



Prof. Charles Musiba



Prof. Mirjana Roksandic

Adwa museum unmissable to visit in Africa's capital: Int'l scholars

BY TSEGAYE TILAHUN

ADDIS ABABA – Ethiopia's ongoing infrastructural development, highlighted by the Adwa Victory Memorial Museum, has showcased the potential of African nations, according to international visitors.

The museum was visited by over 200 scientists drawn from 34 countries yesterday. Also the visitors took part in the 8th Eastern Africa Association of Paleanthropologists and Paleontologists annual conference that was held here recently.

In an exclusive interview with *The Ethiopian Herald*, Prof. Charles Musiba of Duke University lauded the Adwa

See Adwa museum ... page 3

President pushes for unity towards lasting peace, dev't



BY MESERET BEHAILU

ADDIS ABABA – President Sahlework Zewde emphasized the critical need for a united effort to ensure sustainable peace and development across Ethiopia.

The President made the above statement yesterday during the 16th Regular General Assembly and Recognition Forum organized by the Inter-Religions Council of Ethiopia, held at the Adwa Victory Memorial Museum.

In her opening speech, President Sahle-work highlighted that collaboration is the key to achieving lasting peace and holistic development in the nation. She acknowledged

See President pushes ... page 3



Ethiopia expects increased FDI flow amid policy reform

BY YESUF ENDRIS

ADDIS ABABA - Economic policy reforms designed to liberalize Ethiopia's economic structures and foreign exchange system are expected to stimulate Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) inflows, according to Investment Commissioner.

Speaking at the second Ethio-China Friendship Cooperation Forum, Commissioner Hanna Aryasellassic

See Ethiopia expects ... page 3

Macroeconomic reform in tune with import substitution

BY ASHENAFI ANIMUT

Introducing viable domestic home-grown initiatives and a 10-year import substitution strategy, Ethiopia has been undertaking wide-ranges of activities in the manufacturing sector in a bid to promoting import substitution.

The recent macroeconomic reforms highly promised to bring about a huge significance to the country's growing trend of import-substituting industries, offering industries in this space an opportunity to scale up their operations and capture significant market share.

See Macroeconomic reform ... page 3



AU's move to elevate African coffee as strategic commodity historic milestone

BY BETELHEM BEDLU

ADDIS ABABA – The adoption of the Kampala Declaration and the inclusion of the Inter-African Coffee Organization (IACO) as a specialized agency of the African Union (AU) mark a historic milestone for Africa's coffee sector, announced Agriculture Minister Girma Amente (PhD).

This announcement was made following the 37th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the AU held last February.

Minister Girma emphasized that recognizing coffee as a strategic commodity in Agenda 2063 and incorporating IACO as a specialized agency of the AU acknowledges the critical role coffee plays in the continent's socioeconomic transformation.

He also noted that despite Africa being the birthplace of both Coffee Arabica and Robusta, the sector struggles with low productivity, inequality in the value chain, and minimal economic benefits from low domestic consumption.

"Africa captures only one percent of the global coffee sector's annual revenue of 495 billion USD and exports 99% of its coffee without adding value," the minister stated. He further highlighted that the new decision would enable research in coffee value addition, drive innovation, and attract investments in the sector. This would promote domestic coffee consumption and enhance access to finance through the AU/AfCFTA framework.

The decision also provides political leverage for transforming the coffee sector and supports regional integration and economic cooperation among member states. The G25 Heads of State initiative aims to address infrastructure, taxation, and financial issues, providing an amplified global voice and a unified African stance on global issues. This initiative is expected to enhance regional market access through the AfCFTA, improve logistics, and strengthen infrastructure.

As Chairperson of IACO, Girma expressed his delight at the designation of IACO as an AU Specialized Agency and pledged to diligently execute the vision of transforming the African coffee sector through value addition.

He emphasized that the coordinated effort with all AU organs would be crucial in advocating support for the transformation of the coffee sector.

The elevation of IACO and the adoption of the Kampala Declaration represent significant steps toward realizing the potential of Africa's coffee sector, ensuring its growth and sustainability for the future, the minister remarked.

State secures 10.5 bln Birr revenue

BY MISGANAW ASNAKE

HOSANA – Apart from responding to public grievances regarding political and social issues, Central Ethiopia Regional State announced that it has collected 10.5 billion Birr revenue since its establishment.

The state which established last August has done various works to achieve development insocial and political spheres, State Chief Administrator, Endashaw Tassew said.

Briefing the media yesterday, Endashaw noted that the state has attained collectingsome 10.5 billion Birr revenues, strengthening health extension programs, mitigating occurrence of diseases like malaria and so on.

Central Ethiopiastate has established seven centers with various social and economic clusters in which the development activities could be accomplished to ensure equity and social justice, he said.

According to the Chief Administrator, the establishment of the state has enabled the local people to enjoy self-governance, peace, goodmaladministration, increased productivity and input supply and conducive teaching learning environment.

Moreover, the regional administration also maintained 1500 km road that connect rural and urban areas while benefiting 850,000 people with health fund to get medical treatment in the nearby institutions, he stated.

Endashaw also expressed that his administration has planned to generate about 20 billion Birr revenue through

implementing the new tax proclamation this fiscal year.

Efforts are underway to increase agricultural productivity through cultivating one million hectares of land in the summer and winter to ensure food self-sufficiency, he stated.

"We would work on ensuring peace in the community, improving livelihoods of the people, creating jobs, and establishing fruit and vegetable centers by planting saplings," he said.

Endashaw also added that the state has

planned to register 600,000 households for health fund, improve access to potable water and issue investment license by enforcing strategic plan.

"Will would focus working on developing tourism and manufacturing potentials, expanding digital services to improve trade, resolving land management issues and health services in the future."

The Central Ethiopia state, which is home to 7.5 million citizens was established on 19 August 2023 incorporating seven zones and three special districts, it was learnt.



Endashaw Tassew

Universities enhance research quality with new plagiarism software

BY MISGANAW ASNAKE

ADDIS ABABA - Universities in Ethiopia, including Addis Ababa University (AAU), have recently launched electronic resources, plagiarism detection software, and research intelligence tools to improve research quality and reliability.

This initiative will be implemented across AAU and 14 other universities.

Jimma University Library Director, Addisalem Girma, explained to the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) that this software helps conduct research reliably and independently, enhancing overall quality and reliability, thus benefiting the university community and society at large. "We have been implementing this software since last year in three colleges after providing training and working with AAU. This is particularly beneficial for postgraduate and PhD programs where lecturers check student research for plagiarism."

Addisalem also noted that AAU facilitated the software's entry into the universities.

Haramaya University Lecture and Library Director, Tilahun Shiferaw, added that

the software offers significant benefits for universities and researchers and is expected to play a crucial role in the future. "Our university invested 1.5 million Birr for the software, with the license package spanning three years. As a member of the Consortium of Ethiopian Academic and Research Libraries (CEARL), this tool greatly enhances our universities," he stated.

Tilahun further emphasized that the analytic tools help universities check the quality of research and improve research productivity. "We are collaborating with AAU to provide our students and faculty access to the most

current and relevant resources available online. The software was purchased collectively by several universities, making it a feasible and beneficial platform for institution of higher education."

Additionally, electronic journals, e-books, and research intelligence tools will help universities bolster teaching, learning, and research objectives, as well as strengthen library-faculty cooperation. This application will open new opportunities for academics, researchers, and students to explore more knowledge in various disciplines, he remarked.



Tilahun Shiferaw



Addisalem Girma

News

Austria keen to enhance bilateral, multilateral cooperation with Ethiopia

ADDIS ABABA - Austria is keen to enhance both bilateral and multilateral cooperation with Ethiopia across various fields of common interest, according to Simone Knapp, Austrian Ambassador to Ethiopia.

In an exclusive interview with ENA, Ambassador Simone Knapp said Austria and Ethiopia enjoy excellent diplomatic relations, paving the way for further collaboration and mutual benefit.

She added that in early December 2023, we had the pleasure of hosting Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed in Vienna.

The visit was highly successful, engaging discussion with Austrian Chancellor Karl Nehammer, and covered a wide range of bilateral issues and exploring numerous cooperation opportunities.

Additionally, our Foreign Minister visited Ethiopia two years ago. Overall, the two countries enjoy very strong and productive relations, Simone Knapp explained.

“The key areas of cooperation between Austria and Ethiopia are in the fields of diplomatic relations or political discussions. We also have economic cooperation which is small, but we still want to expand. We do have joint cooperation plan

in the area of economy, economic cooperation. Just in a couple of months in October this year; we are planning to bring Austrian companies, businesses to Ethiopia.”

Also, we are collaborating with the Ethiopian Investment Commission (EIC) to facilitate B2B meetings with Austrian experts in the field of investment in Ethiopia, she said.

As an embassy, we can focus on two key actions: bringing Austrian companies to Ethiopia and highlighting opportunities for collaboration, Simone Knapp added.

The ambassador added this involves working with EIC and other authorities to showcase Ethiopia's potential and identify connections between our two countries.

We can also collaborate on highlighting the framework in which Ethiopia offers for businesses, including its business environment and opportunities for investment, she said.

There are diverse opportunities in Ethiopia, including energy solutions, waste management, health, and production, particularly in the expanding city of Addis Ababa.

“I really think that Austria and Ethiopia have a lot in common when it comes to multilateral interest

and cooperation in the multilateral field. Austria, Vienna is a UN city and capital. We have a lot of UN organizations based in Vienna, and Ethiopia, Addis Ababa is a host country not only to the African Union, but also to the United Nations and UNECA which shows already that both countries have a big interest in the multilateral system.”

Together with our permanent representations in New York and Geneva, we are fostering strong cooperation across various fields, including peace and security, human rights, transparency, and crime prevention.

According to the ambassador, the prospects for future cooperation are very promising, and there are opportunities to expand our collaboration across various areas.

In addition to economic cooperation, we are also working together in the field of university partnerships.

Austria and Ethiopia have several university cooperation programs in place, involving various institutions across both countries, which is excellent, the ambassador elaborated.

This year, the Austrian Embassy celebrated its 60th anniversary here in Addis Ababa.

President ...

the significant role religious institutions have played in building peace and protecting the country's values over the years.

However, the President stressed that the current peace challenges call for a consolidated effort from the government, religious leaders, and stakeholders to overcome these issues.

“Peace does not come just because it is wanted, but it requires a lot of effort. Therefore, all concerned bodies should put in their part, as peace is a key issue for development and growth,” She underscored.

Sahle-work urged the Inter-Religions Council of Ethiopia to continue its efforts in fostering peace, cooperation, and development.

Inter-Religions Council of Ethiopia Board Chairperson Abune Gorgorious reiterated the council's commitment to promoting unity, tolerance, and development. He emphasized the importance of strengthening ties among societies and institutions and addressing breaches of peace through justice, reconciliation, and consensus.

Supporting this viewpoint, Peace State Minister Kairedin Tezera (PhD) highlighted the significant role of religious institutions in establishing social values throughout Ethiopia's history.

Kairedin assured that his ministry is working closely with the council to ensure peace and development, including preparing systems and procedures to effectively integrate non-members of the religious council.

Religious leaders, council members, Ministry of Peace officials, and other government higher officials attended the forum which was held under theme “Let Us Give Thanks to The Benefactors; Keep Our Peace.”

Ethiopia expects increased...

highlighted that Ethiopia's macroeconomic policy reforms are designed to attract FDI.

She noted that these reforms would allow investors to access opportunities previously controlled by the government.

Ethiopia, which has seen rapid growth in FDI, has opened up several sectors including energy and telecommunications. Accordingly, Commissioner Hanna invited Chinese firms to invest in Ethiopia utilizing the new macroeconomic policies and government incentives.

Mentioning Ethiopia's significant achievements in attracting FDI, the Commissioner has reaffirmed her government's commitment to explore investment opportunities with Chinese government and companies.

Hanna observed an “increase in the number of Chinese investors” participating in various sectors of Ethiopia's economy, including ICT, agro-processing, and manufacturing.

Water and Energy State Minister, Sultan Welle, also remarked that the energy sector, one of the recently liberalized sectors, holds untapped

potentials for foreign investment.

He expressed optimism that Chinese companies, as key investment partners, would make substantial investments in the future. The government, according to Sultan, is prepared to offer incentives to bolster investments in the sector, with plans to expand energy grids within and beyond Africa in the long term.

In related news, Investment Commission and the Ethio-China Friendship Committee signed a letter of intent to support Ethiopia's industrialization process through the “Light up Villages Program”.

Macroeconomic reform in tune...

Despite challenges, the manufacturing industry is attracting additional investments, for example, in the ‘Let Ethiopia Produce’ initiative close to 481 industries have resumed operations especially in Amhara and Tigray states.

Ministry of Industry (MoI) State Minister Tarekegn Bululta told the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) that establishing import substitution strategies and policies, the country is expediting the manufacturing production capacity by prioritizing on import substitution commodities.

Mentioning the minimal stage of the industry to GDP share which counted for 7%, Tarekegn emphasized that the country is employing multi-sectorial approaches for manufacturing industry development.

The government is also paid due emphasis to the sector by setting short, medium and long term national plan to increase the manufacturing industry import substitution production capacity from 40% to 60%.

Identifying about 96 industrial products, he said they are taking bold measures on tariff stress, promoting local investors participation, lifting restrictions and empowering and

transferring small and medium enterprises.

According to him, over 72,000 jobs are created from 272,000 manufacturing industries in the just concluded fiscal year.

In addition to viable legal frameworks, the policy has given due emphasis to security issues and clustering infrastructure, logistics to increase competitiveness of the manufacturing sector by producing imported products locally, he pointed out.

The recently announced national macroeconomic policy is believed to address the local manufacturing sectors challenges and promote import substitution.

Seconding the macroeconomic reform, Fair Fax Africa Chairman Zemedeneh Negatu posted on X that the recently announced economic adjustment would have multiplier effect on the economy. Tohim, the economy could be up to 10 times boost over the next few years.

“As the head of a large global company that has invested in the country, I fully support the reforms,” he said mentioning the goals such as bringing structuraleconomic transformation, maintaining macroeconomic stability, (especially by reducing inflation, increasing

Adwa museum...

Victory Memorial Museum as one of Africa's finest. He emphasized that the museum eloquently narrates Ethiopia's historical resistance against colonialism and its journey towards prosperity, urging Africans to take pride in this heritage.

“The museum reflects the spirit of Pan-Africanism and Ethiopia's significant role in the independence of other African nations,” Musiba said. He encouraged Africans and others to visit Ethiopia to witness the impressive work firsthand.

Prof. Musiba further highlighted the need for African unity to combat modern-day neocolonialism and protect the continent's resources, particularly minerals. He also praised Addis Ababa's rapid infrastructural development, noting its transformation over the past six years to rival European cities, making it a desirable place for the youth.

Prof. Mirjana Roksandic from the University of Winnipeg remarked on the unexpected beauty and development of Addis Ababa, while Brent Adrian from the Institute of Human Origins at Arizona State University noted that the Adwa victory symbolizes pride and democracy for Ethiopians and African alike.

The conference attendees also visited the Ethiopian National Museum, Unity Park, and other notable sites, reflecting on Ethiopia's historical and contemporary significance.

Completed on February 2024, the Adwa Victory Memorial Museum hosts a multipurpose facility, including a meeting hall, amphitheater, libraries, and youth centers.

Opinion

Government's commitment to peaceful dispute resolution, National Dialogue

BY ADDISALEM MULAT

Ethiopia has been playing a huge role in ensuring peace and tranquilly in every nook and cranny of the country in the face of challenges that need a quick fix. Since time immemorial, whenever the various Nations, Nationalities and Peoples of Ethiopia have entered into conflict, they have been putting their own dispute resolution mechanisms into effect. No matter what happens, they leave no stone unturned to get to the bottom of their problems in a nonviolent way in the shortest possible time.

In the present circumstances, the federal government of Ethiopia has been working around the clock to ensure peace and tranquility making use of national dialogue which is going to be held in the near future.

Conflict can be understood as engagement in a fight or possible confrontation between two or more parties as aspiring towards incompatible or competitive means or ends. Conflict may be either manifest, recognizable through actions or behaviors, or latent, in which case it remains dormant for some time, as incompatibilities are unarticulated or are built into systems or such institutional arrangements as governments, corporations, or even civil society, according to sources.

It has been learnt that conflict is part and parcel of the nature of human beings. It is a fact of life. There is only one human being who is free of conflict that is a dead human being. Conflict is an inevitable phenomenon that cannot be avoided in human society's sphere of life since the entire life of humankind is manipulated by the prevalence of conflict within the society when people set opinion against opinion, run interest against interest. Wherever people interact, there is a potential for conflict. That is not bad news because good things can rise, and relationships can be improved through conflict.

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed discussed with political party representatives recently to forge a consensus on national issues of importance for all, according to information obtained from Ethiopia News Agency.

He recalled that: "Earlier in April, I met with political party representatives to discuss cooperation on national issues. A direction was set for discussions to continue at various levels," he noted.

"Today, we met again as a continuation of the April meeting, working toward forging a consensus on national issues of importance for all," the prime minister wrote on his social media page.

The Joint Council of Political Parties remarked that the ongoing consultations among political parties in Ethiopia are key foundations to addressing national challenges and building robust democratic system in the country, according to information obtained from local media.

Ethiopian political parties held a discussion



forum recently to exchange views on current affairs and major national issues.

Democracy Building Center Coordinator Office Head with the rank of Deputy Prime Minister and Vice President of Prosperity Party, Ademe Farah, Chairperson of the Joint Council of Political Parties, Desta Dinka among other leaders and members of political parties were in attendance at the discussion forum.

On the occasion, Chairperson of the Joint Council of Political Parties, Desta Dinka stressed the need to further bolster the culture of dialogue among political parties to address national challenges jointly.

Commending the commitment of the government to discuss national issues with political parties, the chairperson urged the parties to demonstrate their readiness for such opportunity.

The ongoing consultations among political parties in Ethiopia are instrumental to addressing national challenges and building civilized democratic system in the country, Desta underlined.

He said, "Today's consultation forum aims at paving ways for political parties to discuss challenges that could be addressed jointly."

The Chairperson further stressed the need to stand together to curtail Ethiopia's problems by aiming at national goals vital to the people and future generation of the country.

Head of the Democratic Culture Building Department at Prosperity Party and executive member of the Council, Meles Alemu, for his part stated that consultation process being underway among political parties in Ethiopia marks the inception of new political culture.

He highlighted the significance of Dialogue in safeguarding national interests, addressing challenges and maintaining positive achievements, stating the ongoing efforts of the ruling Prosperity Party to build robust democratic system with strong commitment.

Whether a National Dialogue has actually succeeded is often a contentious question. The outcomes of the national dialogues are sometimes intangible and may include: the

strengthening of a culture of debate and free speech; the breaking of taboo issues which after the dialogue may be more openly discussed; the entrenchment of certain norms of inclusion and representation in politics of marginalized groups, including women and minorities; and, the ability to keep all the political actors inside the political process, according to sources.

While addressing members of parliament, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed Pertaining to peace and security matters said, "Ethiopia has passed through a vicious circle of conflict and war for a long time. The history of killing one another should be stopped in our generation. The government is ready to pay any price for peace.

"In the previous years, the government, by prioritizing peace, has made more efforts and gone the extra mile. In Ethiopia, holding power through conflict and war is impossible. The most practicable way for Ethiopia is discussing differences, solving problems in a peaceful manner."

The active participation of all segments of society is essential for a successful national dialogue aimed at creating a peaceful Ethiopia, stated the Ethiopian National Dialogue Commission (ENDC).

ENDC Chief Commissioner, Prof. Mesfin Araya, 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. He added that all 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.

This discussion attempts to illustrate that the mandate of national dialogue processes has in the past been negotiated in several different ways. The lessons that emerge point to the fact that these negotiations should as much as possible include the main political forces in order to ensure their willingness to participate in the dialogue. If these negotiations are not inclusive, the dialogue process itself should as much as possible leave the door open for the participation of the excluded actors.

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.

It is recalled that the Commission in collaboration with the Federation of Ethiopian Associations of Persons with Disabilities (FEAPD) has recently 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 believes 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.

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

Editorial

Leaders must embrace broader responsibilities beyond lending

Ethiopia lately made big moves in its economic policy. The shift is widely hailed as a rewarding measure in many ways while some take it with cautions. The devaluation which is part of the ongoing economic liberalization and reform is already having some impacts on the market and the economy in general—the full force of the shift whether positive or negative will be felt down the road. Obviously, the government took the measure considering different factors yet unprecedented and unexpected things could be triggered that would have short and long-term impacts.

While conversations are ongoing and attention is high on the economic reform, some are advising the nation to prepare for any repercussions that come with the change of economic policy. As witnessed elsewhere in the world, dollarization has both pros and cons and its success or failure depends on the country's regulatory capacity and resilience to cope with emerging threats that follow the devaluation.

Being proactive rather than reactive is a rewarding gesture to do. In an increasingly volatile global economy, the stakes are high and the pitfalls are too many. Let alone taking a big measure, markets are unstable due to international or local factors and the only way to avoid unprecedented damage mainly falls on one's preparedness to prevent and react. It does not require a crystal ball to tell that a slight change let alone a big policy turnaround will have positive and downsides, the sole option which is safest is to remain vigilant and to act quickly and decisively.

So far, the country's development partners have welcomed the country's move to a market-based foreign exchange rate. After years of negotiation, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) Board has resumed loan issuance to Ethiopia, approving 3.4 billion USD in the wake of the country's macroeconomic policy reform. According to IMF report, the loan will address macroeconomic imbalances, restore external debt sustainability, and lay the foundations for higher, inclusive, and private sector-led growth.

Following the country's measure, global financial institutions are approving credits and loans to the government. The World Bank and IMF have already allowed Ethiopia access to billions of dollars in loans and aid. The World Bank said on Tuesday its board has approved 1.5 billion USD in finance for Ethiopia as the country is striving for debt restructuring.

The World Bank said in a statement that it will provide a grant of 1 billion USD and an additional 500 million USD in a low-interest credit line to Ethiopia. The country also secured 3.4 billion USD support from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) last Monday, which would enable the country to restructure its debt.

In spite of the blessings that come with the devaluation, the move could bring ramifications.

Inflation and cost of living, according to experts, will see some shake-ups that could be positive or negative though. To address such scenarios, the government will increase its tax revenues and the salaries of employees. Moreover, the support of the international community is required in a time of economic transition. The international community should provide the country with the necessary finance, expertise, and other assistance to avoid any possible threats.

More accountability is needed from international lenders than just giving developing nations loans. Ethiopia is one of many nations that struggle with credit payment regulations and restructuring. The foreign exchange policies of these multinational creditors also affect international trade. For inclusive and sustainable development to be supported, the international financial system must be changed.

In sum, to accomplish the objectives of the breakthrough move, all relevant stakeholders both public and private must implement policies and strategies over the long term and with consistency.

Opinion

The long standing quest for restructuring of global financial structure

BY STAFF REPORTER

Gatete.

The claim that the world is one or that it is globalized would remain a fallacy without restructuring its financial structure. The current state which is skewed towards the developed world is a reason for the economic and social injustice against the developing world. The recent preparatory conference for the 4th International Financing for Development Conference had also been an opportunity where this strong and burning claim has highly reverberated.

During the conference which took place here in Addis Ababa last week UN Deputy Secretary General, Amina Mohammed also said that most developing countries are facing high costs of capital. "Many of them cannot invest in the future as they struggle to meet their immediate needs, paying salaries and meeting debt service".

The quest for restructuring of the financial system is not a new topic. The 56th Conference of Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (COM2024) which took place few months back in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe had also reached a consensus that African countries should with one voice, advocate for the reform of the global financial architecture for it to be fit for purpose and serve Africa's development priorities.

The ministers noted that countries to develop instruments and institutions that can bridge the technology gap and develop innovative financing mechanisms that can work for Africa with the right governance frameworks.

"We, African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development having deliberated on the theme of the conference, note that Africa is off track in most indicators of the 2030 Agenda of the Sustainable Development and has even regressed in some," said the ministers in their statement.

"Also, the first 10 year implementation plan of the African transformation Agenda 2063 has just ended with visible achievements in some areas and shortcomings in others."

In this regard, the ministers noted that Africa requires an additional \$1.6 trillion by 2030 to achieve the SDG goals and that the actual expenditure on the attainment if the goals on the continent falls short of the amount required to achieve them.

Claver Gatete UN Under-Secretary-General and Executive Secretary, Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) said the resolution adopted on tax cooperation is important as it will help countries strengthen domestic resource mobilization and prepare for the Financing for Development Conference that will take place in 2025.

"This, indeed, marks a pivotal step towards fostering a fair and equitable global economic system," said "Building inclusive green economies in Africa is not merely an anecdote but a pressing imperative that demands our concerted action," said Mr.

"In addition, the innovative solutions proposed, and the partnerships forged underscore our resolve to advance economic prosperity for all Africans."

He indicated that ECA is reorienting its work, with particular focus on deepening our intellectual leadership on technology, infrastructure and climate.

"This will enable us to better support countries to accelerate the implementation of Agenda 2063 and the SDGs," he said.

The ECA Executive Secretary extended his heartfelt gratitude on behalf of ECA to the President, the entire government and to the people of Zimbabwe for their warm hospitality.

In their statement, the African ministers raised their concern over the public debt burden in Africa that has worsened during the past decade, with the average debt-to-gross-domestic-product ratio on the continent sharply increasing since the 2010s, from 39.49 per cent between 2010 and 2014, to 56.41 per cent between 2015 and 2019, to 70.47 per cent in 2020.

In addition to the need for increased financing, they said, there is a need for more effective policy and regulatory frameworks to help to close development and climate finance gaps in Africa, and that a supportive policy environment for scaling up renewable energy.

Mthuli Ncube, Minister of Finance, Economic Development and Investment Promotion said that the economic growth in Africa remained subdued in 2023, amid tight monetary policies, low demand for African exports and global factors such as the geopolitical tensions, leading to elevated food and fuel costs, as well as limited fiscal space. This is also being compounded by the imposition of unilateral sanctions on some African member states by the developed world.

"The Conference explored policy options that encompass reforming the global financial architecture, boosting private sector participation, exploring innovative financing tools, implementing the African Continental Free Trade Area and fostering regional and global cooperative initiatives to drive climate resilience and sustainable development across the continent," said Mr. Ncube.

He noted that countries should urgently transition to inclusive green economies, to restructure the global financial landscape, to accelerate regional integration, and to provide tailored support for our Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and do not leave behind Middle Income Countries caught in the development trap.

The ministers recommended that the Economic Commission for Africa and its partners to systematically support the sustainable debt coalition in contributing to efforts to tackle the foreign debt challenges faced by Africa and the reform of the global financial architecture.

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Business & Economy



Effective tax collection positively influences the economic reform's performance

Nexus between tax, revenue and paying national debt back

BY MENGESHA AMARE

Not only does Ethiopia need to increase tax collection and make tax systems more equitable and efficient to resume economic growth, reduce poverty and improve citizens' livelihoods, but also other nations require balancing goals such as increased revenue mobilization and sustainable comprehensive growth via ensuring a fair and equitable system.

Taking all this into account, the Ethiopian Press Agency had a stay with Molay Woldu, a Tax Policy Department Head at the Ministry of Finance, in relation to the close nexus between tax and revenue following the recent macro-economic reform thereby giving the county a power to pay its debt back.

He said, "Undeniably, economic growth is the basis of increased affluence as it is a key objective for the government of the nation. The rate of growth can be affected by policy choices through the effect that taxation has upon economic decisions and through productive public expenditures. Hence, the recently ratified macroeconomic reform is significantly useful in fueling the stride geared towards economic advancement and socio-economic trajectories."

As far as the tax reform especially the policy significance towards helping the government reduce loan burden is concerned, Molay said that the tax collection system and its proper implementation would have positive influence at national level and support the government build capacity to pay back foreign loan. Besides, this positive move would undoubtedly contribute to the effort towards reinvigorating the economic growth and foster a range of activities towards that end. It would also make a noteworthy contribution to augment transaction with regard to import and export products; even it has helped producers' secure ample foreign currency.

As to him, most developing countries like ours strive to achieve economic growth and development through taxation, but they have been facing numerous economic challenges that need to be well abated via applying lucrative reforms. The tax collection and its proper implementation would help the government build capacity in due course of reimbursing debts.

According to Molay, the macroeconomic reform would be instrumental in generating tax revenue for the nation thereby engineering economic performance. The foreign direct investments would also positively influence the growth of the economy and abate the impact of inflation.

Besides, he added it would also contribute a lot to bolster transaction with regard to import and export products; even it has helped producers' secure ample foreign currency.

Products will also be in a state of increasing and there will be a lot of opportunities to get citizens employed. Since the step would help increase production and productivity, the yield will be rising and this trend in turn helps the nation create a number of job opportunities. Yes, he said circumstances with regard to production and productivity have been well intertwined and highly glued when revenue or income increases, the capacity of the country to pay back debts would reasonably rise.

So, the system will be of paramount importance in paying loan back and even reining the rising trend of the existing stock. Therefore, it is possible to observe situations in relation to this reform in terms of two dimensions: in the first place, the economy will be highly motivated and the base of the tax would be made well widened, and the revenue solicited via utilizing local currency would increase from the products being exported to other nations and imported from overseas.

Second, when there is economic motivation and the country can produce more and its export items have increased, the price of commodities will also proportionally increase. Following this, the foreign currency the country would collect will proportionally increase.

Having these two circumstances in mind, as to Molay, it can be deduced that the foreign currency Ethiopia secures would increase and the country will have the capacity to pay its debt back and the stock would remain as it is, without any increment, of course.

So, the major target of the reform would be of significantly useful in reducing the loan. The policy reform is also of quite decisive for reinvigorating Ethiopia's ties with international donors and some other financial institutions like the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (WB).

He further elucidated that collecting taxes is the main way for the nation to generate public revenues that make it possible to finance investments in human capital, infrastructure, and the provision of services for its people and businesses.

The very important thing here in Ethiopia can be, all other things keep intact, a country of having its own consent and capacity to buy whatever its citizens deserve and want. The previous way of course was benefiting finger counted individuals, but the recent one would be of highly relevant to make all segments of the society and citizens beneficiaries out of the marketing and economic system.

He said, "It is not a matter of forging ties, relationships and other amicable fashion; instead it is of our own way of doing business and get benefited out of the system. Whenever our economy grows, the country will be competent, capable and independent one to make sound decisions at its own reach. Hence, the reform is instrumental in bringing about such a remarkable change."

In simple terms, he said building huge economy itself is a magnet that can prettily attract smooth relations and make the best allies as big economy is a viable weapon to get the country's interests and sovereignty highly respected.

Responding to the question 'the reform decidedly has been grateful for a market-oriented/market-led foreign currency,' and what is this concept and what benefits can it bring to Ethiopian economic growth, Molay stated that the steps taken are really good to cheering tax collection means, encouraging investment and increasing import and export trade. Since it helps the income secured from tax, the development undertakings, be the existing ones or would be commenced, can be highly fostered.

Furthermore, the services rendered to the society or entire citizens will be well organized and prompt, and improved in terms of quality and quantity, too. Thus the increment of the tax revenue helps the community get all what they need and justify as economic growth is registered. The demand and supply equilibrium could also be quite close despite circumstances that need to be bridged well occur, basically the effect of the reform is not limited to some aspects as it can be applied on a number of

sectors.

To reply to the question posed on him 'Since the ban on imported commodities is lifted, what repercussions would be witnessed in this regard?' Molay stated that this would help the nation boost local production in terms of quality and quantity as well as this will also cause the generation of profit and revenue. Hence, the input gained from local sources and from abroad would proportionally rise.

Molay said, "If we see the reform from the perspective of locally produced items and job creation, the economic motivation will be a feasible weapon to increase revenue, first. Second, the commodities and items the country imports from overseas can be sources of national income. Whenever the number of exporters and their items to export rise, the scope they cover widens. From such multitude of aspects, the nation can collect a great deal of currency or wealth from the tax. Such remarkable approaches in one way or another help the nation have huge revenue."

As to Molay, the organizations or export operators can promote themselves and have ample opportunities to create a number of jobs for many citizens. From all these employment opportunities, the country in general and the organizations or companies in particular can gain much more revenue. On the whole, the country can accumulate a range of income generating means from import commodities and export items.

When it is seen from the perspective of price, too, he added the system would open competitive chances to do so at a reasonable rate.

In a nut shell, it is well recognized that collection of taxes and/or relevant fees from citizens and relevant organizations is a cardinal development priority as it is quite essential to finance investments in infrastructure, socio-economical aspects and human capital as well. True, the provision of services for citizens and businesses as well as setting the right price incentives for sustainable private sector investment are other invaluable moves to make a difference in the economic growth trajectory. In clear terms, the tight nexus between tax, revenue and paying national debt back is highly friendly since the rise of one magnetizes the mount of another.

Art & Culture

Developing a culture of appreciation

BY NAOL GIRMA

The Mayor of Addis Ababa City Administration Adanech Abiebie has recently received a recognition award from female members of the House of Peoples Representatives (HPR) of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE). The overlord of the women's caucus at the HPR, Lomi Bedo, said the effort being exerted by the City Administration, to increase women's role in decision-making, ensure their economic security, and improve their life status was encouraging.

Lomi also added the team spirit revealed by women officials of the City Administration. Their integrated effort has brought a significant change in the city and suggested that such a coordinative culture must expand from top to bottom levels.

The HPR women's cocoon moved around the city and visited some corridor sites and human-based development activities. Concerning the corridor development, what has been done in the five corners of Addis Ababa was a manifestation of proving promises through practice and the mayor is the prominent figure to acknowledge, Lomi said.

She also acknowledged the effort of the City Administration to pull community members, who live on the streets permanently, disabled people, women, and others in need, out of poverty. "The recognition and award are meant to reflect that we are always with the mayor on her current and future activities.

The HPR members indicated that Adanech has shown her commitment to realizing her vision of ensuring people benefit from the corridor development. They also stressed that the Mayor's commitment and words in practice are an indication that women may have lost opportunities but not skills. The strength, effort and commitment of the Mayor, are not only exemplary to the women in the Nation but also to all leaders throughout the Country, according to the female HPR members.

In past political trends, the culture of recognizing one's relentless efforts and showing appreciation was not mostly welcomed by our officials or politicians. The most practical political tradition was discouraging those who worked harder for truth and the better wellbeing of the public and burying them down with acerbic criticisms, says Israel Arage, a history teacher at Radical School.

According to him politicians' lack of sense of appreciation was the reason why Ethiopia remained a backward Country for a long time.

Prime Minister Dr. Abiy's Social Affairs Councillor, Daniel Kibret, once wrote a story of a plumber who fixed a broken water pipe and solved the community's problem. In his short fiction, Daniel wrote



that a broken water line was the only way to get drinking water. When this lonely water line was broken, the water started running on the ground and was wasted. The community would repeatedly notify the water development office of that particular small town. But no one from the office came to fix the water line.

One day, a plumber saw the water flowing on the ground and couldn't simply watch the precious water get wasted. He fixed it. The officials from the water development office heard what the good citizen did for his town and his community and instead of coming up with a letter of appreciation, they came up with a later accusation for illegally fixing a government facility.

Daniel Kibret's story depicted the past trends of politicians or officials, which is a lack of appreciation for one's best accomplishments for the Nation's good causes.

"The Mayor accepted the award humbly and said the recognition and award are also for all those who have been working in cold nights and scorching hot daylight 24/7 to make Addis Ababa a flower like its name

depicts. "We will work harder to make our residents beneficiaries of the development and make the city a safe and sound place to live in," she also pledged.

In addition, the mayor underlined that there would never be a corridor development project, which would leave poor communities behind. "We work for our people. Addis Ababa was well thought out when its founders picked the name. Meanwhile, the reality has been different. The city was packed with unplanned housing, causing below-standard access to infrastructure for society. It was very congested and there were difficulties for fire control brigades to handle fire accidents because it was hard to get into many compacted slum neighborhoods. The sewerage system was poor. Pedestrian roads used to serve as parking lots. There would be car accidents because of narrow roads leading vehicles and pedestrians to move in the same lane. In this case, we cannot change the situation by punishing those who cause accidents. We have to build a world-standard infrastructure and facilities to avoid unpleasant situations and create a better living atmosphere," said Adanech.

According to the Mayor except few accessories most of the materials used in building the corridors are homemade. She says "It may look difficult, but every material is available. We have the tree seedlings for the greenery, stones to do the claddings, underground water for fountains etc."

In this case, the Mayor was also stressing not only the value of hard work but also the value of appreciating the resources one could find in his/her surroundings for a profitable task. According to her, the new working culture has enabled local unions and contractors to learn the possibility of finishing a job at a quick pace. In addition, Adanech highlighted that the corridor development project has so far created 50,000 jobs.

As the completion of the corridor development project approached, several parts of the city started shining in daylight and, most of all, at night. Several places that used to be examples of a backward, shameful lifestyle, which has for so long made society live in insecurity about almost everything, have changed. According to Israel, it is always constructive to learn and embrace the culture of appreciating what is better and more positive. He said, "Appreciating the positive achievements of a particular government or official doesn't mean playing a cadre role or supporting a political ideology that oneself doesn't accept. It is rather the openness of knowing what's best for the mass public and embracing the opportunities of working for mutual development. If we keep on thinking and acting as one nation, there is no way that we cannot realize the prosperity of this country. Most of all, we have to develop a culture of appreciation and let go of the old traditions of dragging one another backwards."

When the corridor development project is completed, the City will gain more income, which will help the City Administration to build more houses and meet other infrastructural demands of the residents, said Adanech, adding, "We have hope. We will continue our developmental progress. This is only the beginning. But all these can be achieved if people feel a sense of ownership."

Science & Technology

Ethio Coders Program:

A step towards creating vibrant generation in digitalization

BY DARGIE KAHSAY

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) launched the Five Million Ethiopian Coders' Initiative last week, which will be implemented in collaboration with the United Arab Emirates until 2026. The program targets to train five million Ethiopians in coding through online platforms, PM Abiy disclosed, calling on the youth to properly use the chance, which is open to all citizens. The Five Million Coders program is part of Ethiopia's efforts to realize digital transformation by developing skilled human resources in the digital sector. It targets cultivating the talents of the younger generation in computer programming and related skills.

Ethiopia is undertaking various measures and initiatives to transform digital technology. Especially, the Digital Ethiopia 2025 Strategy targets realizing the digital transformation of Ethiopia by 2025. As part of the initiative, in addition to reforming policies and strategies in the digital sector, promoting private sector participation in the sector, creating a conducive environment for digital transformation, and developing the digital infrastructure, Ethiopia focuses on equipping its generation with the coding program.

Coding is a computer language that helps users use their mobile or computer laptops properly or to communicate with electronic devices. Traditionally, knowledge of coding or computer language was limited to computer science professionals. However, these days, with the expansion of electronic devices and internet access, coding is becoming fundamental for all, especially for the youth generation, as business activities and the economy are digitalizing.

Considering the role of coding in developing digital technology and in creating job opportunities for the youth generation, Ethiopia launched the five million coders' initiative, which is a huge move for Ethiopia to train its growing youth generation in the rising field of digital technology. The initiative, according to PM Abiy, is a joint initiative with United Arab Emirates (UAE) to be applied for the coming three years where it targets providing coding training for five million Ethiopians.

Understands the role of coding in developing digitalization and digital economy, Ethiopia gives due focus to train its youth generation in the field. This new initiative opens a new chance for Ethiopians who are interested to train in the field. During the launching program of the initiative at the Science Museum, Prime Minister Abiy (PhD) said "despite it seems something new today, coding will become something normal practice shortly. Today, it may be difficult for us; however, it will become something easy and normal tomorrow. Hence, we have to prepare for it by training our youth generation to equip them early. We have to invest today so that our children would



5 Million Ethiopian Coders Initiative Launching Ceremony at Science Museum here in Addis Ababa

not become new to coding. We have to cultivate our children early so as to equip them in coding for their future endeavors."

According to PM Abiy, coding will become crucial in the digital technology and digital economy. Hence, to exploit the economic potential of digital technology, it is critical to develop at least basic knowledge in coding. Hence, Ethiopia's five million coders' initiative aims to equip youths the basic knowledge and skills of coding by providing trainings online. By trained the youth generation to develop coding skills, it means certifying the youths to find international job opportunities and also to equip them to create companies using the digital sector, according to the premier.

According to the premier, anyone from all corners of the country is invited to register for the online coding training. He calls all Ethiopian youths to use this open opportunity to develop their knowledge in the coding sector. As to the premier, the main goal of the five million coders' initiative is to make the youth generation active participant in the digital economy and digital transformation in Ethiopia.

For his part, Minister of Innovation and Technology, Belete Molla (PhD) said that the Ethio Coders Program is an initiative applying to realize Ethiopia's digital transformation. The initiative will help to train five million Ethiopians through online means and the ministry will work eagerly to achieve the target in the coming three years, Belete added. As to Belete, Ethiopia is investing its maximum efforts to become a competitive country in the digital technology, and it started the journey already.

Speaking to local media, Senior Advisor to the Minister of Innovation and Technology, Abiyot Bayu (PhD) stated that coding is a computer language that helps people to properly use or communicate with their electronic devices. As to him, in the past, coding demands professional knowledge in computer science where it was left for computer science experts. However, today with the expansion of internet and electronic devices, coding becomes an easy task where everyone should have developed the knowledge to for the day-to-day tasks in the digitalized world.

According to Abiyot, applications we are using in our mobile phones, laptop computers and other electronic devices are products of coding. Before becoming applications, all applications were developed as coding and translated into functional applications. This indicated that coding is a crucial skill in today's digital era. So, in today's digital world, coding is becoming a fundamental skill especially for the youth generation. Hence, according to Abiyot, by developing coding knowledge, developing new business ideas using the digital technology is becoming a new trend in the world.

"Now a day, digital technology touches every sector. Developing coding knowledge helps to exploit the potential opportunities of digital technology," Abiyot said, adding that Ethiopia's five million coders' initiative targets alerting the youth generation to develop knowledge of coding and to exploit the potential opportunities of the sector for business activities. Not only that, but he also said that coding is the future language as technology becomes more sophisticated.

Now, the chance is open for all Ethiopians to get the training through online means. As to Abiyot, over 60,000 Ethiopians are working with international companies without traveling abroad as they develop coding knowledge. For Abiyot, during the past four years, the number of Ethiopian youths joining the coding field is rising.

Through the five million Ethiopian coders' initiative, Ethiopia aims providing coding training for millions. It targets providing basic coding skills. And as to Abiyot, the training will be provided jointly with internationally accepted institutions. It targets international knowledge and certification.

The main courses of the training are, fundamentals of programming, android development, data science, AI programming which are key skills to develop coding skill, according to the advisor. Achieving the target goal within the set time frame will benefit the youth generation and Ethiopia at large. Similarly, it attracts FDI and helps the country to build digital army to protect its digital infrastructure. Hence, the youth generation and families should give due attention for this opportunity.

Considering the role of coding in developing digital technology and in creating job opportunities for the youth generation, Ethiopia launched the five million coders' initiative, which is a huge move for Ethiopia to train its growing youth generation in the rising field of digital technology

Society

Health insurance: Path to universal health coverage

BY MENGISTEAB TESHOME

In today's complex and ever-changing healthcare landscape where the cost of healthcare services is soaring up day in and day out in a manner common man cannot afford, having reliable health insurance coverage is very useful and more important than ever before to access timely healthcare services and achieve better health outcomes.

Weighing the return of health insurance, the government has implemented Community-Based Health Insurance (CBHI) to allow communities to access safe affordable healthcare services and lessen the high medical cost burden; thereby improving individual healthcare outcomes.

These days, the number of people benefitting from the government's community-based health insurance scheme is increasing all over the country from time to time.

Mekonnen Telila, 84, is one of the beneficiaries of this community-based health insurance scheme where this reporter met him while accessing health services at the Basha Wolde Chilot Health Center.

As he stated to *The Ethiopian Herald*, he was enrolled in the program five years ago. It is meaningfully alleviating the healthcare challenges of the community by enabling them to access affordable and safe healthcare services.

The program is ideal because it eases the stress of fellow citizens, especially those in low-income households due to the rising cost of medical expenses. "I developed old age-induced health problems like diabetes and vision problems. Recognizing the gravity of my condition, I visit the healthcare center frequently. The service I always receive from the health facility is good; everyone is very cooperative and willing to help patients."

Mentioning he is a pensioner, living alone because his wife and sons passed away years ago, he said that in the face of many complexities that have left him developing a feeling of frustration, confusion, and helplessness, having access to reliable healthcare services is a relief.

According to him, the health insurance plan is a game changer because it brings all the difference in ensuring that everyone has access to quality health care service and safeguarding financial security. Health insurance is paying off the community that has already enrolled as per the directives in many ways. "I would not be here today but, died years ago because of my health problems. But thanks to the scheme, it lets me get timely and essential health services, improve my health status; and be alive in dignity," he opined.

Basha Wolde Chilot Urban Health Extension Team Leader Biniyam Girma for his part said that the Health Center is providing



The health insurance plan is a game changer because it brings all the difference in ensuring that everyone has access to quality health care service and safeguarding financial security

health insurance services for over six hundred households as per the proclamation put in place.

Communication Expert with the Ethiopia Health Insurance Service, Eyob Amanu also said that the Community-Based Health Insurance system is driving Ethiopia's bid for universal health coverage in many ways, letting citizens get timely, quality services.

The ultimate goal of the scheme is to provide health insurance services to individuals and families, mainly those who often lack access to healthcare services, including the rural community. Each participant contributes a small, regular premium, which in turn grants them access to a comprehensive package of primary and secondary healthcare services.

So far, the findings indicate that the impact of the CBHI scheme has been encouraging and welcomed by the communities. Since its inception, the program has been growing steadily, with enrollment reaching over 20 million Ethiopians by 2021. CBHI is productive in rural areas, where access to healthcare has been a challenge. By making health insurance more accessible and affordable, the CBHI has empowered communities to take a more active role in managing their health and well-being.

The Ethiopian Health Insurance Service will keep on advocating the scheme through several platforms. The Service calls on stakeholders to support the effort through supplying technical and financial support.

Community-based health insurance was first launched as a pilot program in four states, Tigray, Amhara, and South Oromia States in 13 words in 2021.

In general, community-based health insurance has played a great role regarding to fulfill universal health coverage. The

progress made in the realm of health insurance has created a tangible impact on the overall health outcomes in Ethiopia. As more individuals gain access to quality healthcare, the country has experienced a decline in infant and maternal mortality rates, as well as a reduction in the prevalence of communicable diseases. Additionally, the increased focus on preventive care has enabled Ethiopians to proactively manage their health status.

However, the country's commitment to expanding health insurance coverage, coupled with the meaningful impact it has brought about on the lives of its citizens, serves as an inspiring example for others seeking to prioritize the health and wellbeing of their populations.

According to documents, the CBHI scheme seeks to put an end to debilitating and potentially devastating out-of-pocket health expenses for the approximately 85 percent of Ethiopians who work in the informal sector. As such, it is a key component of the country's pursuit of universal health coverage, a target set by countries during the adoption of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals in 2015. Households with members employed in the formal sector, meanwhile, will soon be included in a mandatory social health insurance scheme that is in the final stages of launching.

Between 2015 and 2020, almost 7 million households, equating to 32 million people, enrolled in the scheme. About 5.5 million of these households were members paying the yearly premium, while the remaining 1.5 million households were sponsored by the government. Over the same period, the number of new consultations in all health facilities by CBHI beneficiaries increased by over 200 percent, as to documents.

International News

Cameroon's ministry of economy, planning and regional development and ECA join forces for ICISOE 2024

YAOUNDE/CAMEROON (ECA) - The third joint session of the Intergovernmental Committee of Senior Officials and Experts (ICISOE) of Central and East Africa will be held in Yaoundé, Cameroon, from October 15 to 18, 2024. His Excellency Alamine Ousmane Mey, the Cameroon Minister of Economy, Planning and Regional Development, has agreed for a joint organization between ECA and his department. "I would like to thank ECA for choosing Cameroon as the venue for this high-level event. Am happy to express the support of the Ministry of the Economy in ensuring a successful meeting of the Inter-governmental Committee", he said.

The audience on July 29, 2024 gave Jean Luc Mastaki, Director of the ECA's Sub-Regional Office for Central Africa, the opportunity to officially present to his host the stakes and implications of this statutory meeting, which will see strong participation from East and Central Africa. "Cameroon is

our host country, and ECA is proud to hold its statutory meeting at home. This session of the ICE will bring together two ECA offices, and we hope that Cameroon's leadership in the sub-region will serve as a guide to ensure that Central Africa benefits fully from this experience," emphasized Jean Luc Mastaki.

The previous two sessions of the joint ICISOE of ECA's Offices for Central and East Africa were respectively held in the Seychelles and Burundi, therefore in East Africa. In 2024, discussions will focus on "Rapid implementation of research and innovation solutions to accelerate economic diversification in Central and East Africa". For His Excellency Alamine Ousmane Mey "this theme is a clear follow-up to the discussions on the Douala consensus adopted in September 2017. Research and innovation have accelerated economic development and particularly industrial progress wherever they have been integrated. If we

want to achieve the high level of value addition, we definitely need to strengthen research and innovation systems."

Today's meeting was also an opportunity for the Minister in charge of the Economy and ECA-CA's Director to review the cooperation between Cameroon and ECA. Alamine Ousmane Mey praised "the quality of cooperation, which is rich, dense and fruitful at both regional and subregional levels, with Africa aligning itself on a common position for the reform of the global financial architecture, ECA's support in drawing up and implementing the national development strategy (SND30), the national strategy towards a successful implementation of the AfCFTA Agenda, the review of the industrialization masterplan, the development of value chains through the Special Economic Zone for timber in Bertoua and the Kribi-Edea-Douala growth triangle. We are delighted about this, and know we can count on ECA's support when it comes to

large-scale and transformative projects like the AfCFTA. This major market will drive investment, industrial transformation and job creation.

Jean Luc Mastaki praised the good collaboration between experts from the Ministry of the Economy and their ECA colleagues on several pieces of work at national and sub-regional level. "We are fully committed to pursuing our engagement on improving economic and environmental statistics, strengthening foresight, implementing the AfCFTA Agenda, promoting green finance and carbon credits for Cameroon's economic transformation," he said.

The forthcoming meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee of Senior Officials and Experts of Central and East Africa will provide an opportunity to consolidate this partnership.

Source: UNECA

Equipping leaders to resolve land challenges in Africa through a political economy approach

WESTERNA CAPE /SOUTH AFRICA (ECA) - The Institute for Poverty, Land and Agrarian Studies (PLAAS), at the University of the Western Cape, in collaboration with the African Land Policy Centre (ALPC) have concluded a five day short course on the Political Economy of Land Governance in Africa.

"The aim of this short course was to equip leaders to resolve the land challenges facing the continent because the majority of both rural and urban residents have insecure tenure rights, either in law or in practice," said Joan Kagwanja, ALPC Coordinator.

"Land challenges in Africa can only be addressed by building a highly skilled cohort of land professionals and land policy makers," added Ms. Kagwanja.

ALPC is an initiative of the African Union Commission, UN Economic Commission for Africa and the African Development Bank, focused on

A range of stakeholders, experts on land reforms and governance were trained on various themes and concepts that include pre-colonial and colonial histories of customary and statutory land tenure in Africa; introduction to the political economy of land in Africa; and reform law, policy and governance in Africa; women's land rights in Africa; natural resource access and management in Africa; political economy of extractive industries and land rights; commodification of the commons

in the transition to neo-liberalism; urban and rural land administration in Africa; large-scale land acquisitions in Africa; African and global land policy and policy guidelines; and climate crisis and land governance

Making a presentation on Food Systems and Land Governance in Africa, Mamadou Goita Institute for Research and Promotion of Alternatives in Development, Mali said land reform is instrumental to this production system.

"We need more diverse and resilient food systems to better withstand shocks, urgent debt relief for poorer countries and we must learn from countries that have eradicated hunger - through social protection schemes," said Goita.

On the subject, Pre-Colonial & Colonial Histories of Customary & Statutory Land Tenure in Africa, Kojo Amanor University of Ghana highlighted that land reform processes under economic reform stresses administrative reform rather than land redistributive reform.

The recent resurgence of the customary land tenure, he said, hinders a critical historical assessment, freezes African society within traditional identities, and obstructs policies that promote social redistribution, justice, and agricultural modernization.

According to Ruth Hall from PLAAS, political economy is a perspective which aims to denaturalize the distribution of

power and resources. It is an analytical perspective that draws attention to the historical process of the creation of regimes of property and the distinction between who holds the land, how capital is accumulated, and who controls labor.

Phyllan Zamchiya University of the Western Cape - Institute for Poverty, Land, and Agrarian Studies (PLAAS) noted that Market-led land reforms are painfully slow, prompting calls for stronger interventions to support smallholder producers. Land restitution has been particularly messy in South Africa, highlighting that context matters. "This problem won't be solved without strong social movements from below. The challenge is to rethink what works best for communities and to understand land reform within broader agrarian reform."

Patricia Kameri-Mbote for her part emphasized the need to prioritize vulnerable communities, particularly with regard to climate issues, calling for participatory governance.

"The more things change, the more they stay the same - land continues to be a very important resource, and it has many implications for local, national, sub-regional, regional, and also global development," she said

Emmanuel Sulle - Aga Khan University, presented key tools and instruments to address issues of women's land rights and quantify and monitor the performance

of different countries. This revealed that overall in Africa, the implementation and protection of women's land rights are weak. "We must be optimistic that we can be the seeds of change and transformation. We can implement reforms that are people-led and emphasize local agency," he said.

On Rural and Urban Land Administration in Africa, Andries du Toit, University of the Western Cape - School of Government said there is a need for flexible land tenure systems that accommodate local needs. Moreover, the effectiveness of such systems depends on the government overseeing them, creating a tension between the desire to centralize and the need for locally responsive systems, calling for a balance between centralization and decentralization.

Speaking on the commodification of the commons in the transition to neoliberalism, Issa Shivji School of Law, University of Dar-es Salaam said we must shift our internalized concept of individual ownership and rethink ownership itself.

"Embracing new ideas will face resistance, reflecting the bifurcation in our society, where social groups and classes have developed but large masses remain untouched," he said, adding that reclaiming the commons will resonate with the masses but less so with smaller groups, leading to a class struggle.

Source: UNECA



This is Ethiopia

Melka Kunture: Unique Paleolithic site

COMPILED BY STAFF REPORTER

Melka Kunture, located in the southwestern part of Oromia State, in the upper Awash Valley, 50 km south of Addis Ababa, is a rich and complex cluster of archaeological sites.

This prehistoric site is surrounded by mountains like Wachacha and Furi Mountains in the North, Boti and Agoiabi in the South, and the main Ethiopian Rift Valley system to the East.

According to documents, the serial property is a cluster of prehistoric sites that preserve archaeological and paleontological records, including footprints that testify to the area's occupation by the hominine groups from two million years ago and the fossil footprints at Melka Kunture occur more frequently than expected, which encouraged archaeologists to be more aware of the possible presence of bioturbated layers in other archaeological contexts and to plan specific research accordingly.

Some months back, a team of researchers affiliated with several institutions in Spain, working with two colleagues from France and another from Germany and excavating at Melka Kunture, had also announced the discovery of a 1.2 million-year-old 'stone tools workshop', in this same area, which brought additional development in archeological studies from Ethiopia.

The archaeologists uncovered almost 600 obsidian stone tools and identified the oldest known "workshop," the study says.

Such workshops developed as tool-making evolved into a skill. Individuals who developed such skills worked together in workshops to crank out enough of whatever tools were needed by those in the general area. One such tool was the handaxe, which could be used for chopping or as a weapon, the researchers indicated.

Handaxes were made by chipping bits off of a stone to make a sharp edge. They were not attached to anything; they were simply held in the hand when in use. The stones used were typically flint or, in later times, obsidian—a type of volcanic glass. Obsidian, even in modern times, is considered a difficult material to work with because it is so rough on the hands. In this new effort, the researchers have found evidence of an obsidian handaxe knapping workshop established far earlier than one has ever been seen before.

According to the archaeologists, excavating at Melka Kunture, almost 600 obsidian stone tools were identified and there are also a large deposit of obsidian stones at the Melka Kunture archaeological site, according to a study published Jan. 19 in the journal Nature.



The obsidian handaxes found at the Melka Kunture Archeological site by Italo-Spanish archaeologists.



The archaeologists concluded that they uncovered a "stone-tool workshop" — the oldest ever known, according to the study.

The Tourism Ethiopia Investment Profile document also highlights sites potential in archeological remains. it stated that the archaeological deposits of Melka Kunture are a unique archive of human evolution, spanning over more than 1.7 million years, from Oldowan layers to a very long and complex sequence of Acheulean layers, to Middle Stone Age and eventually by Late Stone Age layers.

Own to this, Melka Kunture and the surrounding areas have been the focus of long-term archaeological, paleontological, and geological research.

This Paleolithic site, aside from its importance as a rich and complex cluster of archaeological sites, has substantial benefits in promoting the tourism sector

and generating considerable income for local communities.

As Solomon Kebede stated in his paper titled "Significance of Melka Kunture Prehistoric Site for Sustainable Tourism Development of Ethiopia," the site would bring a significant positive impact on the development of sustainable tourism.

The proximity of the archeological site to the capital city, as well as the presence of closely located archeological and paleontological localities, the Open Air Museum, the natural resource sites in the wide area, as well as the flourishing living cultural qualities of the Oromo people and the natural habitat can yield ample economic benefits to local people and the country.

As an archeological site, that largely attracts researchers, educational visitors, leisure tourists, and other excursionists, the site has

untapped tourist attractions.

Recently, in the 46th annual conference of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee taking place in New Delhi, India from July 21-31, 2024, the Melka Kunture and Balchit Archaeological and Paleontological Site has been inscribed on the prestigious World Heritage List of UNESCO.

Following the nomination of the area to be included in the Heritage list, As ENA reported referring to the Ethiopian Embassy in India, Melka Kunture and Balchit Archaeological and Palaeontological Sites located in the Upper Awash Valley in Ethiopia, the serial property is a cluster of prehistoric sites that preserve archaeological and paleontological records – including footprints – that testify to the area's occupation by the hominin groups from two million years ago.

The sites, situated about 2,000 to 2,200 meters above sea level, yielded Homo erectus, Homo heidelbergensis, and archaic Homo sapiens fossils, documented in well-dated strata in association with various tools made from volcanic rocks.

The cultural sequence includes four consecutive phases of the Oldowan, Acheulean, Middle Stone Age, and Late Stone Age techno-complexes.

Fragments of palaeo-landscapes, preserved buried under volcanic and sedimentary deposits with fossil fauna and flora, allow reconstruction of the high-mountain ecosystem of the Ethiopian Highlands during the Pleistocene.

Thus, it can be drawn on the adaptation of hominin groups to the challenges and climatic conditions of high altitudes, according to the Ethiopian Embassy in India.

The Embassy added it is delighted to share the news that Melaka Kunture and Balchit Archeology and Paleontological site has been registered as world heritage during the 46th annual conference of UNESCO World Heritage Committee meeting in New Delhi, India.

Among the three requirements for Melaka Kunture and Balchit Archeology and Paleontological Site to be inscribed as a World Heritage Site is that it contains stone tools that were used by humans from 2.5 million years to the end of the Stone Age.

Furthermore, because the site contains many human and animal fossils dating back to 2.5 million years old it to be declared as a world heritage.

In her message to the conference, Minister of Tourism, Amb. Nasise Chali, said that the fact that this heritage was registered during the 50th anniversary of Lucy's discovery, is of great significance to the country. It has also given further proof to the world that Ethiopia is truly land of origin.