was that Africa was considered not only open for cultural development but also unable to copy from others. According to this



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view, Africa as a continent had no culture worth speaking of and in a few cases, culture was recognized, it was considered backward, unable to stand by itself unless supported by the strong arms of the former colonialists or unless they were replaced by Western culture that should replace it as both a symbol and alternative of cultural development or modernization.

Although African traditional culture was languishing in obscurity and neglect what we may call African elite culture, that is to say the day to day practices as expressed in art and literature was in the process of explosion with intellectuals taking the front seat of such a promising development. African culture, expressed in many novels and creative writings in general had to wait three decades before it produced some of its best imaginations that put it on par with any literature in the World.

Meanwhile, traditional African culture remained entrapped in illiteracy and poverty. Despite the motto of “Africa Rising” African culture remained imprisoned in stagnation or serving as a feast for the eyes of the Western tourists who saw in it an opportunity to exploit it

for making illegal money in the legal and illegal cultural markets of the West.

Colonialism did not come to Africa only to occupy and control our natural resources although that was its ultimate objective. Colonialism first controlled the African mind and prepared it for accepting willingly, if not by force, colonial rule and colonial occupation. Occupation of the mind preceded territorial occupation. It sent missionaries from Europe to preach to them the doctrine of submission as if Africans had never had their own cultures, belief systems, and religions for thousands of years before the advent of foreign rule.

African education was thus tailored to reflect European educational systems that subtly promoted the idea that since Africans could not educate themselves or develop their educational programs, they needed to be tutored by educated Europeans whose educational systems were the only ones feasible for Africans.

Education was thus used as a formidable tool for undermining the African identities under a heap of European prejudices and Eurocentric biases. After independence in the 1960s, African leaders simply copied the European educational systems to govern their people the way the Europeans did by feeding them with the same diets of cultural prejudices and superiority that was carefully cultivated under direct colonial rule. Africa was subsequently divided into Francophone and Anglophone Africa and African culture was reshaped accordingly.

All in all, “Africa Rising!” remains a forgotten slogan gathering dust in the memories of Africans. True, there has been some progress made in the last couple of decades. But this progress is not commensurate with the expectations of millions of Africans, who might now be disillusioned as their experiences belie the promises. The solution well, let Africans discuss the issue, debate, and come up with novel ideas for making the slogan more in tune with the times and/or revisit it with a new African spirit.

Society

“If you educate a woman, you educate a nation”

BY LEULSEGED WORKU

When it comes to changing the behavior and attitude of individuals or groups regarding gender equality and equitability, there is no question that education will play a constructive role in bringing a radical change. This is especially true in most African societies where traditional beliefs and value systems restrict the role that girls and women play in their communities.

That is why policymakers and women's rights advocates agree with the fact that investing in women's and girls' education is not only a matter of basic rights but also a strategic imperative for Africa's development. By empowering women and girls through education, Africa can unlock its full potential, drive economic growth, and build more inclusive and equitable societies.

Seeing education's many-sided benefits, the First Pan African Conference on Girls' and Women's Education was recently held here in Addis Ababa.

At the event, several high-level AU and African countries officials, representatives of various agencies, including the United Nations and other development partners, civil society organizations, representatives of African girls and women, and academicians took part.

The conference, themed “Prioritizing Girls and Women's Education: A Strategy for Increased Access to Inclusive, Lifelong, Quality, and Relevant Learning in Africa,” discussed ways to provide education opportunities for African girls and women and served as a platform for fostering collaboration and innovation in advancing girls and women's education in Africa. During the conference, participants shared insights, experiences, and strategies for overcoming barriers to access, improving quality, and promoting gender equality in education.

Speaking at the event, African Union Commission Deputy Chairperson, Monique Nsanzabaganwa, underscored the importance of ensuring equitable access to quality education. According to her, accessing quality education is not an option for African women and girls. Education is key to eliminating gender inequality and gaps in many spheres, she added.

“Education is instrumental in eliminating gender inequality and closing the gaps in social, economic, and political spheres. In this regard, the conference provides an opportunity to focus on promoting and protecting girls' and women's education in the continent.”

Nsanzabaganwa also indicated that ensuring better and more equitable education opportunities for African women and girls is not only about creating a better world for an individual woman or girl but for the whole continent. Ensuring better access to education and skill development for African girls and women will help to create an



inclusive continent while boosting women's role in the socioeconomic and governance fields, she added.

“Education, as a resource, is a game changer in our daily lives, particularly for women's empowerment. Education helps to eliminate gender inequality, closing the gaps in social, economic, and political spheres,” Nsanzabaganwa said.

According to her, the AUC has been taking numerous initiatives to spearhead the processes of the promotion and protection of girls' and women's education on the continent, as it considers education a key driver for development.

Mentioning the fact that continental crises and conflicts are affecting the well-being of Africa, Nsanzabaganwa said that providing all necessary educational opportunities to African women and girls is not something to be compromised.

“We know that the ongoing crisis, geopolitical tensions, and conflict on the continent have also taken us some steps backward, so we want to see how we are going to come back and accelerate, even more, the outcomes for girls' and women's education. And as we do, we also look at the boy because it will need to be sustainable for both girls and boys.”

Speaking on his part, Commissioner for Education, Science, Technology, and Innovation within the African Union, Mohamed Belhocine, said that education has a crucial role in ensuring sustainable development in Africa.

In this regard, there is a need to strengthen continental commitments to harness the potential of education as a critical enabler in addressing Africa's development bottlenecks and realizing major development aspirations.

As a means to realize this goal, Mohamed also called on African countries and concerned actors to redouble efforts toward

problem, according to him.

Indeed, as the African proverb goes “If you educate a man, you educate an individual. But if you educate a woman, you educate a nation.” In this respect, accessing quality education for African girls and women is a wise decision for African leaders to make poverty a history and advance the socio-economic development of the continent.

In this regard, the First Pan-African Conference on Girls and Women's Education can be taken as a landmark in terms of reawakening African leaders to give more attention to girls and women's education, invest more, and facilitate the platform to achieve sustainable development and gender equality in Africa.

Empowering girls and women through investing in education and creating the future generations of Africa requires a collective effort, from Africa's leaders, politicians, and policymakers. By coming together to share knowledge, experiences, and solutions, they can pave the way for transformative change that will benefit societies across the continent. Through strategic investment in girls' and women's education, African leaders can unlock the immense potential of their populations, drive economic growth, social progress, and attain sustainable development.

Leaders in Africa should invest meaningfully and devise policies and programs that promote girls' and women's education and help them reach their full potential. By championing initiatives that address barriers to access, educational quality and foster gender equality in schools, they can drive systemic change that benefits entire societies. Through targeted investment in technical and vocational training centers, facilitating scholarships, and mentorship programs for girls, policymakers can ensure that girls and women have the support they need to succeed academically and professionally.

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ensuring improved access to quality education and skills development, with due emphasis on girls and women.

No doubt, educating girls and women provides an opportunity for them to be equipped with the needed knowledge and skills and transform themselves. It enables them to break the traditional cycle of exclusion that compels them to end up in marriage and keeps them out of the decision-making process. Several studies have shown that educating girls is directly correlated with improving the health of populations, in particular reducing infant mortality; as an educated woman reacts more quickly and rationally to a health

Law & Politics

The economic, security bonanzas of Ethiopia's sea access quest

BY EYUEL KIFLU

Ethiopia is making a concerted push to gain direct access to the strategically vital area, a move that experts say could bring significant economic and security benefits not only to the landlocked country but to the broader Horn of Africa region as well.

The country has long relied on neighboring Djibouti's port for its imports and exports. However, the on-going conflict in the Middle East and the destabilizing activities of Houthi rebels has threatened the safety and viability of the Red Sea shipping lanes. Reports indicate that the crisis has led to an estimated 80 percent decrease in economic activity in the Red Sea, and large commercial vessels have been forced to take the longer route around South Africa, incurring an extra 1 million dollars in costs.

The Horn of Africa is widely considered one of the most contested and vulnerable regions when it comes to maritime security threats like piracy and smuggling. Ethiopia's ability to project naval power and protect its economic interests in the Red Sea could, therefore, be a crucial factor in enhancing regional stability and prosperity.

Ethiopia, as a major user of the Red Sea, argues that establishing its own port and naval capabilities is necessary to safeguard its trade and contribute to the overall economic development of the Horn of Africa. Officials have emphasized that their maritime ambitions are not just about securing national interests but also about addressing the legitimate security concerns of their neighbors and fostering greater regional cooperation.

Following the country-signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the self-declared state of Somaliland, different positive and negative voices are echoed. Recently, during a meeting in the House of Commons, Lord Stuart Polak CBE (a British Conservative politician) praised the Memorandum of Understanding that Ethiopia and Somaliland signed on January 1, 2024, calling it a historic and significant deal.

He stressed that peace and prosperity in the Horn of Africa will be greatly aided by this historic accord. He also conveyed his sincere gratitude to Somaliland's allies in the House of Commons and the House of Lords for their outstanding and steadfast support. According to Inside Africa, their commitment to promoting robust relations and collaboration between Ethiopia and Somaliland remains crucial in propelling peace and advancement within the area.



The Ethiopian government also expressed its real mutual-benefit approach to sea access. The country is still opening its door for negotiation and working in collaboration, despite some unwarranted accusations. In this regard, Somaliland is the first to negotiate with Ethiopia to work together for mutual benefit.

As the largest coffee exporter and producer of other agricultural products that are the blood vessels of the country's economy, getting an alternative port is not optional.

In a recent press briefing, Ethiopian Shipping and Logistics (ESL) disclosed that it set and ready to operate in accordance with the country's strategic port access and sea outlet interests.

While welcoming the country's sea outlet quest, the organization also expressed its readiness to use any available alternatives for operations.

ESL's plans involve effectively utilizing the Lamu Port in Kenya, in addition to seeking other alternative sea outlets, to complement the country's main import and export gateway through the Djibouti Port, said Beriso Amelo, the CEO of ESL, in a press conference held recently.

"Based on our economic growth, we need to have alternative ports," Amelo said. "For the future, we are looking to use the Lamu Port effectively, in addition to seeking other alternative ports. If the country gets any alternative ports, we are ready to adjust our ships and trucks to move there and provide our services."

Currently, the Djibouti Port serves as the primary entry and exit point for Ethiopia's commercial activities. However, the shipping service provider also utilizes the Mombasa Port in Kenya for container goods imports, though less frequently.

Regarding the crisis, the CEO said that

risk management and mitigation efforts also helped the country's commercial activities stay unharmed, despite the growing crisis in the strategic region of the Red Sea.

By reshaping the route and even by selecting which ship to carry on, ECL is doing its best despite the challenge, he added. Also, the exports have increased, but the distribution still can't stop the country's imports and exports.

Capitan Wondwossen Kassa, the Deputy CEO for the Shipping Sector at ESL, highlighted that the ongoing Red Sea crisis has not significantly impacted the country's commercial activities. "The crisis is a very big challenge; however, we tackle the problem to the best of our capacity," he said.

"Without any interruption, cargoes are entering the country, and export cargoes are being exported in a timely manner. Despite the challenge, ESL has managed to import goods without any price changes, effectively managing inflation and the macro economy."

Despite challenges in the Red Sea, Ethiopian Shipping Lines (ESL) generated over 57 billion birr in income in the last fiscal year, with a pre-tax profit exceeding 8 billion birr.

ESL focused on enhancing income and expanding loading capacities for ships and trucks. The institution prioritized providing efficient services, implementing technology-driven processes, and aiming to boost foreign currency earnings, achieving over 420 million dollars in the previous fiscal year.

Plans for the upcoming fiscal year include targeting an income of 70.64 billion birr, expanding container terminals by 66 hectares, handling 7.9 million tons of operational services, transporting 4.2 million tons of incoming goods by sea, moving 16.1 million tons of goods via sea transport, shipping over 810 thousand tons from foreign ports, and transporting more than 639 thousand tons of imported goods using company vessels.

To further bolster its capabilities, ESL is planning to collaborate with the federal government to acquire six (two Ultra, two multi-porpoise, and two container ships) additional ships in the coming year, adding to its current fleet of ten vessels.

Ethiopia, as a major user of the Red Sea, argues that establishing its own port and naval capabilities is necessary to safeguard its trade and contribute to the overall economic development of the Horn of Africa

EPHREM ENDALE

Between you & me

The Raging Waters of Anger!

This elephant of a human being bumps into you almost sending you to the ground flat on your back. It hurts and you've every right to feel enraged. You expect at least what might sound an apology however feeble and heartless it might be. No, that doesn't happen; not in the ties we are in. In fact what actually happens is that the guy turns back and glares at you as if you were the one who heavily bumped into him! You're aching from head to foot and he glares at you! You struggle to your feet every cell in you overworking as if a thousand hands were preventing you from standing upright. You feel like rolling up your sleeves. Of course that would have amounted to the craziest (In some ways near-fatal!) thing to do! Now if you think any blow however hard it might be from you would make on any impact on this person may be you should have stayed on the ground a couple of minutes more at which time he'd probably leave and save you from a second episode of humiliation.

But of course that what event which could drive you into losing your control. It's only human! The problem is such incidents aren't infrequent. So you've every right to be pissed off!

Of course public display of anger or rage isn't a very smart thing to do. I mean these days in multiple locations and scenarios there are many instances which could practically tamper with the connection between the brain and the rest of the anatomy. I mean the hands and feet could start flying in the wrong directions without getting any orders from upstairs. Sudden rage seldom knocks from braking down the door and

surging in. But that wouldn't justify irrational actions. Things could be humiliating in more ways than one. You losing your head and the guy who wronged you standing there unresponsive and almost enjoying it wouldn't go down well with all those onlookers. In fact the immediate narratives cooked there and then would make you the protagonist of the story. There and then stories are created about you and how you must have gone over the bridge. Mind you, not a single person there knows your real identity.

"He must be the guy who they say lost wife and went crazy."

"What happened; did she pass away or did she leave him?"

"She left him and went to a guy they say was his best friend for decades."

I once have read that when you feel rage and uncontrollable anger go and punch a bag until your hands almost fall off. Well I couldn't tell you if that works or not; For one thing I never tried it and no intention of doing so anytime the future. Not that I don't find myself those anger and, when things get worse, in rage scenarios. But for one thing it is difficult a punching bag these days and you have to fill with all kinds of stuff. No sir, that isn't for me. But several years back I had this friend who tried it. Him having quite a spacious residence with reasonable open space he had the opportunity to hang a self-stuffed bag. What's funny about this friend of mine, currently somewhere in the world is that, was that he tries to jump all the way nearest

planet over the simplest thing most wouldn't have given a second thought. He used to almost come to blows a few times; had it not been for interference of well-meaning human beings it'd be hard to imagine what would have happened to him 'once upon a time!' pacified by others close by. So he thought punching some bag would be the perfect remedy. Now we are talking about a guy who never sent punches against anyone, at least there is none those close to him know about. Well one day he was enraged over something and decided to make good work of the bag in the back of the house. For several minutes he punched the bag and when he called it a day his arms were already aching. It took his arms almost two weeks to 'heal.'

Look, when you feel wrongs have been done your actions are seldom driven by logic and reasoning and that leads to the most irrational reactions. No wonder at times you are so angry the only action that comes to mind is running to the nearest watering hole and down repeated shots of the real hard stuff. (A friend tells me if there was some competition for real hard stuff he would have a few local brews he can nominate. "I don't know why people go for those expensive imports. I tell you there are local brews which by the fourth sip you're already on some planet looking down at this miserable world.")

Sometimes you could be pushed into thinking about payback ("Payback,"- that politically correct term for revenge! Say your other half of a couple of decades leaves you suddenly and without any explanation. You two went to bed

last night laughing and the word laughing with you. But when you wake up in the morning she isn't there! The initial reaction before your eyes are fully charged would probably be that she must have gone to wash up. But then... "What the hell!" Her clothes, her handbag and almost every item by her side of the bed aren't there. It must be some emergency. You call the housemaid and ask her where your 'other half' has gone.

"She didn't tell me; she just rushed out carrying a suitcase." Carrying what! You sideway the maid with a not-so-nice hand gesture and call your wife's cell; no answer. You try three four times and she isn't answering. That must be the most trying moment of your life since as a teen the elder brother of a girl you were interested in was hunting for you boasting he'd put twenty three of your teeth on your palms! Then as you were creating and then killing assumption after assumption in your head her call comes.

"You had me worried! What happened?"

"I'm not coming back. I want a divorce."

The rest, as they say, would be history. Dear readers, this fragment of a story is an edited version of a sad story that actually happened to a couple we knew. You just can imagine how angry the fellow left out in the freezing cold would feel! Anyways there are many instances these days which you mulling all kinds of the wrong responses and there could be nothing smarter than doing whatever possible to calm the raging waters of anger.

The Legend of the Rich Widow

A year or so back a family sits down to convince their thirty something year old son to tie the knot. The young man worked in an international organizations and the conventional wisdom within the family and relatives was that he made fortunes every month. The figures he's supposed to earn every month range for a hundred thousand to half a million. By the way I was reading on the social media that there are still local footballers with monthly earnings of far more than four hundred thousand close to half a million! Hmm...Well does that football is that money is? With individual players making who would want to hear that football is cash-strapped. With earnings so high why our clubs aren't going for those Williams and Lamin guys!

Anyways this family sat to convince the young guy but they failed to do so. He declined diplomatically and told them he would be the one to tell them when the time arrives. Their attempts to know if he had a bride waiting for him also failed. He wasn't the type to give away secrets. A few months later the news came that he had already married! The entire household was in shock. No pictures, no videos nothing but a simple phone call and "I wanted to tell you that I've married." he adds a few more words none of which have to do with his marriage. He promised to visit them in a couple of weeks' time and that was it! His was one completely confused family which didn't know what to do. How are they going to break the news to relatives?

"We just wanted to tell you that our son has

married."

"What do you mean married? Why didn't you invite us to the wedding party?"

"Well, actually there was no wedding party."

"What the hell are those about? You say your son is married and you tell us there was no wedding party? Is this a joke?"

"Well he called and told us that he was married. That's all we know."

I can tell you this scenario would be the worst this family ever faced or will ever face if they lived a couple of hundred years more. A son calling and telling his parents he's married just like that!

A couple of weeks later he indeed comes to visit them. They started to grill him about the marriage and he cut them short saying they will talk about that another time. Well a couple of months later the news comes through a third person who finally stumbled on what really happens. The guy wasn't actually 'married,' in the real sense of the word. No marriage certificate, no paper of any sort! He just vacated his apartment and moved into the spacious villa of his partner who happened to be a very rich widow into her prime and knocking on sixty. It was a sort of a tsunami for his parents close relatives and even closer friends none of whom knew anything about the whole thing.

It was barely another month when another, unexpected news broke. The partnership goes down south and the lady tells him to leave! As if it was what they call poetic justice or something like that the rumors are

she just tells him to leave one morning and leave immediately. Now no one except the two of them knows the real story. But one thing was sure; the guy was in a very sorry state following the demise of what he thought was an unending roller-coaster of luxury and VIP treatment life of the highest order. For weeks he just disappeared from public view with his parents and friends worrying what might have happened to him. He disabled his cell phone and the international organization where he supposedly worked isn't that place where you just pop into his office and say "Surprise!" When he finally started making the rounds of the city and connecting with parents and friends the signs was he managed to disentangle himself from the memories of that bad, very bad episode in his life. Of course he talked about it and admitted he was in the wrong and should have given the whole affair more thoughts before jumping into some bed which is so vast it looks (and probably feel, whatever that means) like a mini-football field. Ha!

He was open to questions and the obvious question probably everyone wanted to ask him was, "What led to you to go as far as going to this woman who could as well could have been as old as his mother who was in her mid-sixties! One thing about the young man was he didn't try to hide behind words and never said anything that wasn't true. He was the kind of guy confident about himself and the type of fellow you can say, "...has class..." when it comes to manners. He admitted he made the wrong decision and that no one talked him into it. He didn't even know the woman inside out. Their chance

of meeting was at a reception his employers threw for a delegation of foreign visitors.

Then one thing leads to another and he finds himself amidst luxury and extravagance; His childhood dream was answered! That was what it was all about; childhood dreams. It was way down during his high school years when this idea of the rich widow issue pops up. Could there be a more direct and shortest way to riches. And that happens after a little more than a decade; this young man comes face to face with the perfect target, a rich widow and he fell for her! Or, rather her riches! He probably thought there was no need for second-guessing. What am I talking about here? Of course, childhood dreams! You never know when the doors that you envisaged in your mid-teens would open wide in his mid-twenties or later.

One thing we know these days is that almost every one of us irrespective of social status, age and what have you dream about is getting rich, really rich! I wonder what the young of today are dreaming about given all the wrong and even damaging narratives and stories we hear day and day out! As no one seems to be listening to no one these days the best we can hope is that the young would come to their senses and keep themselves from being ensnared in the wrong narratives which sound great but are dangerous except getting rich in the shortest of time!

The rich widow sort of story might come in many guises and may the young be saved from looking only at the surface of narratives without taking the time to dig deeper.

In Pictures

Degree of confidence

BY DARGIE KAHSAY



A gesture of positivity, friendliness with citizens

This week, a viral picture of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) and Deputy Prime Minister, Temesgen Tiruneh was circulating on the social media. The two leaders were pictured walking on the street and crossing an asphalt road.

The two leaders were walking into the Science Museum to launch the 5 million Ethiopian Coders initiative. They arrived at the event walking starting from their office. Though it seems something usual to see leaders walking on streets, what makes this event special and unusual was that the road was busy and the two leaders were crossing the road carefully checking the usual traffic activities.

It breaks the traditional image of a high-profile politicians typically seen surrounded by heavy security and closed-off areas. It resonates positively with citizens and transparency in their leadership.

PM Abiy discusses with Political Parties



Last week, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) met with representatives of political parties and discussed ways of cooperation on national issues. The discussion is a continuation of a discussion held in April, this year.

Launching ceremony of 5 million coders initiative

This week, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) has launched the 5 million Ethiopian Coders initiative. The initiative aims to train five million Ethiopian youths in coding in collaboration with United Arab Emirates. PM Abiy calls the youth generation to register for the program, gain skills, and acquire international certification.



Ethiopian Olympic delegation attends the 2024 Paris Olympic opening ceremony

The opening ceremony of the 2024 Summer Olympics, which is the 33rd Olympiad and officially branded as Paris 2024, was officially started this Friday in Paris, France.

The Ethiopian Olympic delegation, carrying the Ethiopian Flag, was attending the colorful and beautiful opening ceremony of the Paris 2024.

The Ethiopian Olympic delegates dressed Ethiopian costumes that showcase the Ethiopian image to the world during the opening ceremony. The Ethiopian Herald wishes success for the athletic team.