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Tamirat wins gold shattering Olympic marathon record

President, Premier extend congratulatory messages

BY BILAL DERSO

ADDIS ABABA – Athlete Tamirat Tola clinched the gold medal at the Paris 2024 Olympics, setting a new Olympic record with a time of 2:06:26, and becoming the first Ethiopian to win the Olympic marathon since 2000.

Tamirat, who previously won the marathon at the World Championships in Eugene, U.S., two years ago, led the race from the 21 km mark and secured Ethiopia's first gold medal at the 33rd Paris Olympics. Athletes from Belgium and Kenya claimed the second and third positions, while Deresa Geleta of Ethiopia finished fifth.

In celebration of this significant sporting achievement, President Sahle-Work Zewde and Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) extended their heartfelt congratulations to the people of Ethiopia. They praised Tamirat for raising the country's flag high once again with his gold medal victory in the marathon. "Tamirat Tola!! You have brought happiness and pride to our people!! Today's victory has a special meaning. May the creator bless you!!" expressed President Sahle-Work.



Stakeholders stress Nat'l Dialogue's role to promote peace

• ENDC embarks agenda gathering in Harar

BY BETELHEM BEDLU

HARAR– The National Dialogue process could help the nation develop the habit of resolving differences through discussion, according to ENDC Commissioner Tegegnework Getu (PhD). Speaking during the official agenda gathering phase in Harari State, the commissioner emphasized that the National

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Growing concerns on rising cyber-attacks

BY YESUF ENDRIS

As the intensity and volume of cyber-attack targeting Ethiopian public and private institutions is growing, officials and scholars are raising concerns and suggesting measures to be taken to save the country from huge damage.

In her recent discussion with staffs of the Ethiopian Police University, Information Network Security Agency Director General, Tigist Hamid had called for University's special collaboration in the fight against cyber-attacks.

Parallel to digital advancements, several Ethiopian enterprises and institutions are becoming victims of cybercrimes. Only in the first half of 2024, the INSA reported 4,623 attempted cyber-attacks targeting public and private institutions though it has successfully thwarted 98.56 percent of them. The volume of the attack compared to the past year was also greater and amounted to 115 percent. If



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Metropolis gears for African Cities Forum: GCS

BY STAFF REPORTER

ADDIS ABABA- In a move that highlights its commitment to a greener future, Addis Ababa is set to host the inaugural African Cities Sustainability Forum slated to be held from September 4-6, 2024, the Government

See Metropolis gears for ... page 4

EuroCham backs new economic reform amidst challenges

BY DANIEL ALEMAYEHU

ADDIS ABABA:- European Chamber in Ethiopia (EuroCham) backs Ethiopia's recent reform on a market-based exchange rate signaling such move to eliminate nation's forex crunch amidst some ongoing concerns.

According to a press release sent to the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA), EuroCham believes that the historic economic reform surely brings "a landslide change into the macro-economic landscape" while addressing the longstanding disparity in structural distortions.

The reform, based on the press release, will open doors for the forex availability for the manufacturing and import-substitution sectors by reducing the role of parallel market. "The announced measures have the potential to address long standing macroeconomic imbalances."

"The authorization of forex exchange bureaus is a crucial step towards addressing the scarcity of foreign currency notes in the formal economy which will benefit outbound travelers."

These measures, together with a more unified exchange rate are expected to stimulate the inflow of forex into the formal market, including remittances originating from the diaspora community, and reduce the demand for black market exchange.

The ability of exporters to freely use their own foreign exchange for purchasing goods



and services within the same legal entity also marks a groundbreaking shift in Ethiopia's economic landscape, the presser stated.

"The new regulations allow big scale mining, public-private partnerships (PPPs), and strategic foreign direct investments (FDIs) to establish offshore accounts. It also introduces favorable conditions for Special Economic Zones (SEZs) and Industrial Parks (IPs)."

The presser also disclosed the concerns observed such as price hikes seen on many agricultural commodities, minimum export prices, backlogged dividend repatriations, and the restriction on fuel powered vehicles, and

the like.

"Unless the government takes bold action on actors engaged in contraband, price hiking and hoarding, the envisioned reforms will miss their target and trigger an accelerated inflation."

"For the reforms to be effective, a multi-stakeholder approach is required, and government stakeholders such as customs, tax authorities, trade regulators, security forces and NBE jointly crack down on illicit actors whereby the rule of law and peace and security shall prevail and anti-inflation measures are rapidly implemented."

Ethio telecom eyeing rural community's digital inclusion

• Deploys rural connectivity solutions

BY ASHENAFI ANIMUT

BOZABER- Ethio telecom launched the first phase of the rural mobile connectivity solution project in Central Ethiopia, Guraghe Zone Bozaber Town aiming to bridge the existing digital divide between rural people and their livelihoods.

Speaking at the launching ceremony yesterday, Network Infrastructure Deputy Chief Officer Alem Hailemariam said that the company is working with a great enthusiasm to build a resilient digital economy and realize digital Ethiopia bridging the digital inclusion gaps.

While launching the new and modern rural mobile connectivity solution, Alem emphasized that this rural community coverage help the rural communities to access telecommunications services thereby reducing the network coverage gap.

It was also stated at the occasion that the firm has successfully deployed yesterday 100 new rural mobile solutions in various rural areas where enabling approximately 903,000 residents across 305 kebeles with accessible telecom services.

He pointed out that: "The company is a pioneer in providing telecommunications services in Africa and has been significantly contributing to our country's comprehensive development for the past 130 years by making the latest technological advancements widely accessible to our community."

Telecom has planned to deploy about 500 rural mobile solutions in remote areas throughout the country in March 2024, it was stated.

He said, "This achievement underscores our unwavering commitment to bridging the digital divide and ensuring equitable access to connectivity for all."

When the project was undergoing, he said that they encountered various challenges such as difficult terrain, scattered settlements, and power shortages, but it was managed to achieve with the invaluable support of the local communities.

Moreover, this innovative rural connectivity solution is eco-friendly, solar powered, scalable technology with 2G and 3G connectivity and a capacity for 4G upgrades and free from environmental pollution, Alem noted.

Apart from lessening the hassle that the local communities heading to get connectivity services, he said, adding that this rural connectivity project makes the company one of the few prominent telecom operators in Africa help realize the rural connectivity project it is believed to ensuring the long-term sustainable development and economic opportunities of rural areas.

According to him, this service not only enables the rural part of our country to get basic telecom services, but also substantially contribute to bridge the existing digital divide between rural people and cities by empowering them to digital services in areas such as education, health, agriculture and other sectors thereby creating economic opportunities for citizens and improving the life of local citizens, he pointed out.

Indeed, it would also improve local communities' lives for it enables them to use telebirr and access digital based micro credit and saving services beyond sending, receiving and making transactions.



Harari unveils corridor dev't to boost tourism, heritage preservation

BY BETELHEM BEDLU

HARAR- The recent corridor development activities are set to enhance the tourism industry by adding beauty and comfort for visitors, according to Harari State President Ordin Bedri.

Speaking during the inauguration of the state's corridor development projects on Friday evening, President Ordin highlighted the significance of these upgrades.

The state unveiled new infrastructure, including a plaza corridor, public toilets, and roads within the Jegol Walls, a UNESCO World Heritage site. Ordin emphasized that the corridor development

not only enhances the state's historic charm, known for its ancient architecture enriched with indigenous knowledge and traditional medicine, but also serves to connect current and future generations.

"This project reflects our commitment to fostering a vibrant working culture, demonstrating the dedication of both officials and citizens to achieve our goals," President Ordin stated. He also noted that the state is undertaking various initiatives aimed at harnessing its natural resources.

Looking ahead, President Ordin stressed the importance of public participation and ensuring community benefits in future corridor development activities. The state

recently celebrated the recognition of two heritage sites under UNESCO, further highlighting its rich cultural legacy.

The ceremony concluded with acknowledgments for stakeholders who contributed to the success of the corridor development project, which was initially inspired by a broader initiative from the Addis Ababa City Administration. This initiative aims to transform Ethiopian cities into smart, modern spaces by rejuvenating neglected urban areas, with plans to improve infrastructure, create pedestrian-friendly zones, and enhance utility networks to elevate the quality of life for city dwellers.

Editorial

A concerted effort to crystalize Ethiopia's turnaround

Ethiopia is undergoing various economic improvement programs. This move is part of the country's economic reform initiative and that of the 10-year home-grown economic improvement push. As such, lately, the country has opted for the market to decide the foreign currency exchange rate. The bold measure is aimed at curbing the loss in the foreign currency earnings the country used to incur and augment its perks.

The policy amendments are believed to bring to life an enduring and sustainable seedbed to the country. The reform program has zeroed in on covering one's expenses by oneself. The full translation into action of the Macro Economic Reform Program has the objective of modernizing Ethiopia's economy and warranting unflinching growth.

Though Ethiopia's economy is portraying growth, failure to fully implement initiatives has created its share of sluggishness. The macroeconomic reform program in full swing has the aim of covering expenses by oneself. This has resulted in an upswing in the supply side of hard currency. The venture aside from allowing Banks to render a state-of-the-art service, affords them an upward trajectory in the hard currency they collect thereby facilitating their success.

Such an economic reform program does not only promise a turnaround in the aforementioned sphere but also a new opportunity for Ethiopian Diaspora and Ethiopians of Foreign Origin who have the capacity and preparedness to open foreign exchange bureaus. Because the aforementioned stakeholders have the financial muscles and expertise to crystalize the sought-after change. Through formal channels, they could inject their hard-won wealth into the country's growth ventures.

Observably, the Ethiopian Diasporas and foreigners of Ethiopian origin will do everything they can to buttress the reform program and kill birds with a stone—assist their country and help themselves. Following the measure taken, the National Bank of Ethiopia has called upon the Ethiopian Diaspora, foreigners of Ethiopian origin, and Ethiopians who can be forthcoming in getting the ball rolling. In doing so the latter could benefit innumerable unemployed citizens here.

A country does not belong to a few. It experiences a leap or suffers a lapse as a cumulative effect. In light of this, knowingly or otherwise some try to bar the inflow of foreign currency. However wide the chasm in political outlook with the incumbent, it is hard to imagine the presence of individuals untethered from Ethiopia that take pride in the lapse of this ancient country aiming as well as striving to catapult to affluence. When it comes to politics, begging to differ is not something to be frowned upon as it is exercising democracy. But this does not swing a room for putting a spoke in the development wheels of the country, for such a folly augurs ill for the nation. This way a rosy future and a prosperous country for the coming generations will be elusive. That is why capitalizing on supporting a nation becomes plausible.

The abovementioned reform is also one that takes aboard entrepreneurs who want to engage in the investment sector. It could serve as a springboard for them to make a dive into the investment venture to allow the country to catapult to the pinnacle of prosperity.

Thanks to the economic reform and policy amendments, the ripe moment has presented itself. Hence, it is high time the Ethiopian Diaspora and foreigners of Ethiopian origin come here in droves and roll up their sleeves to play their due role in spurring the country's march in the right direction, which holds in store the amenities of modern life. The good gesture on the government's side must sink in.

There is a call for a concerted effort to crystalize Ethiopia's turnaround in the economic sphere.

Opinion

Maximizing efficiency with better OSH policies, training

BY GIRMACHEW GASHAW

Alemayeh Jida, 32, is a father of two who currently works for a flower farm in the southwestern region of the Awash River. He has been employed at the farm for the past eight years. Despite the strong smell of flowers and chemicals, he has no better option than working in a difficult situation to earn a living.

More than 1300 workers are employed at the flower farm, but the factory shows little concern for the safety and health of its workers. The care and protection given to the flowers, which bring in profits for the farm owner, far surpasses the attention given to the workers.

As a result, many workers are now suffering from various occupational diseases, such as occupational asthma, a chronic lung condition affecting people of all ages. According to data from the Ministry of Agriculture, nearly 200,000 individuals are employed in the labor-intensive horticulture sector. You can imagine how many workers are exposed to various diseases due to an unsafe work environment.

Similarly, a number of workers, especially daily laborers, participating in the construction sector are also exposed to death, injuries, and fatalities while partaking in an unsafe work environment.

A systematic review and meta-analysis showed that approximately 44.66% of labor workers in Ethiopia have experienced occupational injuries. Factors contributing to increased odds of injury include being male, working more than eight hours per day, lack of supervision, absence of personal protective equipment, and lack of OSH training.

The sad part of the story is that those who have faced physical injuries or fatalities did not report or notify OSH incidents to the various labor offices as they did not see any positive benefits for doing so. Incident reporting was seen as an invitation to be punished rather than an opportunity to improve OSH procedures.

Ethiopia has put systems in place to ensure work place safety and health, but the effectiveness of these systems is compromised by a general lack of resources and training to permit the required level of enforcement and implementation.

Every company is expected to comply with standards regarding occupational safety and health (OSH) in the country. While there have been improvements in meeting OSH standards, there are still areas that need to be addressed.

Improving workplace safety measures and raising awareness can help reduce injuries and create a safer work environment. The economic impact of workplace accidents causing injuries or fatalities is significant, emphasizing the need for better OSH standards and practices in Ethiopia.

The Ministry of Labor and Skills (MoLS) oversees OSH in Ethiopia and reported a high rate of fatalities in the construction sector. There is a pressing need for improved OSH performance in various sectors to prevent accidents and ensure worker safety.

Given the lack of research into this sector, and a lack of formal policies and procedures for reporting accidents and injuries, there is limited reliable and accurate data.

However, this assessment starts to give a picture of the burden from a lack of occupational health and safety policies and procedures. It presents a strong motivation for investment to be made in this area.

Poor OSH performance is generally observed when local companies are engaged on locally funded projects. There is often a better adoption of OSH systems and performance when the same companies are engaged in projects financed or executed by international investors or when supplying to international markets.

Discussions with local companies revealed that international investors require high OSH standards as a condition of doing business with them and hence this drives them to comply. This requirement is lacking or not consistently enforced by both government and local businesses, thus contributing to non-compliance on local projects.

The credibility of any inspectorate depends to a large extent on its ability to give competent advice to employers and workers on how best to comply with the law, but it also depends on the existence and implementation of an enforcement regime. Any threat of enforcement must be perceived as a real one. Enforcement efforts by labor inspectorates in Ethiopia are limited. Inspectorates also indicated that they normally 'advise' employers rather than enforce the law.

Although the legal framework for a national 'Occupational accident, disease, and dangerous occurrences data collection and reporting system' is in place, it has not yet developed into an integrated system that has clear standard operating procedures which include definitions, guidance, simple tools and forms, information and training to key actors (labor inspectors and employers) which would enable compliance with the legal provisions.

Despite these challenges, there have been examples of success which can guide future interventions to improve OSH performance. Institutional changes, international best practice showcased by foreign contractors, the requirements of international financiers, and reputational risk to foreign investors all have a role to play in this process. However, for change to be sustainable, it must be driven by national enterprises, with a strong lead coming from top management.

To improve the OSH environment in Ethiopia, systems, policies, and procedures need to be put in place. There first needs to be a broader understanding of the implications of a lack of OSH, which this assessment begins to measure. Once there is an understanding of the scale of impact, then there should be a greater appreciation of the problem at all levels, from senior government officials to companies implementing the procedures. Refined reporting systems will allow the government to more accurately track the impact that workplace accidents and injuries have. It will also allow the measurement of progress made by improvements in OSH.

To address these challenges, it is essential to implement better OSH policies, procedures, and training. Increased enforcement and compliance with OSH standards will lead to a safer work environment and a more competitive economy for Ethiopia.

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



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Oromia to plant millions of trees

BY MESERET BEHAILU

ADDIS ABABA – As part of the national green legacy initiative, hundreds of millions of trees would be planted in Oromia, the State Agriculture Bureau announced.

Bureau's Deputy Head Elias Kedir told The Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) that the necessary preparation has been finalized to plant hundreds of millions of seedlings.

The head stated that advocacy works have been undertaken in to achieve the plan while sites and planting holes are prepared

well, he mentioned.

According to him, Oromia has been carrying out soil and natural resource protection activities through planting over 4.9 million seedlings under the green legacy initiative.

According to Elias, the seedlings have been planted in 1,000 spotted areas in many parts of the Oromia state this August.

“The seedlings that are planted are different due to exploiting for food such as avocado, guava and others. In a similar manner, plants that used for animal fodder and environmental protection will be planted

in the state. As the Oromo people have a good culture in preserving trees under the traditional constructive rules, which has a paramount importance to achieve the plan across the state,” he noted.

He called up on residents to put their fingerprint in these historical moments and support the national ambition of improving production and productivity.

It was to be recalled that Ethiopia has planned to plant 7.5 billion seedlings under the national green legacy initiative this fiscal year.

Metropolis gears...

Communication Service (GCS) said.

Briefing journalists yesterday, GCS Minister Legesse Tulu (PhD) stated that 59 urban development ministers, 14 African mayors and over 2,640 participants registered to take part in the event that will be held under the theme : “Sustainable Urbanization Planning for Africa’s Transformation - Agenda 2063.”

The forum set to discuss strategies for sustainable urban development across the continent.

Deputy Prime Minister Temesgen Tirunch

took a significant step towards the forum by convening an awareness-raising session with the African Urban Forum National Coordinating Committee. This underlines Ethiopia’s dedication to ensuring a successful and impactful event.

The forum presents a unique opportunity for African nations to share best practices and develop a collaborative roadmap for sustainable urbanization. This aligns with Africa’s Agenda 2063, a blueprint for the continent’s social and economic transformation.

As a historic nation and a founding member

of the African Union, Ethiopia is taking a leadership role in championing sustainable development across the continent. Deputy Premier Temesgen emphasized this responsibility on social media, highlighting Ethiopia’s commitment to fostering collaboration amongst “African brothers.”

The African Cities Sustainability Forum has the potential to be a turning point for urban planning in the continent. With its focus on sustainability and collaboration, the forum can set the stage for a greener, more prosperous future for African cities, it was learned.

Growing concerns...

all attacks were successful, the amount of loss could be over 10.5 billion Birr, according to INSA.

Globally, even a single cyber-attack causes huge damages. Last July, a single updating task of the cyber-security firm, crowd strike, had caused technology outage on businesses and institutions in multiple countries, airports, airlines, rail companies, government services, banks, stock exchanges, supermarkets, telecoms, health systems and media outlets into chaos, as reported by Al Jazeera.

Both the national and global reports on cyber-attack impacts show the devastating consequences of cyber-attack. Scholars in political science and international relations urged the Ethiopian government to

prioritize defensive mechanisms against the growing cyber-attacks targeting major public enterprises.

In an interview with the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA), Political Science and International Relations scholar, Degu Asres (PhD), highlighted that enterprises such as Ethiopian Airlines, Ethio telecom, and various banks are the most vulnerable institutions to cyber-attacks due to their profitability.

These attacks could stem from competitive countries, groups, or individuals, he said.

“These companies contribute significantly to government revenue. Consequently, those who opposed the government, including some foreign nations, may seek to weaken it

through cyber-attacks,” Degu noted.

He also emphasized that defamation on social media platforms is a form of cyber-attack, with some attackers aiming to distort information in government databases. The need for to enhance defensive capabilities is critical, he underlined.

“As institutions with substantial national interests, large enterprises must invest heavily in their IT systems. They should also keep pace with the dynamic developments in information systems globally.”

Public Administration Policy expert Gemechu Ararso (PhD) added that flagship projects and enterprises are not sometimes immune to cyber threats. “For example, the Ethiopian Airlines Group, a major national

Stakeholders stress...

Dialogue would be instrumental in promoting this approach.

The Ethiopian National Dialogue Commission (ENDC) is committed to integrating indigenous knowledge in a way that aligns with the context of the state. Tegegnework noted that the ENDC identified over 360 participants from 10 community representatives across nine districts in Harari State one year ago. The agenda gathering phase is set to last for six consecutive days.

The ENDC has identified participants in 10 states and two city administrations, recognizing that National Dialogue is a new concept for the country. Extensive discussions have been held across these states with various representatives.

Religious leader Melakselam Keleme work Mekonen highlighted the importance of resolving differences through dialogue to preserve the nation’s values passed down through generations. “Unlike in the past, solving challenges through discussion can save citizens from unnecessary sacrifices.” He also emphasized the role of indigenous knowledge in addressing challenges and creating a better future for the next generation.

Semira Abdi, a representative of displaced people currently residing in a shelter in Harari for six years, underscored that dialogue is crucial for peacefully settling insecurities and conflicts. She stressed that while disagreements are inevitable, discussion should always be the first option, considering its impact on others.

Additionally, Semira stated that the National Dialogue is essential for fostering a culture of peaceful conflict resolution.

asset, had faced significant risks because of social media campaigns. Recent defamations appear aimed at creating political, economic, and diplomatic crises towards Ethiopia,” he said.

He pointed out that geopolitical struggles, internal conflicts, and regional instabilities are intensifying the frequency of cyber-attacks. As these threats become increasingly prevalent, he recommended that the solution lies in developing modern defense systems.

To protect the country’s giant financial institutions and enterprises from cyber-attacks, the need for coordinated and strategic action, and awareness raising of individuals working on such institutions are major priorities that scholars are suggesting.

Opinion

Locally devised means for defeating poverty

BY MENGESHA AMARE

The sustainability of mechanisms devised at home is unquestionably viable and lucrative as their spare parts are in the vicinity to be modified and altered whenever need arises. However, the solutions or subsidiary approaches imported from other nations or cultures might not be sustainable and rewarding as wasting time in search of remedies from countries of origin incurs the nation too much.

The very important approach recently entertained scheme, which is termed as 'homegrown economic reform program', as its name bespeaks, it reflects doable means to solve problems using home made weapons, mechanisms and gratifying approaches at home. Apart from pronouncing the lyrics of Homegrown Economic Reform Agenda, which has been a alleyway to opulence is a comprehensive economic restructuring, making conditions conducive for the people directly affected by the problems and/or issues of poverty is an incomparable lane to make a difference.

This means that the affected people themselves will be the major participants of the intervention to fight against poverty. Formal leaders need to be consulted, as well as those affected to make a difference. Their worldview should be taken into contemplation, and through facilitation, they become part of the process of addressing and resolving the issues they and fellow citizens face.

Besides, it is quite important to create an organized group within the community to help many people, rather than only a few individuals. Yes, as an alternative of working with individual persons, it is more effective to facilitate collective and organized actions to help strengthen and empower people in poverty through an institute. This means that it is not enough to provide assistance to individually affected persons alone, but through collective organization, each individual is developed and steps are taken to address their problems and other evils in the future.

Whenever community members are authorized to well identify issued and are made part of the plan, they would develop sense of belongingness and active in terms of being part of the solution. True, it is more effective when issues and troubles are identified by the people facing them. They begin to gain self-confidence and acquire capabilities in working together on simple problems. This means that their initial efforts and experiences can be used toward addressing more complex problems and concerns. It is in identifying and acting on their initial simple issues or problems that the affected people gain confidence and the capability to identify other matters which need to be properly addressed. Though externally introduced projects can help some of poverty's effects, without the people's active involvement linking these projects with their own identified issues and problems, such projects will most likely not be sustained or maintained.

Unequivocally, fighting poverty takes time

as it is not an overnight processes. The process of fighting poverty is not simple, indeed, especially since a deep personal transformation needs to take place in various forms and magnitudes, whose spillover effect benefits the nation at large. Since it takes time to empower affected people, they can become actors of their own development and change through lively contribution. Coming back to the transformation via effective poverty reduction, the recent reform and the most recent macroeconomic move build on the achievements of the past decade in infrastructure and human capital developments, among others.

Interestingly, poverty reduction schemes, including myriads of reforms, would incorporate strengthening public finances including through improving the efficiency of privatization for instance, gradually moving towards a flexible exchange rate regime to address external imbalances, reviving the monetary policy framework with the objective to stabilize prices and support if properly managed and systematically handled. This is to say that if the reform and policy trajectories are not scrupulously directed and professionally supervised, the outcome would undoubtedly be the overturned.

Unequivocally, when a nation relies heavily on imports, it may inadvertently adopt foreign cultural practices or lose its own traditional industries. Yes, by embracing autarky and promoting domestic production, Ethiopia can preserve its unique cultural heritage and support local artisans and craftsmen. Not only does this help to maintain independence, sovereignty and national identity but it also contributes to tourism and investment opportunities by which economic growth can be pushed forward, which ultimately helps the nation defeat poverty.

True, economic independence brings numerous benefits and opportunities for Ethiopia, ranging from increased job opportunities and improved living standards to enhanced security and resilience thereby being confidently competent in the continental and/or global arena. Most definitely, Ethiopia can have ample opportunities and greater control over its economic policies, foster innovation, among others, via embracing autarky and reducing dependence on external sources, aid providers as well as loan facilitators.

Since economic independence is a goal that many nations strive to achieve and bring numerous benefits and opportunities for growth and development, Ethiopia has to prettily underscored the significance of promoting homegrown economy and mobilizing citizens from corner to corner, particularly potential ones, so as to declare economic freedom, independence and become triumphant over poverty as it is not an innate phenomenon.

It should also be known that when a country is economically independent, it means that it can sustain its own needs without relying heavily on external assistance or resources, and this can be a pride if this trend is locally made. No doubt, economic independence can bring the nation to a bright boulevard over poverty.

As it is repeatedly heralded and confirmed by economists, one of the primary benefits of economic independence is the ability for a nation to have complete control over its economic policies and decisions, but when they rely heavily on imports or foreign investments, they may/could be subject to external pressures and influences that can hinder their respective growth or comprehensive development.

Ethiopia has to devise local solutions to the problems it has been entangled, especially as a result of poverty and underdevelopment, especially focusing on all means leading to economic development and combating poverty and scarcity. Here, another of economic independence is the potential for increased job opportunities and improved living standards for citizens. Yes, whenever Ethiopia is able to produce and supply its own goods and services, such an appealing situation creates a self-sustaining economy that can generate employment opportunities for a number of its citizens. This, in turn, reduces unemployment rates and improves the overall standard of living, which contributes a lot to the effort geared towards poverty reduction.

The best example of this is seen in the case of South Korea, which transformed itself from an aid-dependent nation to a major exporter of automobiles, electronics, and other manufactured goods. This economic transformation has not only created jobs but it has also propelled South Korea to become one of the world's leading economies.

Meaningfully reducing poverty and declaring economic independence would also provide Ethiopia with a sense of security and resilience in times of regional, continental or even global economic uncertainties. Obviously, when a country is heavily reliant on imports, it becomes vulnerable to fluctuations in global markets, such as price hikes or supply disruptions that would absolutely result in serious high cost of living. Hence, export promotion needs to be encouraged since reducing dependence on external sources can be a preferable weapon to safeguard the country from such risks and ensure a stable supply of locally provided essential goods and services.

Besides, empowering citizens can help eradicate poverty because those who have been empowered will become self-reliance from their skills that they have learned, can have jobs which they will use to lift their family members and the community at the vicinity out of the grip of poverty they find themselves in. If there is no one in the family could afford to take care of the children and other relatives the poverty will increase, so by empowering a single person it is possible to save many lives. Thence, poverty is defeated at family level though the degree varies.

Without a shadow of doubt, making citizens powerful to achieve poverty eradication implies developing clearer and more consistent coverage polices that appropriately address the unique needs of individuals and community members.

The issue of good governance can also be cited here as it is instrumental in fostering

undertakings that target at reducing poverty though the link between good governance and poverty reduction is much more complex and difficult to deal with.

Poverty alleviation has been highlighted as one of the essential aspects of development and growth. Multiple factors such as low household income, the high expense of drugs and medical procedures, and lack of health insurance coverage also pose significant obstacles for impoverished populations seeking timely access to medical services. Despite progress made in the aspect of poverty alleviation, in Ethiopia, lessons should also be learned from many countries which have come up with remarkable records in that regard concerning economic, health, education, infrastructure development and other related factors especially through effectively utilizing local resources and putting domestic expertise into effect.

It is this time that locally devised means for defeating poverty would bear yummy fruits and help the nation declare economic independence over poverty. Therefore, effective strategies aimed at facilitating poverty alleviation need to be constantly explored, along with the evaluation of projects targeted at poverty alleviation from the perspective of cost-effectiveness and wise use of resources.

The invaluable role of administration in guiding poverty-eradication-related work cannot be ignored here as leadership and effective implementation of activities matter the most.

Clearly, Ethiopia has to make a significant contribution to the continental as well as global poverty alleviation endeavor as it has consisted of second level population in the continent. This remarkable milestone trekked on promoting homegrown economy, macroeconomic policy and journey to intensify potential tourist destinations can be attributed to the significant role of leadership and organization at the governmental level.

Yes, the country has established a poverty eradication management network with the federal government acting as a coordinator, state governments taking overall responsibility, and city administrations overseeing the proper implementation. From a global perspective, effective control of these poverty-related health conditions calls for cross-national collaborations and communication aimed at facilitating joint efforts toward global poverty alleviation for mutual benefit on a win-win basis. Besides, numerous measures need to be taken to improve equity in terms of economic growth, healthcare, and infrastructure development, among others. Additionally, society, in general, should have an increased awareness of the importance of eradicating poverty and the great contribution of their participation in that regard.

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

Business & Economy

Breathing new life into Ethiopia's fish resources

BY ADDISALEM MULAT

Of late, *The Ethiopian Herald* had a short stay with Abebe Getahun, a Professor of Aquatic Biology at the Department of Zoological Sciences, Addis Ababa University concerning Ethiopian fisheries and aquaculture, the contribution of fish and fish trade in Ethiopia as well as other things of a similar kind.

As of Professor Abebe, Ethiopia is endowed with several water bodies (lakes, rivers, natural ponds, and reservoirs) and is considered as the water tower of Eastern Africa. These Ethiopian inland water bodies harbor about 200 so far recorded fish species, including 191 indigenous and 9 exotic species; of which 45 species are endemic, making Ethiopia one of the five endemic fish species rich African countries. The high diversity plays key role in enhancing the fishery and aquaculture potential of Ethiopia.

Fisheries and aquaculture play a crucial role in food and nutrition security, employment creation, means of income generation, and improved livelihoods. In Ethiopia, over a million people are reported to be directly or indirectly engaged on the fisheries and aquaculture sector for their livelihood. However, as it stands now, this sector is contributing an insignificant amount to the country's GDP, though the assessment of the actual value and extent of fisheries value chain activities, goods, and services that are assessed in calculating the GDP is debatable.

As a result, the sector at large remained marginalized in terms of human capacity development as well as implementing proper management measures for its conservation. This condition is much worse at regional levels than at federal level, as the human resource and capacity and organizational structure appears to be weaker as we go to the different regions.

Reflecting on the contribution of fish and fish trade in Ethiopia, professor Abebe said that according to the recently completed Fisheries and Aquaculture Master Plan (FAMP), there has been a rise in local, regional export, international import fish markets, catering to both local and imported fresh and seafood products. These markets, largely located in Addis Ababa, trade both local and imported products, contributing to the economy and meeting the demand for fish products at both local and international levels. Other key markets include the Gambella dry fish market, the Gonder zone of the Amhara region, the Tendaho fish market, and the Lake Tana fish market in Bahir Dar.

Although the documentation of Ethiopian cross-border fish trade remains inadequate, the country imports significant quantities of fish from neighboring nations. It is noteworthy that some of these imports are subsequently re-exported to Sudan through the border with South Sudan. Most fish traders lack access to essential cold chains, including ice and insulated containers. However, only a few enterprises for fish handling and preservation are equipped with electricity and potable water.

It is now evident (FAMP, 2024) that Ethiopian fish exports have experienced a substantial growth, rising from 15 tons in 2012 to 720 tons in 2020. Similarly, the foreign earnings generated from fish exports have also seen a



Ethiopia has to exploit its fishery sector alongside summer farming

significant increase, rising from USD 57,000 to 361,000 during the same period. On the other hand, there is an upward trend in fish imports, which escalated from 345 tons in 2012 to 371 tons in 2020. Consequently, the expenditure on fish imports witnessed a corresponding increase, soaring from USD 517,000 to 1,183,000 within the given timeframe. Overall, it is important to note that the substantial amount of foreign exchange earnings is being lost due to the importation of fish.

He further explained that the fishing industry has significant potential for growth, contributing to food security, nutrition, job opportunities, and profitable production and marketing value chains. Though the potential of the capture fisheries is very much limited (potential of 128,000 tons/year), the aquaculture sector is untapped and has the potential to produce some 402,000 tons per year. There are investment opportunities in making of fishing vessels, aquatic tourism, marketing, aquaculture products, processing, and in insuring product safety through safe transportation. There is high potential for local investment in fish production.

What is encouraging and most interesting is the recent completion of the Fisheries and Aquaculture Master Plan (FAMP) for Ethiopia. This master plan was developed in 2024 by the Ministry of Agriculture with financial assistance from the World Bank. The master plan has identified the most crucial problems hindering the development of capture fisheries and aquaculture in Ethiopia and framed the way out of this quagmire and suggested most feasible solutions. It has also identified and listed bankable projects, if and when implemented could bring about considerable changes in the sector.

It is envisaged over the next ten years the master plan will urgently address the existing fish deficit and demand with expected improvement in fish consumption. The FAMP has adopted the Ecosystem Approach to Aquaculture and Fisheries by way of involving and considering stakeholder concerns, as well as other uses and users of the fisheries ecosystems.

The FAMP is also well aligned to the draft Agriculture Policy (2023), the 10-Year National Development Plan (2021/22–2031/32), the National Blue Economy Strategy, the IGAD Regional Blue Economy Strategy, and the AU guidelines for Policy Reform and Restructuring of the Fisheries and Aquaculture Sector. The FAMP has also extensively been informed by international policies and protocols, and is aimed at improving social services, social protection, and support for marginalized groups, women, and youth.

Moreover, it is universally accepted that fish biodiversity mainstreaming, the consideration of biodiversity across fisheries and aquaculture sector, is vital for the productivity and health of the aquatic ecosystem. This could be achieved through integration of fish diversity into the policy, strategies and action plans of the sector.

There has, so far, been little or no attention given to the fish biodiversity issues to mainstream them into the sector at Federal and Regional levels. Rather, more emphasis is given to the production sector, with some focus only on commercially important species. More striking, though, is the fact that even in regions where we find interesting and globally important fish biodiversity (e.g., the Labeobarbus spp. flock of Lake Tana), most actors of the sector emphasize on their economic importance than their biodiversity value. In other words, there must be appreciation for the market and non-market values of biodiversity and the provisioning and regulatory services that ecosystems provide, while having accountability for the full footprint of fishing and fishery related activities.

Regarding the current status of Ethiopian fisheries, Prof. Abebe said that the fish production potential from capture fishery has recently (after the Fisheries and Aquaculture Master Plan) been reported as 128,000 tons annually. Previously, the estimate has been about 94,500 tons per year. The newly constructed reservoirs/dams elevated the potential capture fishery production by more than 30%. However, the capture fisheries potential is very much limited given the high human population of the country. Even if the potential of the capture fisheries is

fully exploited, the per-capita production still remains around 1 kg, which sets it to be one of the lowest in the world. The average per-capita consumption of fish in the world is 20kg, while it is 10kg in Africa and 5.7kg in East Africa.

Therefore, the aquaculture sub-sector is the most promising sector, if Ethiopia is to fulfill its need for fish derived protein for its population and income generation through high level production. However, currently, the aquaculture sub-sector is among the least developed and untapped potentials. It is limited to few fish ponds found at farmer's yard and limited commercial farms operating in the country.

The recent report indicates that fish production from aquaculture is about 1,020 tons annually but with growing interest and high expansion rate and possibilities. Obviously, this requires engagement of the private sector and expanding and integrating aquaculture into rural production systems such as rice growing, poultry, and horticultural production.

Hence, with an extensive management system, Ethiopia has an estimated annual production potential of 134,000 tons of fish from smallholder or rural aquaculture. Much more potential is envisaged through adoption and support to commercial aquaculture, especially on large water bodies (lakes, rivers, and Dams/reservoirs like GERD) where commercial fish farms (pens and cages) can be established. Taking the minimum, this puts the potential for aquaculture production at 402,000 tons annually with over 60% expected from adoption of commercial intensive aquaculture.

The problems in the expansion of aquaculture mainly rest on two factors; fish feed and fingerling productions. The high cost of ingredients, low uptake, poor distribution, high logistical costs, high inflation, and difficulty in obtaining hard currency for imported components or ingredients limit the adoption and expansion of the aquaculture industry. According to the ten years master plan for fisheries and aquaculture in Ethiopia, the country will need to produce 1,415,640 tons of feed to meet the required nearly 752,230 tons of feed annually by year 2034.

Planet Earth

Harnessing the potential of horticulture in ensuring food security

BY FIKADU BELAY

The horticulture industry makes a substantial contribution to environmental sustainability, economic growth, and food security. Horticultural goods have been improved, particularly in terms of their nutritional content. The foundation of the horticultural industry, fruits and vegetables, are rich in vitamins and minerals, which make them important parts of a balanced and healthful diet.

It has been demonstrated that consuming more of these nutrient-dense foods lowers the likelihood of developing chronic illnesses including diabetes, heart disease, and some types of cancer, hence enhancing population health overall.

Moreover, the horticulture sector plays a pivotal role in the economic landscape. Horticulture enterprises, ranging from small-scale family farms to large-scale commercial operations, provide employment opportunities, generate income, and contribute to the overall GDP of a country. The export of high-value horticulture products, such as fresh produce, flowers, and ornamental plants, can also serve as a significant source of foreign exchange, bolstering the national economy.

Have stay with *The Ethiopian Herald*, agro-economist Prof. Mengistu Ketema stated that Ethiopia is embarking on an ambitious plan to service its agricultural system and boost exports, particularly in the horticulture (fruits and vegetables) sector.

He highlighted that Ethiopia's 10-year development plan for agriculture has a strong emphasis on increasing production, investment, and exports to generate more foreign currency. The plan aims to shift the sector towards a more market-oriented model, integrating agro-processing.

One key focus area is horticulture; however, he noted that consumption in Ethiopia remains far below WHO recommendations. "This is attributed to our social and cultural habits, as well as a preference for meat and dairy products," he explained.

In many countries, the horticulture industry has emerged as a crucial driver of growth, offering a surplus of benefits to both producers and consumers alike. In Ethiopia, the horticulture sector is not yielding the estimated revenues, according to the expert.

Despite the potential, horticulture exports have been inconsistent and largely confined to regional markets like Djibouti and Somalia, rather than higher-value destinations in Europe and the Middle East. He said that this is due to a lack of sophisticated marketing, information sharing, and transportation networks to meet quality and safety standards in those markets.

The main concern in the sector is the perishable nature of many horticulture products, which can lead to significant postharvest losses if not managed effectively. Factors such as improper handling, inadequate storage facilities, and inefficient transportation systems can all contribute to the deterioration of these delicate commodities, resulting in financial losses for producers and disruptions in the supply chain.

Another pressing challenge is the issue of sustainable irrigation practices. Horticulture, particularly the cultivation of high-value crops, requires a reliable and efficient water supply, which can be a significant concern in regions



facing water shortages or droughts. Addressing this challenge through the adoption of water-saving technologies, such as drip irrigation and precision farming, is crucial for the long-term sustainability of the horticulture sector.

To address these challenges, the government is working to encourage direct sales to supermarkets and processors, and provide financial support to food processing startups and technology investments. "We need to be internationally competitive to penetrate these big horticulture markets," he stressed.

Furthermore, the plan also emphasizes the need for more research on improving yields, shelf life, and nutrient fortification of horticultural products. He also said this must be combined with efforts to better integrate policies across the different institutions involved in the sector.

He stated that the government and other concerned bodies should work on the implementation of processing and value-adding techniques. Through the use of technologies such as canning, freezing, drying, and juicing, horticulture products can be transformed into a wide range of value-added products, extending their shelf life and catering to diverse consumer preferences. These value-added products can command higher prices in the market, providing a lucrative avenue for producers and processors to maximize their returns, he noted.

Furthermore, the development of efficient preservation and storage methods is crucial for minimizing postharvest losses. Advancements in cold chain logistics, controlled-atmosphere storage, and innovative packaging solutions can significantly extend the shelf life of horticulture products, ensuring their availability and quality throughout the year. These preservation techniques not only reduce waste but also enable the efficient distribution and marketing of horticulture commodities, both domestically and internationally.

Not only the horticulture sector but also the whole agriculture economy needs all concerned bodies efforts, new policy strategies, implementation, and technological equipment.

Recently, the Agricultural Economic Society of

Ethiopia (AESE) held a panel discussion under the theme: "Changing Agricultural Landscapes in Ethiopia: Role of Integrated Policies and Markets in Food Systems Transformation" in the presence of pertinent academia, NGOs, and the private sector.

Speaking on the occasion, Chief Executive Officer at the Agricultural Transformation Institute (ATI), Mandefro Nigussie (PhD), stated that Ethiopia has been undertaking agricultural transformation through cluster farming to facilitate agricultural market dynamics by identifying strategic commodities to promote production and productivity.

Boosting production and productivity via agri-technologies, services, and finances is central to ensuring food security, where the country is coming from mass production by identifying strategic commodities to ensure food security, he underscored.

In order to mitigate the current difficulties with food security, exports, and other important sectors, he added, policies in the agri-transformation value chain aid in establishing directions that have significant and useful value.

He acknowledged that infrastructure and quality control are just two of the numerous requirements for a functional market, but he underlined that the only way to guarantee food security is to advance strategic commodities.

He stated that the new macroeconomic policy's opening up will increase foreign revenues, solve the agriculture sector's shortcomings, and increase productivity and output.

According to him, the Ethiopian food system roadmap has identified 18 major challenges and grouped them into 7 clusters in line with home grown economic reform and the SDGs.

The major challenges facing the food system in the country include rising unemployment, inflation, drought, floods, conflict, and slow adoption of technologies.

Mentioning the presence of 16 million smallholder farmers and agro-pastoralists in the country, he stressed that access to input, service, and finance should be given due attention as

they are creating productivity differences.

AESE President Endeshaw Habte (PhD), for his part, stated that providing policy advice in the agriculture sector and investigating how markets and integrated policies can be utilized to boost opportunity in the changing agricultural landscape.

He pointed out that transforming agriculture will lead to rural development initiatives and a fundamental change in the economy away from agriculture and toward other sectors.

According to Endashaw, there are a number of prerequisites for agricultural mechanization, such as having enough plot land, bringing in neighboring plots, having access to cash and contemporary technology, and having additional inputs that boost output and market reach.

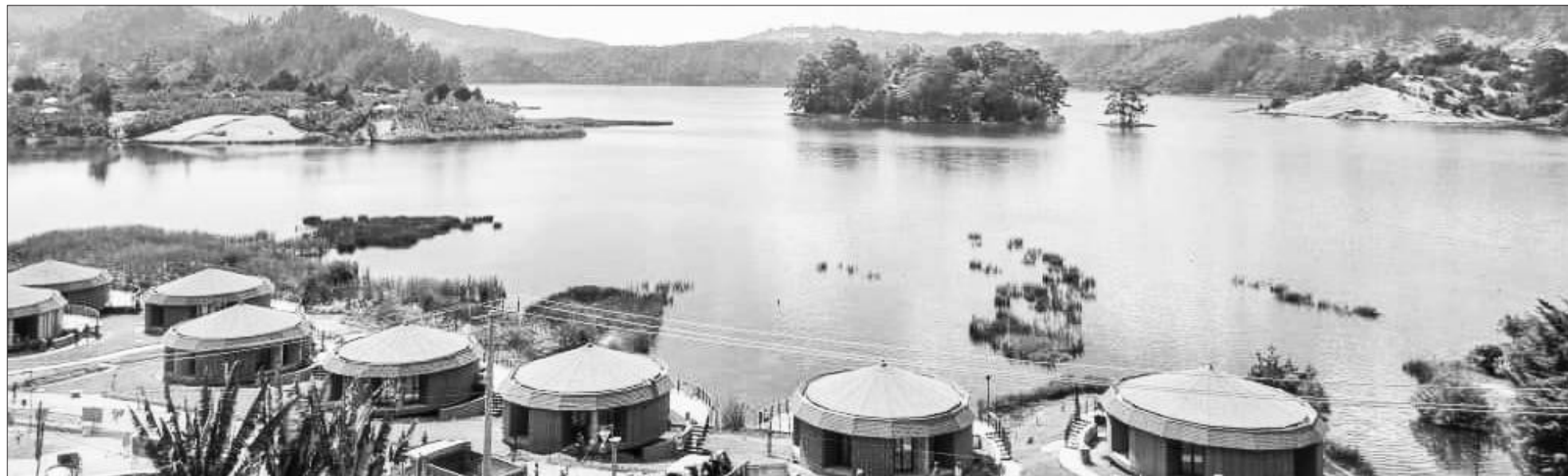
Market, which involves an input market that involves modern technologies to circumvent small plots by cluster farming.

"Increasing the use of cutting-edge technologies and digitalization in the sector in the market information system is also critical, as is being aware of what to produce and what the market is demanding," he stated. In addition, in order to raise productivity, input, capital availability, and appropriate land management instruments are needed.

Mengistu further stated that the government should actively coordinate with other key stakeholders, such as farmers, agricultural experts, and industry leaders, to work extensively on developing the horticulture sector. This holistic approach, he argued, would be crucial in making the country's economic policies more effective and impactful. Particularly, he emphasized that the country should focus on boosting the production and export of high-value horticultural products.

Moreover, he stressed the importance of becoming self-reliant in the manufacturing of agricultural inputs, such as fertilizers and pesticides, rather than relying on imports from abroad. This, he believed, would further strengthen the country's agricultural economy and reduce its dependency on foreign markets.

Art & Culture



Turning Ethiopia to tourists' magnet (Tourists could clap their eyes on *Wanchi*, the crater lake)

BY NAOL GIRMA

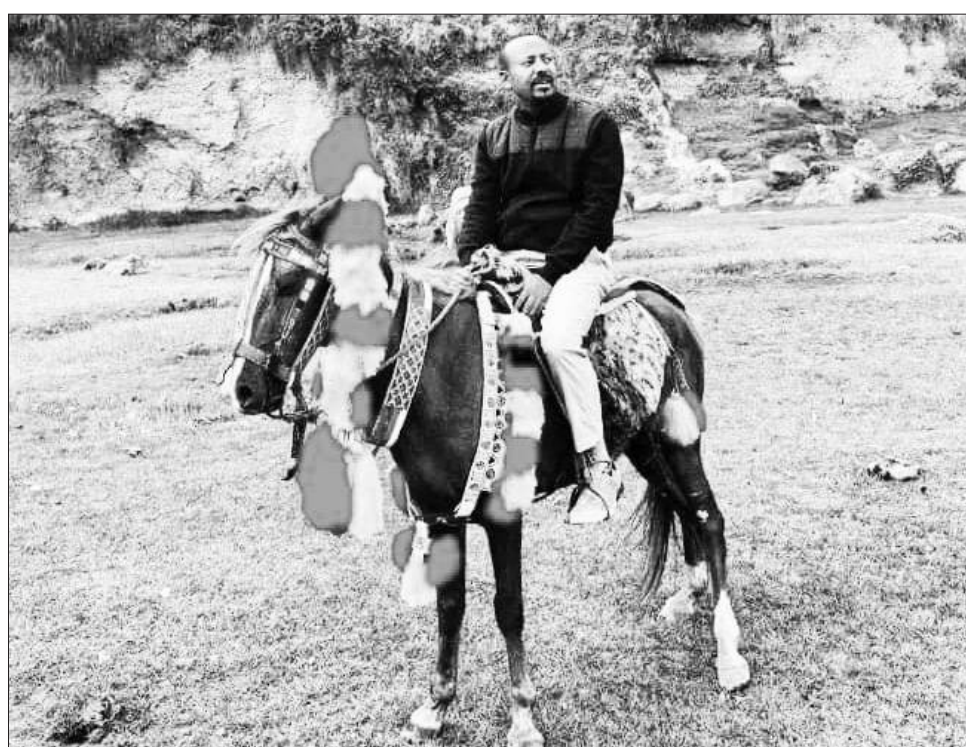
Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) introduced several initiatives expected to turn the Country into a tourism hub and touristic magnet. There are initiatives such as *Gebeta Lehager* (Dine for Ethiopia), *Gebeta Lesheger* (Dine for Addis Ababa) and *Gebeta Letiwulid* (Dine for Generations).

Wanchi ecotourism project is one of one of the projects that are built through the *Gebeta Lehager* initiative. The project is aimed at building the best infrastructures and facilities for tourists in a bid they clap their eyes on the breathtaking natural landscapes, the Crater Lake *Wanchi* and the original culture of the people who resided around the surrounding the site.

According to Engineer Birhanu Tesfaye infrastructural project manager of *Wanchi* Project, the comforting facility of the site begins from the ticket office. Nearby the ticket office, there is a parking lot which can accommodate nearly 250 tour buses at once. No cars are allowed to move into the site to reduce environmental pollution. Birhanu mentioned the presence of alternative transportation, such as electric vehicles, bicycles, and horses. If a tourist wants to pay a visit to the farmers' houses, tickets and rooms will be booked, including the information about which farmer is a specific tourist's host.

There are also different rooms including the exhibition center. The exhibition center comprises pictures and information about *Wanchi's* outstanding touristic spots. That is where tourists get detailed information before they embark on the stunning beauty of nature and original culture.

Next to the exhibition center, is found the CCTV room. Birhanu notes that *Wanchi* is encompassed by security cameras. And if a tourist possibly faces any problem, it is easy to watch things and be there for the rescue. "The server works twenty-four hours. Whenever there is a problem, a call will be made from this room. And patrolling guards will be there quickly to solve any problem. Thus, tourists have nothing to worry about. They are safe", he says. There is also a Bank to make sure that the



Abiy Ahmed (PhD)

tourists do not face financial problems.

In addition, there is a restaurant, which is run by youths who reside around the site. The project has afforded the youths with several opportunities. The restaurant is one of the perks. According to the project manager, cultural dishes are served in the restaurant.

Speaking of what makes the *Wanchi* project an ecotourism project, Birhanu says "Every design and every construction work of the project have considered the conservation of Culture, community custom and nature. That makes the project eco-friendly. The shades or the Tekuls inside the lodges are built with the cultural housing system of the community but their interiors with modern facilities. "On the other hand, what we have built inside the site is not much visible. We cannot build which is more visible than nature. What brings the tourists here is nature. So, natural beauty by itself is more than enough to enjoy. There was no need to add extra modernity."

The *Wanchi* eco-lodge has also conference halls with VIP rooms, quality sound and heat systems, and comfortable seats. In the

future, they will be one of the places where Ethiopia's conference tourism thrives.

Atop *Wanchi* there is a cafeteria called *Liben*. The name is after one of the Oromo tribes living around *Wanchi*. The place is perfect for viewing the entire *Wanchi* from the top. Here also at the cafeteria, local youths have gained job opportunities, and they are the ones who are running it. "From where the idea of the project came up, benefiting local communities was a priority. And the idea is now practical. The youths are benefiting from the projects", says Birhanu.

Goro Cultural House is one of the facilities built on *Wanchi* site. It gained the name after the place where it was built. It is also a cultural house where tourists can enjoy cultural dishes. It comprises a shop where tourists can buy cultural gifts and wearables. The place has also an amphitheater, with a space that can host a minimum of three hundred guests. If outdoor programs are scheduled, it would be the perfect space. The *Goro* spot is also a place where one can get a very special sight or view of sunset and can take wonderful pictures.

Wanchi is endowed with all the wonder-

ful natural and cultural beauties, for many years the place had been neglected by governments or administrators of different regimes. One of Abiy Ahmed's visionary moves has been building infrastructures in several potential tourist sites in different parts of the Country.

Therefore, *Wanchi* is one of the many sites, which gained the Premier's attention. Some five years ago, *Wanchi* exhibited a wild beauty with no roads, electric and telecom accesses. Now the reality is different. The ecotourism project has changed everything. Roads are constructed. It has electricity and a four G telecom service.

With these infrastructures and the lodges combined, the mountainous, dense forest and crater lake which showcase the stunning natural beauty of *Wanchi* are expected to attract more tourists in the future. On the other hand, it can also be a potential hub for Retreats, Incentives, Conferences, Events (MICE) tourism.

According to the Visit Oromia Initiative MICE in Ethiopia is an exciting development that holds significant promise for the Country's economic and cultural landscape. The Initiative also explains it further; as the demand for MICE tourism increases globally, Ethiopia, with its rich history, diverse cultures, and stunning landscapes, is perfectly positioned to become a leading destination for such events.

The Oromia Region, in particular with its vibrant cultural heritage and breathtaking natural beauty, offers an ideal setting for MICE tourism. The region is home to numerous historical sites, scenic landscapes, and modern facilities that make it an attractive choice for international conferences, corporate meetings, incentive travel, and large-scale events.

Meanwhile, the move towards building infrastructures for hidden beauties of the Country by the Gebeta Lehager, Initiative doesn't stop at *Wanchi*. It is extended to *Gorgora* site in Amhara Region, *Chebera Elephant Paw Lodge* part of *Koyisha* project. They are among the projects recently inaugurated by the Premier.

Society

Creating a working ecosystem for innovation, entrepreneurship

BY MENGISTEAB TESHOME

As we look to the future, it is clear that the young generation of today is the one who could be in charge of shouldering duties and responsibilities in nation-building. Informed society puts innovation and entrepreneurship mindset through various systems starting from nursery to higher education system. The developed world has been able to build skilled and innovative human capital that could turn challenges to opportunity. Many agree that the new generation has the potential and opportunity to bring fresh perspectives, develop creative problem-solving skills, and a bold entrepreneurial spirit that can reshape the future because these days access to knowledge and skills is relatively easier than ever before. Countries around the world are working to equip and encourage the posterity attached to innovation and entrepreneurship mindset by putting in place a working strategy.

To garner the expected outcomes, many accentuate the inimitable importance of stakeholders and policymakers to work proactively to encourage and support the development of these critical abilities among the young generation and support the one in progress.

With this in mind recently, Minister of Labor and Skills Muferihat Kamil had a productive discussion with member of the House of Peoples' Representative Ustaz Kamil Shemsu and Ibex Technologies and Promotion Founder and CEO Ezedin Kamil in a bid to nurture and promote innovation and entrepreneurship mindset and exchange views on opportunities to harness further.

She noted that "Undoing problems through skill could lead the nation to materialize prosperity. To happen this, it is a must to formulate a landscape that could encourage the next generation."

The Ministry of Labor and Skills is working along with stakeholders to support innovators and entrepreneurs. It is also keen to support young people like Ezedin; who could turn challenges into opportunities, she reaffirmed.

Entrepreneurship Development Institute Training Specialist Tewodros Abebe on his part said that innovation and entrepreneurship are perceived as vital elements that enable to achieve development for several reasons.

"We, as a nation, should work on awareness creation towards creating an informed community that values innovation and entrepreneurship more than ever before, informed individuals who are in charge of leading the institution could manage innovation and entrepreneurship skills for the development of the nation without any hesitation."

Entrepreneurship Development Institute is striving to promote the needed knowledge and skills through applying public private and corporate entrepreneurship approaches.



By equipping young people with the tools and mindset to identify problems and ideate solutions as well as bring their ideas to life, the nation could produce skilled forces who are agents of change

In an exclusive interview with *The Ethiopian Herald* over the phone Ibex Technologies and Promotion Founder and CEO Ezedin Kamil stated that they have had a productive dialogue with Labor and Skills Minister Muferihat Kamil. "It was a great privilege to discuss with the Minister and senior officials."

Accordingly, we have reached a consensus to advance in digitizing the services of the MoLS to society; and provide the required

support in every possible way including on staging platforms that could help in advancing MoLS goals.

Ibex Technologies and Promotion, as a private local company, will work focusing on to ensuring digital Ethiopia. "We have developed software that could enhance the accessibility of fellow citizens deciding to travel legally to Arab countries and get the services online."

MoLS and Ibex Technologies and Promotion also agreed to organize exhibitions where successful young entrepreneurs and innovators display and demonstrate their innovative works the community.

Responding to how to nurture the values of innovation and entrepreneurship mindset; he said creating conducive platforms and upgrading young peoples' problem-solving and innovative skills across all facets of life, fostering the capacity to turn challenges into opportunities, and encouraging them to be curious are instrumental in driving change and advancing the development of the country.

These days, consorted efforts are ongoing to foster the innovative and entrepreneurship capacity of the generation through various approaches through designing a favorable working system by the government and private sector to foster a supportive ecosystem for startups and small businesses.

"In my view, the key way to cultivate innovation and entrepreneurship further among the youth is through education. Schools and universities as well as training centers should be platforms that give greater emphasis on teaching practical skills such as design thinking and business planning as well as project management. By equipping young people with the tools and mindset to identify problems and ideate solutions as well as bring their ideas to life, the nation could produce skilled forces who are agents of change.

He also recommended that exposing students

to real-world entrepreneurial experiences, such as mentorship programs and startup, as well as business plan competitions, are invaluable. These opportunities allow young innovators to connect with industry leaders, receive feedback on their ideas, and gain hands-on experience in the entrepreneurial process. The platforms help to build the confidence, network, and resource opportunities they need to turn their visions into reality.

Alongside formal education, it is also essential to foster a culture that celebrates and supports entrepreneurship. This can be achieved by showcasing successful young entrepreneurs with seasoned innovators, and creating platforms for them to share their insights and inspire their peers. "By demonstrating that entrepreneurship is a viable and rewarding path, we can inspire more young people to take the leap and turn their ideas into businesses."

Furthermore, governments and policymakers, as well as the private sector should work together to provide the necessary support and resources for aspiring entrepreneurs. This may include access to funding, such as providing grants or loans, and venture capital, as well as shared workspaces, mentorship programs, and regulatory environments that are conducive to business creation.

"I believe through investing in the next generation of innovators and entrepreneurs, the nation is not only fostering individual success but also positioning our communities and economies for long-term prosperity. These young visionaries have the potential to tackle pressing global challenges, create jobs, and drive social and technological progress that can benefit us all."

The effort made to approach Ibex Technologies and Promotion and other stakeholders by the Ministry demonstrates its high desire to ensure the digital transformation of Ethiopia, he remarked.

Law & Politics

Somalia ought not to serve as launching pad to attack Ethiopia

BY EYUEL KIFLU

As Somalia's neighbouring and brotherly country, Ethiopia has been at the forefront of supporting the former people and government. Since the instability that has plagued Somalia for decades, Ethiopia has played an indispensable role in the efforts to restore peace and security in the country.

The presence of Ethiopian troops in Somalia remains the highest among all foreign forces, underscoring the critical nature of Ethiopia's military support. This military cooperation has been a cornerstone of the two countries' relations, as Ethiopia has stood by Somalia through its most challenging times.

However, the Ethiopia-Somalia relationship extends beyond mere military assistance. The deep people-to-people ties between the two nations are equally vibrant and significant. Ethiopia has been the highest host country for Somali refugees who have fled the instability in their homeland. The country has provided these refugees with remarkable hospitality, ensuring that they feel at home in their temporary abode.

Ethiopia's unwavering support for the stability and re-establishment of the Somali government, known as Villa Somalia, has been essential. The country has been a steadfast partner in Somalia's efforts to rebuild its institutions and infrastructure, which were decimated by years of conflict.

Recently, however, there have been attempts by certain entities to interfere and strain the longstanding relationship between Ethiopia and Somalia. This is particularly evident in the aftermath of the Memorandum of Understanding signed between Ethiopia and the self-declared republic of Somaliland. Some countries and groups have tried to capitalize on this development to destabilize the strategic region.

Notably, Ethiopia's regional rival, Egypt, has now emerged as a self-proclaimed "peacekeeper" for Somalia, despite its absence during Mogadishu's most challenging times. This move by Cairo appears to be an attempt to use Somalia as a Trojan horse to achieve its hidden agenda in the region, undermining the strong ties between Ethiopia and Somalia.

The ATMIS mission, which has included contingents from several African Union member states, is set to conclude by the end of this year. This withdrawal will leave a

security vacuum that various actors are jockeying to fill. Among them is Egypt, which has signalled its interest in taking on a peacekeeping role in Somalia.

The withdrawal of the Ethiopian contingent from ATMIS also raises alarm bells. Ethiopia's forces have deep familiarity with the threat posed by the Al-Shabaab militant group, which continues to wage a deadly insurgency in Somalia. Their departure could create an intelligence and operational vacuum that if even Egypt enters may struggle to fill effectively.

In an exclusive interview with the Arabic edition of Ethiopian Press Agency, AlAlem Newspaper, an expert in International Affairs, Abdul-Rahman Ahmed (PhD), indicated that Egypt has constantly opposed Ethiopian interests and also intervening in the affairs of Horn of Africa countries to use them as a means to threaten Ethiopia.

Egypt's engagement in the Horn of Africa is consistent with helping forces who disagree with or oppose Ethiopia. This has been obvious since the signing of the Ethio-Somaliland Memorandum of Understanding, Ahmed added.

According to him, Egyptian scholars, media, and officials are aggressively opposing Ethiopia's interaction with neighbouring nations, which directly jeopardizes Ethiopian interests.

He stated that Egypt has never protested the establishment of 11 foreign military bases in Djibouti, Somalia, and other HoA countries, but reacted quickly to Ethiopia's MoU with Somaliland, which generated media frenzy. "Such responses from Egypt are not new when it comes to Ethiopia's developmental interests," the minister said.

Abdul-Rahman further stated that Egyptian politicians are not only attacking Ethiopia, but they are also openly intervening in Somalia's affairs. Although Somaliland declared independence from Somalia in the 1990s, it has struggled to gain international recognition. Nonetheless, Somaliland has its own parliament, government, army, police, borders, and a unique passport, he stated.

The Ethio-Somaliland agreement is likely to move forward because Ethiopia is committed to establishing a maritime connection with Somaliland, which is eager to strengthen its relationship with Ethiopia, he said. He also suggested that the two sides focus on shared interests and avoid incitement and conflict in order to promote security, peace, stability, and prosperity in the region. He believes

that Somaliland's response to Egyptian interventions is both natural and reasonable.

In an exclusive interview with *The Ethiopian Herald*, Assistant Professor Adem Kamil, a researcher specializing in Arab countries' affairs on his part stated that Egypt played a malevolent role in Ethiopia losing its harbour access decades ago. Now, as Ethiopia strives to secure sea access once again, Egypt continues its wrongful actions.

Adem asserts that Egypt is attempting to interfere with the Ethio-Somaliland pact as part of its strategy to destabilize the Horn of Africa. This comes after Egypt seemingly gave up on the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) issue, realizing it cannot stop the dam's construction, which may be fully completed next year. Consequently, Cairo has been signing military agreements with Ethiopia's neighbours since 2021, totalling around eight pacts.

These military alliances are seen as a way for Egypt to alleviate internal pressures by diverting attention and resources towards external conflicts. He suggests that Egypt is trying to deceive its people and lessen internal political instability by engaging in wrongful actions against Ethiopia.

Furthermore, Adem accuses Egypt of undermining Ethiopia's efforts for peace and stability in Somalia. He claims that Egypt's trying to involvement in Somalia under the guise of military support is actually aimed at exploiting Somalia's untapped resources and countering Ethiopia's positive influence there.

To counter these actions, he advises Ethiopia to strengthen its unity, build a robust economy and military, and engage in strong diplomatic activities. He also notes that Mogadishu currently does not recognize Ethiopia's efforts due to Egyptian influence.

He concludes by pointing out that Egypt aims to isolate Ethiopia from regional affairs, which is why Djibouti and Somalia are members of the Arab League despite not being Arab countries. Egypt cannot help Somalia because even its neighbours are in a worsening situation, and Cairo cannot support them.

Overall, In the face of these challenges, it is crucial that Ethiopia and Somalia maintain their unwavering partnership and continue to work together to overcome the obstacles that threaten the stability and prosperity of the region. The people of both nations have much to gain from the continued strengthening of their brotherly bond.

Ethiopia's unwavering support for the stability and re-establishment of the Somali government, known as Villa Somalia, has been essential. The country has been a steadfast partner in Somalia's efforts to rebuild its institutions and infrastructure, which were decimated by years of conflict

EPHREM ENDALE

Between you & me

“Forty Kilometers are nothing to me”

Near the very place where our gallant athlete Abebe Bikila won the first ever gold medal at Rome Olympic, Tamrat Tola has repeated the Golden History!

Congratulations to all Ethiopians! Kudos to our heroic athlete Tamrat Tola for the first gold medal to his country on the ongoing Paris Olympic “Paris 2024”

‘The runner created quite a stir at the starting line of the 1960 Olympic marathon in Rome, the land of emperors. This thin Ethiopian caught the attention of his Western opponents. “Oh, well, this one we can beat” quipped an Australian runner to his teammates.’ That is how Dean W. Arnold opens his classic book about Ethiopia, ‘The Unknown Empire.’

‘For a moment, he goes on to write; the camera shows Bikila’s face. The commentator asks, “And what’s this Ethiopian called?”’

Well, he was called Abebe Bikila. With our performance at the Paris Olympics, which brought us more frowns than smiles, and all the narratives that fill the social media it’s time to recall at least some of our greats and what our athletes have been doing to athletics at large and the Olympics in particular. At the time of this writing we still have some races and some medals might come our way. But much of the public isn’t at all happy with what has been seen already and all the signs are the house of our country’s sport isn’t at all good.

Our problem is since unsubstantiated and at times toxic gossip flying all over the place the chance being led up the garden path is easier than we could imagine.

Usually the gossips start with something like, “Have you heard?”

“Have I heard what?”

“Have you heard what they’re doing in that sport body we were talking about the other day? They’re emptying it off everything like blind!” But then you most probably hear other far flung versions of the same story. There must be some way the public could be told as much truth as possible since a clean sweep would be practically impossible.

Recently the news, which has yet to be verified by more trusted sources, is that top officials who flew to Paris had with them their own families who have nothing to do with either the sport world of the country or the Paris Olympics. And the funds come from the budget set aside for the competition. But we were not about that.

We graced the Olympics with the Abebe Bikila’s bare foot run; a feat never again repeated by others. We graced the Olympics and world championships with the legendary Green Flood. We graced sport arenas all over the world with broken records and wonderful displays of sportsmanship.

Dean Arnold goes on to write about Abebe Bikila’s Rome Olympics triumph.

“Before the race one resourceful reporter found a translator and was able to ask (Abebe) a few questions.

“Why do you run barefoot?”

“Habit”

“Will you be able to finish the race?”

“If I were not going to finish the race I would not start....”

Wouldn’t you say that is as classic a response as anyone can give? Abebe is also quoted as saying that the people were poor with no mechanical support adding... “So we run everywhere on foot. Forty kilometers are nothing to me.” get me another athlete from yesterday or today who has

the guts to say “Forty kilometers are nothing to me.”

Yes we must have more global household names when it comes to the wonders of long distance running. How can the world afford to forget Miruts Yifter, the Shifter!

And then there is Haile;

One reporter calls Haile G/Selassie “A little man with a big heart.”

Olympics.com writes this about Haile;

“Throughout his prolific career, Gebrselassie’s pure love of running was a constant theme, as was his trademark smile. “It’s in my nature. I can’t change that. It’s not just when I win; I laugh when I lose as well.” It is that beautiful attitude, as well as his feats on the track, that will ensure the Ethiopian’s place in sporting history.

And then there’s Kenenisa;

Kenya’s Bernard Lagat had this to say about Kenenisa Bekele

“Kenenisa has really everything that it takes to be a champion. I would love to be like him. He is really great and I presume we will have to wait for a long time before we will see another runner like him in the future. Kenenisa is one of the greatest athletes of all time,” said. That was us at the Olympics and on the racetracks of the world.

And then there is that memorable moment celebrated by Teddy Afro’s wonderful piece when at one race Haile falls behind and Kenenisa who was almost at the finishing line repeatedly looking back worried about the legendary Haile’s condition who fall behind. Such scenes aren’t common in such competitions or anywhere else for that matter. It was the most memorable display of camaraderie the kind of which are seldom seen. That was us; that camaraderie was what the

‘Green Flood’ was all about.

“Ethiopia’s Kenenisa Bekele has emulated female compatriot Tirunesh Dibaba in claiming a rare long-distance double when he won the 5,000 meters to add to his 10,000m Olympic crown.

“His triumph was the first such men’s double since compatriot Miruts Yifter’s feat over the same events at the 1980 Moscow Games.

“Dibaba’s double over the same distance had been a landmark for women athletes.”

That was us. That was what we Ethiopians were all about when it came to the Olympics and all other international races.

And then there’s Deraratu Tulu;

“Derartu is the first Ethiopian woman and the first black African woman to win an Olympic gold medal,” that’s our story at the Olympics.

And then there’s Tirunesh Dibaba;

“Tirunesh Dibaba of Ethiopia produced her trademark electric last lap to win the women’s 10,000 meters gold medal at the Olympics on Friday. Dibaba set a new Olympic record time of 29 minutes 54.66 seconds in perfect conditions at a packed National Stadium,” That’s our story at the Olympics.

Only a few of an entire generation of great runners who thought of their country and their people and wrote some of the most glittering stories of great sportsmanship. And with all that has been happening with the Paris Olympics we’d be pardoned to crave for those kind of days, days when hundreds of thousands and even millions took to the streets to welcome their heroes. We just hope that wouldn’t be still a long way out as we don’t deserve that!

“Forty kilometers are nothing to me.” That’s the mindset we need!

What’s Going On!

Over the past couple of weeks we’ve been watching all that was happening in British cities. At times in the cities appeared movie sets where the most violent of action film ever made anywhere else was being shot. At times it appeared that maybe, just maybe some alien creatures were manipulating that has happened or AI has gone berserk leading people to part with the real reality on the ground causing all the destruction to their country and making the lives of their own citizens miserable. I mean the level of violence knew no bounds. How could this happen. Does that mean the country has all that time been harboring such people who were practically trying to torch it to ashes and they were only waiting for the right time and the right pretext to act! And act, they did.

Now as innocent as one can be you might think that those responsible the politicians, the media, and the security forces would take matters into their hands and quell the mayhem that was being dealt to the cities and also to the reputation of the country. But sadly enough that didn’t happen. The media? Well I think I given all we’ve been seeing and learning since some years back I don’t think talking of the media over there and elsewhere on the Western world would be far from smart; with the politicians all we see is finger pointing, lots of it too. The accusations, the denunciations fly all-round. Of course you need an Einstein mind to decipher what the hell is everyone talking about while the priority should have been bringing back the calm and once the dust settles everyone can go

out with the guns blazing. Look, there would probably be a couple of friends who after reading or skimming through this piece would probably be giving a not so great Sunday evening or Monday morning.

“What is it to you whatever happens over there? It is their country and it is their concern. Don’t you have more pressing problems of your own like reevaluating your household budget before starting to cry foul?”

“Look, I think you’ve staring drinking some hard stuff you cope with. A sane person wouldn’t jump from Addis to London uninvited and also unwanted.”

Yes it might sound a little off-track talking about something happening thousands of kilometers away while we’ve our own heavy baggage. But believe me the things that happen over there and other such places could affect us in more ways than one even if indirectly. After all we’ve tens even hundreds of thousands of our compatriots out there. Given the recent financial changes in this country we need them more than ever! (“Aha!” some would say “So that was what it was all about! All about the dollars and the pounds!) But more importantly in this age of a few things we know and much more we don’t know a sneeze or two over there could set off some severe cold epidemic over here. It’s as simple as that.

Back to a couple of things that confuse us back here. When the politicians throw ‘insults’ and slanders at each other we hear of one

side accusing the other of being a far left. Hmmm! In the American election “far left,” “radical left” have become regular dishes on the political menu. Over there now the name of Carl Marx is being echoed more and more. In fact we’ve heard some of being accused of being Marxists. At least that’s better as you can goggle what that heavily bearded fellow is supposed to have propagated. (By the way is he the fellow who said something like, “You’ve nothing to lose, but your chains!”) I mean if you fly private jets, drive Aston Martins, Lamborghinis and Rolls Royces, live in multimillion dollar villas and are still labeled as “far left,” the world is indeed changing beyond our wildest expectations. I mean even in the movies we still have to see the red flag with the star and all that draped on some Lamborghini.

Coming back to the British riots the irony of it all was that another violence protest, though for completely different reasons, was going on in Bangladesh. And believe me for us back here it’s a little difficult to not to be drawn into analyzing both side by side. Both protesting sides carried sticks (tough in Bangladeshi it’s largely bamboos!) stones, sharp objects and the like. Both protesting sides were clearly agitated, angry and all signs were that most of them were out for blood literally and figuratively. The Bangladeshis wanted to chase the Prime Minister from power (Which she smartly did!) and the British protesters wanted to chase the illegal immigrants all the way to

the English Channel and beyond. One visible difference was that in the Bangladeshi case, maybe because of heavily edited newsfeeds we didn’t see as much property damages as we saw in the British cities. Of course, having turned the vacated house of the former Prime Minister they not only turned into a mess they had their fill of the Prime Minister’s culinary! Ha! Now they know what the food up there tastes like.

I mean there things you just are forced to mull in your mind one question being how is that the law enforcement people didn’t act fast when they were practically under siege in most places. At times they were the ones retreating though still many of them suffered injuries some of them serious. I mean when all those objects were thrown at them when they were subjected to all the abuse by the thugs, as much of the British media calls them, are there laws that prevent them from defending themselves? Just curious. I mean watching what has been transpiring on the streets of British cities it is not at all easy to form opinions though it might in a way or two be none of our business. The streets of one of the most powerful countries in the world being decimated with such venom by its own citizens, and it looking like so out-of-the-world sort of scenario it is practically difficult to come up with any final understanding of the whole the thing.

What really is going on over there? Just curious.

International News

Green energy: TotalEnergies acquires Uganda power plant

Total Energies has signed an agreement with Bujagali Energy Ltd as part of its plans to invest in energy projects, particularly renewable energy. The deal will see the oil company acquire a 28.3 per cent stake in the hydropower plant located in Jinja, 80km east of Kampala.

With a capacity of 250 MW, the plant covers a significant part of Uganda's electricity demands.

Total will also acquire minority stakes in two projects under development in Rwanda (260 MW) and Malawi (360 MW).

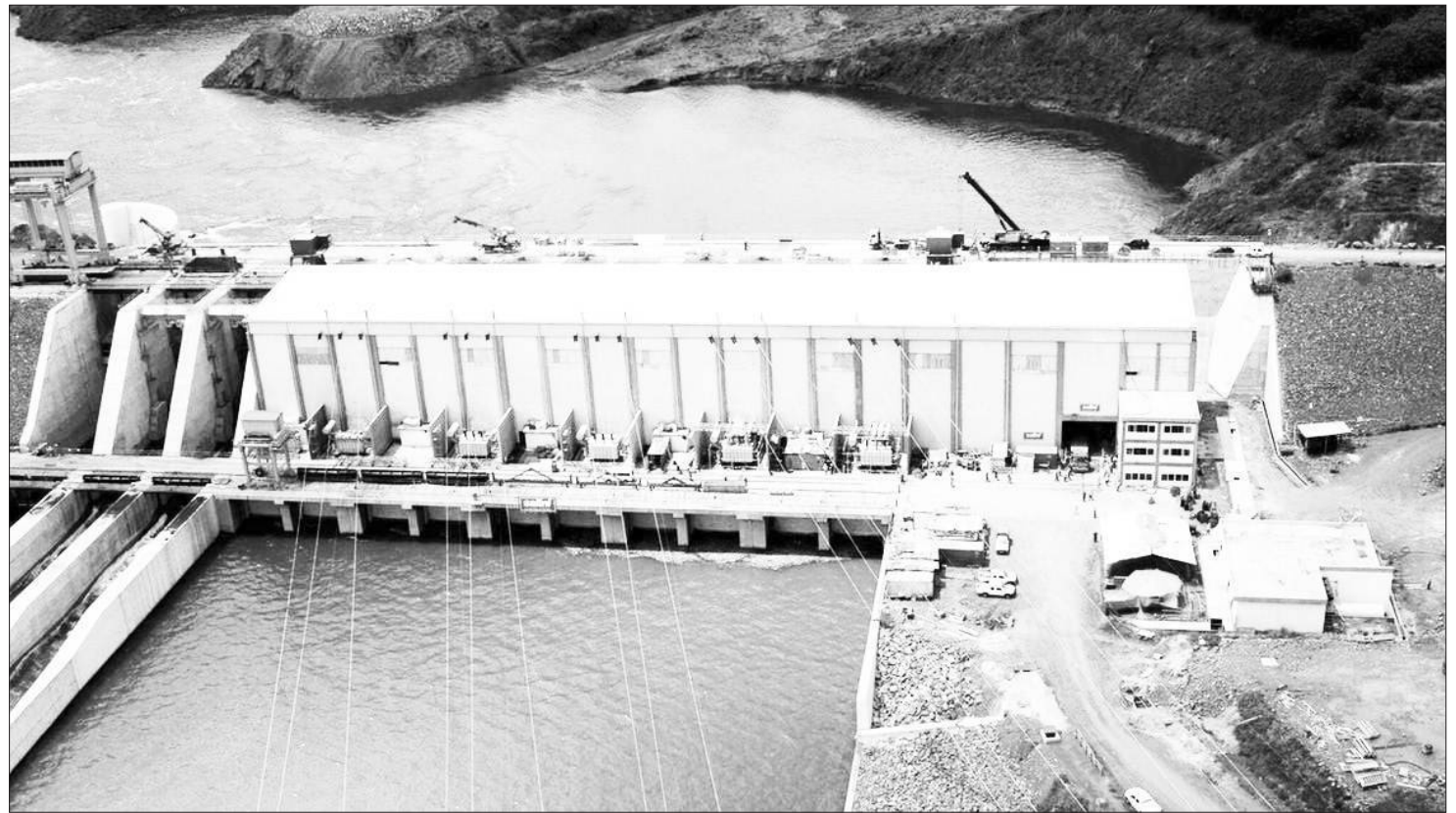
"This acquisition of renewable hydroelectric assets and projects in Africa reflects our desire to contribute to the continent's energy transition by bringing electricity to the people of African countries," the company said in a statement released on Tuesday.

According to Patrick Pouyanné, the chairman and CEO of TotalEnergies, this transaction is an example of the oil major's ability to implement its multi-energy strategy in oil-producing countries to support them in their energy transition.

"We believe that Total Energies will be a strong asset owner going forward, with the ability to further develop the projects and contribute to the energy transition in Africa," he said.

Total Energies has interests in a number of hydropower projects worldwide with a gross capacity of 3.7GW. These include 218MW installed in Europe – France (19MW), Portugal (33MW) and Turkey (166MW) – 1.5GW under development in Mozambique (Mphanda Nkuwa project) and 2GW under development by Adani Green in India.

Total is also developing renewable energy



projects in Uganda and Tanzania to meet the growing demand for electricity, reportedly over five per cent per year, and plans to install between 500 MW and 1 GW of gross capacity in the two countries.

The company has already invested in solar in Uganda, with a power plant in Soroti, and plans for more in Tororo and Iganga by the end of next year.

In Tanzania, the company is working on a 115MW solar power plant and a 100MW wind power plant in projects worth \$500m over the next five years, according to highlights from the company's "Sustainability & Climate Workshop" held

in March this year.

Uganda hopes that this development will keep electricity tariffs low, an issue that private sector players through the Uganda Manufacturers Association and the Private Sector Foundation Uganda have been pushing for. The cost of doing business in Uganda remains one of the highest in the East African region, in part due to the cost of electricity for manufacturers, which is currently over 10 US cents per kWh – well above President Yoweri Museveni's recommendation of 5 US cents per unit.

"We are delighted to become a player in the hydropower sector in Uganda, a country

where we are also developing a major oil project," Total Energies said.

In Uganda, Total Energies is involved in oil and gas development projects in the Lake Albert basin alongside China National Offshore Oil Corporation and Uganda National Oil Company.

Minister for Energy and Mineral Development, Ruth Nankabirwa Ssentamu, said: "This is good news because Total Energies is involved in fossil fuel activities and this acquisition of stakes in the Bujagali hydropower plant will go a long way."

Source: *The East African*

ECA Facilitates Significant Step Forward for the LAPSSET Corridor Development Programme

Nairobi, – The second Joint Technical Committee (JTC) meeting of the LAPSSET Corridor Program was held from August 6 to 7, 2024, in Nairobi, Kenya. A key focus of the meeting was the review and validation of a proposed Regional Coordination Mechanism (RCM) to streamline the development process of the LAPSSET Corridor, a vital infrastructure project aimed at boosting regional integration and economic development. This crucial step, supported by the ECA, aligns with decisions made at the third LAPSSET Ministerial Council Meeting held in Juba, South Sudan, 2023. The meeting was attended by representatives from the footprint countries of Ethiopia, Kenya and South Sudan, including partners from the NEPAD/APRM Secretariat and the ECA.

In his opening statement, Mr. Stephen Ikua, Director General of the LAPSSET Corridor Development Authority, Kenya, underscored the importance of shared commitment to the successful implementation of the LAPSSET Corridor. He highlighted the

benefits of establishing a regional coordination framework and streamlining the financing approach for cross-border components of the programme.

Mr. Yalew Tesfaye, Lead Executive Officer for Logistics Administration from the Ethiopian Maritime Authority (EMA) underscored that Ethiopia's recent successful shipment of bulk cargo through the Port of Lamu was a tangible example of the corridor's potential. He acknowledged that, as a landlocked country, the LAPSSET corridor offers Ethiopia an opportunity to ensure sustainable access to multiple seaports to support its growing economy and population.

Lado Tombe, Director General for Road and Safety Authority of South Sudan highlighted that the LAPSSET Corridor Program is one of the top priorities for South Sudan. He said that the World Bank had agreed to fund the engineering design and construction of the LAPSSET road linking Nadapal and Juba, marking a significant milestone for the project.

Mr. Samori Okwiya, Chief Executive Officer, NEPAD/APRM Kenya Secretariat, commended the member states and stakeholders for the progress in the development of the LAPSSET Corridor. He reaffirmed NEPAD/APRM's commitment to support the LAPSSET Corridor Program.

Mr. Stephen Karingi, Director of the Regional Integration and Trade Division of the UN ECA reiterated the importance of the LAPSSET Corridor in enhancing regional connectivity, integration, and trade and contributing to the achievement of SDGs and the AU Agenda 2063. He acknowledged the tangible progress in implementing the Juba Ministerial Commitments that call on LAPSSET member states to integrate corridor projects into their national development plans. He reaffirmed the ECA's continued support towards strengthened collaborations among the three member states.

The meeting deliberated on the options for establishing the RCM and a key outcome

Kenya's debt sustainable amid growth in exports, CBK says

Kenya's debt remains sustainable in the medium to long term supported by sustained policy actions and expected strong export growth, the Central Bank said in a quarterly economic report on Friday.

In the report for the period ending in March released in Kenya's capital Nairobi, the apex bank said that the country's debt burden indicators have improved supported by a stronger fiscal effort. However, the overall and external ratings for risk of debt distress remain high, according to the bank.

It noted that the country's Debt Sustainability Analysis shows that Kenya is susceptible to export, exchange rate and primary balance shocks.

"In view of this, efforts aimed at boosting exports and revenues would strengthen external debt sustainability," the Central Bank said, adding that the country's exports to Africa have been on the rise, with the value of goods exported rising in the first quarter of 2024 to hit a new high of \$1.81 billion.

Kenya's public and publicly guaranteed debt stood at Ksh10.3 trillion (\$79.3 billion) at the end of March, representing 67 percent of the gross domestic product.

Source: *The East African*

In Pictures

A moment of felicitation

**Tamrat Tolla wins Paris Olympic Games men's marathon Gold Medal**

Tamrat Tolla wins the Paris Olympic Men's Marathon to bring the first Gold medal for Ethiopia in the Paris 2024 Marathon. In addition, Tamrat becomes the first Ethiopian to win the men's Olympic marathon.

Tamrat won the marathon gold medal in the men's marathon at the 2024 Olympic Games in Paris. Tamrat finished the marathon in 2:06:26 and this set a new Olympic record for men's Olympic marathon where the previous Olympic record was 2:06:35.

Ethiopia was represented by the well-known long-distance runners, Kenenisa Bekele, Tamrat Tolla, and Deresa Geleta at the Paris men's marathon Olympics.

Borena: From severe drought to abundance of productivity

A year ago, Borena area was hit by a severe drought and drought-driven famine. At the time, the Ethiopian government applied various measures to control the drought and its impact to halt the immediate effect of the drought.

Parallel to the short-term measures being taken to control the impact of the drought on the people and livestock, efforts were started to solve the recurrent drought in the area sustainably by introducing irrigation and new ways of life to the area. Borena was mostly known for its livestock farming, but now, agriculture including mechanized agriculture is becoming a new way of life in the area.

The above picture shows this year's wheat harvesting which was produced using irrigation through the summer irrigation wheat farming initiative.

**Borena Livestock thrive post-drought, grazing in lush**

Last year's drought in Borena has badly affected the livestock in the area, due to lack of water and grazing. Now, Borena is seen with an abundance of grazing lush and grass-filled fields.

The drought-survived livestock in Borena is now in a grazing lush, where filled with grass which is the outcome of hard work and meaningful measures. Seeing the Borena change, PM Abiy stated "If we work hard, we can change our country and ensure food sovereignty."

Mass plantation for greener tomorrow, economic gains

Planting seedlings is something that has become a common culture during the past six years, following Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed's (PhD) Green Legacy initiative, which started in 2019. The initiative introduces not only planting trees to increase the coverage of the forest but also planting cash-crop plants and fruits.

Planting tea during the plantation seasons has become among the newly introduced and becoming a common culture in recent years. The above picture shows the community mass planting of tea seedlings.

