



The Ethiopian Herald

Vol. LXXX No 310 6 September 2024 - Pagumen 1, 2016

Friday

Price Birr 10.00



Photo: Gebabo Gebre

Fistum Assefa (PhD)

Albeit to challenges, Ethiopia advancing sustainable economic growth : MoPID

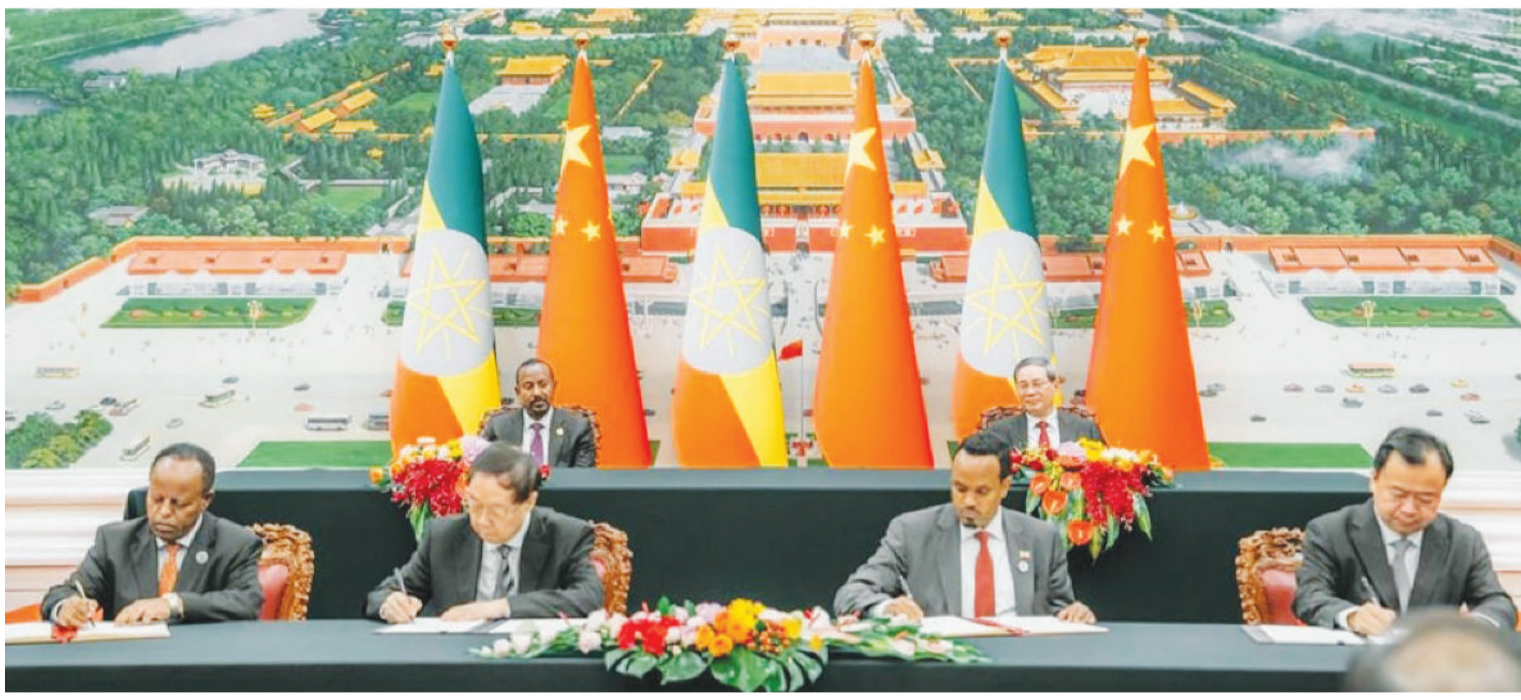
BY BETELHEM BEDLU

ADDIS ABABA- Despite facing numerous internal and external challenges, Ethiopia has demonstrated remarkable resilience and achieved substantial growth across various sectors, the Ministry of Planning and Development (MoPID) said.

During a press briefing on the first day of *Pagumen*, celebrated as the 'Day of Transformation,' MoPID Minister Fistum Assefa (PhD) highlighted the nation's significant progress despite the obstacles encountered on its journey.

Minister Fistum emphasized that the day is dedicated to celebrating achievements in agriculture, manufacturing, tourism, and the energy sector. She noted that transformation is evident through

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FOCAC 2024 : Elevating Ethio - China all-weather cooperation

BY YESUF ENDRIS

As the West and the East continues competition over Africa's opportunities intensifies, China continues to solidify its position as the largest foreign investor in Africa, particularly in

the Sub-Saharan region, where Ethiopia is located. China recently pledged 400 million Yuan to Ethiopia, a donation that underscores its support for Ethiopia's ongoing economic activities.

Although the trade deficit still favors China, it

has slightly narrowed. China remains Africa's largest economic partner, receiving 16% of African exports, while the latter imports 20% of its needs from China, marking a slight progress in addressing the trade imbalance.

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IPDC setting up new business units

- Manufacturing industry's annual growth hits 10.1%

BY TSEGAYE TILAHUN

ADDIS ABABA - The Industrial Parks Development Corporation (IPDC) disclosed that it has been establishing Industry Project Service (IPS), logistics and transportation services, agriculture, construction and hotel as new business units .

This was noted yesterday during stakeholders' forum on macroeconomic reforms implementation in manufacturing industry sector. The forum was organized by the IPDC in collaboration with the Ethiopian Investment Commission (EIC) .

Speaking at the occasion, IPDC Director General Fiseha Yitagesu (PhD) said that the IPDC has been working to establish business units such as IPS, logistics and transportation services, agriculture,

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Ministers advocate innovative solutions for Africa's urban future

- Ethiopia transforms cities from poverty symbols to prosperity centers

BY ASHENAFI ANIMUT

ADDIS ABABA-African ministers are prioritizing stakeholders' collaboration on innovative solutions for Africa's urban future and advocating for national development policies and institutional enhance urban resilience and drive economic growth.

Ethiopia's Urban and Infrastructure Minister, Chaltu Sani, highlighted the country's shift in urbanization, transforming cities from poverty centers to symbols of African prosperity. She emphasized a focus on climate resilience through green innovations and developing human-centered infrastructure.

"Ethiopia's urban growth rate of 5.4% shows both the dynamism of our population and the challenges we face, such as

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Photo: Berihun Tadele



Mayor Birhane Negesse

Town working on power boost

- New 230kV substation to drive investment, growth

BY MENGISTEAB TESHOME

ADDIS ABABA - Bekoji is set to receive a more reliable electricity supply with a new 230 kV power transmission line and substation, aiming to provide stable power and attract investment, according to Mayor Birhane Negesse.

Speaking to the media, Mayor Birhane highlighted that power outages have been a significant challenge for the town. However, thanks to the efforts of Ethiopia Electric Power (EEP), a new power substation is under construction to supply electricity to Bekoji and surrounding areas within a 120 km radius.

The mayor's office is working tirelessly to accelerate Bekoji's development by enhancing connectivity and providing essential services. They have prepared land for investment and identified promising areas, emphasizing the town's potential in agricultural productivity, particularly in wheat and dairy products, which could offer profitable opportunities for investors. Mayor Birhane encouraged investment in agro-processing sectors, such as dairy and flour production, as well as in hospitality.

"We are grateful for this opportunity because power is vital for urban development, economic growth, infrastructure improvement, quality of life, and sustainability. As urban areas continue to expand, ensuring a reliable and sustainable power supply is crucial for fostering vibrant, resilient, and inclusive environments. Investing in power infrastructure is not just a necessity but a strategic imperative for our city's future," she stated.

The mayor also noted that Bekoji's residents are a peace-loving and welcoming community, eager to participate in new job opportunities.

"I have a message for Ethiopia's renowned athletes, especially those connected to Bekoji: invest in our town and support our efforts to attract more investors," she urged.

In an interview with *The Ethiopian Herald*, Bekoji Power Transmission and Substation Project Manager Endalk Jambostated that the project is progressing according to plan, with any delays being addressed through catch-up strategies. The EEP is constructing the transmission line and substation using its own resources, with the Bekoji project being one of its key initiatives.

Project's Site Engineer Tigist Belew added that reliable power is the lifeblood for investment to flourish. EEP is committed to providing a consistent power source, and with the project already 67% complete, it is expected to commence operations in two months.

UN feeding agency resorts to loans to feed hungry people

- Slashes daily ration due to big financing gap

BY DESTA GEBREHIWOT

ADAMA - World Food Program clamours for increased funds as it struggles to feed the staggering number of food-insecure people in Ethiopia with donors now redirecting their funds to other areas impacted by raging conflicts elsewhere in the world.

The program also forecasts burgeoning humanitarian needs as the region braces for more conflicts and natural disasters. The humanitarian agency is struggling to keep pace with the rising humanitarian needs.

The relief agency also depends on loans to continue operations and maintain relief works.

The UN feeding agency also signalled a 341 million USD gap in funding to deliver life-saving food assistance to the most vulnerable over the next six months.

WFP is now providing only 60 per cent of the needed daily nutritional requirement to refugees sheltering in Ethiopia, so said, WFP country director Zlatan Milisic speaking to *The Ethiopian Herald*.

Due to the increased needs, with over a million registered refugees and asylum seekers in the country; WFP has had to reduce rations to ensure that all refugees are assisted, the country director added.

On Wednesday, WFP in a handing over ceremony held in Adama received 13,582 mt of rice from the Republic of Korea for refugees who are in urgent need in Afar and Somali states.



The agency welcomes Korea's donation while appealing for more funds and work to help people who are struggling to feed themselves.

"We are borrowing from a contingency fund in which we have to repay and looking at all possible ways to help those in need,"

Currently, Ethiopia hosts over one million refugees who were displaced and fled war-torn neighbouring nations. Countries like Ethiopia also appeal for more international donors and financiers to do more to abate the dire humanitarian crisis unfolding in the continent, said the director.

The funding situation is very worrying and the future is not looking very optimistic too. "We are trying to speak to our donors and explore

other finances and back our operation. At this moment, we are securing 90 million, but are quite worried that there is a big gap between the demand and supply."

"We are concerned that our needs are still quite big, 13 million people need humanitarian aid in Ethiopia. And the fund is not even close to what we hope it's to be." Milisic added.

Some donors that used to fund WFP have stopped funding over some concerns WFP is strengthening its monitoring and supervision mechanisms to redress concerns of irregularities raised by donors. I understand donors would like to see strong measures put in place and we are trying to implement strong because hungry people cannot wait.



Ethiopian students engaging in digital tour in China

BY STAFF REPORTER

ADDIS ABABA - Chinese technology company, Huawei announced that it has organized an eight-day digital tour in China to students, including Ethiopians, to explore China's digital landscape, interact with startups and executives.

In a statement sent to *The Ethiopian Herald*, the company said that three Ethiopian students are part of an eight-day digital tour organized by Huawei that begins in Shenzhen and ends in Beijing, China.

Accordingly, the tour arranged for Huawei Seeds for the Future (SFTF) Tech 4 Good alumni, began on September 1 and will continue until September 8, 2024.

This initiative provides Seeds alumni with a

unique opportunity to explore China's digital landscape, learn about ICT and developing technological startups, gain insight into their operations, and engage in interactive discussions with industry executives, it said.

During the screening process, 5% of the top outstanding Seeds alumni from the 2023 SFTF Tech 4 Good program were invited to present productions on a variety of topics such as Understanding ICT, Youth Entrepreneurship, and Sustainability, as well as their personal development and career objectives. Finally, three students excelled on their tour in China, the company announced.

The students reportedly expressed that the visit provided them with an intimate understanding and experience of how the digital world works.

The tour includes Huawei Dongguan Campus Visit about Smart PV Showcase, Huawei Exhibition Hall Visit about ICT Advanced Course, Digital Government Visit about High-Tech Enterprise, Cultural Immersion, and High-Tech Enterprise, Huawei University Visit and AI Workshop, Panel Discussion: Digital Technology Empowering African and Chinese Youth Development, Huawei stated.

This year, 45 outstanding students from 17 countries in the Northern and Southern African regions are participating in the 2024 Seeds for the Future China Digital Trip. SFTF is one of Huawei's Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives in Ethiopia, which is run in partnership with the Ethiopian Ministry of Education, it was learnt.

News

Ministers advocate innovative ...

infrastructure deficits and inadequate housing,” she stated, advocating for turning these challenges into opportunities.

While the rapid expansion of cities signifies progress, it also presents challenges such as infrastructure deficits, inadequate housing, and strains on essential services. Minister Chaltu suggested that these challenges could be transformed into opportunities for development.

She also noted that the forum is not merely a meeting but a call to action for policymakers, urban planners, development partners, and community leaders to collaborate and innovate. With urban economies and transformations expanding, collective efforts are crucial to address Africa’s urban challenges.

Kenya’s Ambassador to UN-Habitat, Grace Okara, underscored the forum’s importance in reaffirming commitment to Agenda 2063, with Kenya’s urban population expected to grow from 31.2% in 2019 to 50% by 2030. She noted urbanization’s potential to drive growth and shared prosperity despite challenges like infrastructure strain.

“Despite these challenges, urbanization is a positive force with the potential to harness structural transformation and accelerate growth and shared prosperity,” she added. Kenya has made significant strides through government initiatives, strategies, and private partnerships to address urbanization challenges, including the Affordable Housing Program, a revolutionary initiative to provide Kenyans with access to decent homes.

South Africa’s Human Settlements Deputy Minister, Tandi Mahambehlala, indicated that Africa’s rapid urbanization has led to 60% of the urban population living in slums. She stressed the need for productive cities that offer economic opportunities for all.

“Reducing poverty and upgrading informal settlements will not be possible unless cities are productive and efficient, providing economic opportunities for the poor to build assets and incomes,” she emphasized. Properly managed urbanization can support cultural changes and the structural transformation of Africa.

Ambassador Hassan El-Laithy (PhD) from

Egypt’s Ministry of Housing, Utilities, and Urban Communities mentioned the forum as a milestone for implementing Africa’s new urban agenda, briefing his country’s initiatives in housing and community development.

“This framework symbolizes a united commitment to tackling pressing issues and seizing opportunities brought by rapid urbanization,” he said. Aligning with national strategies, Egypt has implemented policies and programs to address housing issues through subsidized housing and community development projects. He also underscored the importance of digital inclusions and technologies to enhance the efficiency and sustainability of urban services.

Somalia’s Public Works, Construction, and Housing Minister, Abdisalam Abdi, called for collaborative efforts to address urban challenges, stressing the need for inclusive and sustainable urban development across Africa. The minister also indicated that cities and settlements are hubs for cultural and economic activities and modernizing infrastructure and simplifying housing finance is vital for urban development.

IPDC setting...

construction and hotel business units under IPDC to make it more entrepreneurs. It has also planned to transform parks into dynamic Special Economic Zones (SEZ) adding extra services and works in the coming 5 or 10 years.

The SEZ would be launched in the Dire Dawa Free Trade Zone. The guideline and other legal frameworks are finalized. The remaining task is launching operation. The objective of establishing SEZ is to boosting operational efficiency excellence and infrastructure quality, balancing local and foreign investors, emphasize on import substitution and export promotion, create quality jobs, diversify investments and others, he said.

The ongoing macroeconomic reforms such as opening up of wholesale, retail, export-import trade, foreign exchange flotation, banking sector liberalization and others would contribute to the effectiveness of investors or private sector, he said.

Some 85% of shades in industrial parks seized by investors the remaining 15% of shades are available for future investments. Currently, some 147 investors are operating in parks of which over 51% are local investors.

According to him, as of now, there are 70,000 employees in parks. Hawassa and Bole Lemi Industrial Parks giant parks that are highly contributing in export earnings amount and job creation.

So far, the parks are facing poor export performance, low operational excellence, global and local uncertainty, low resource optimization, bureaucratic hurdles, foreign exchange shortage, infrastructure gaps, regulatory complexities and others challenges, he noted.

For his part, Industry Minister Melaku Alebel stated that the annual growth of manufacturing sector has hit 10.1%. Hence, the sector requires creating, import substitution, more job opportunities. Some 78% of country’s export was raw agricultural products during the just ended Ethiopian fiscal year. Changing this trend needs industry parks to operate in their full capacity as well as joining of new additional investors to export value added products.

Furthermore, the country has been undertaking giant economic reforms. Local and foreign investors have to utilize these lofts of reform opportunities since the policy reform only could not bring change. Hence, the government is committed to improve production and productivity of manufacturing industry sector, he added.

FOCAC 2024 : Elevating Ethio- China...

With Ethiopia, China has reinforced its role as a dominant foreign investor. Chinese investments exceeded 5 billion USD in 2023, and nearly 2,000 Chinese-led projects have created 65,000 jobs, making a significant impact on the country’s economic landscape. Yang Yihang, Minister Counsellor of the Chinese Embassy in Addis Ababa, highlighted these figures during the Ethio-Chinese Business Forum held last May. Thus, Chinese investment portfolio is expected to grow as foreign direct investment (FDI) between the two countries continues to strengthen.

Chinese enterprises launched over 223 new products in Ethiopia in 2023 alone, particularly in renewable energy, agriculture, and manufacturing, aligning with Ethiopia’s current economic needs.

In their third meeting since August 2023, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed and President Xi Jinping discussed on the sidelines of the Forum on China Africa Cooperation to further strengthening their relations, particularly in the areas of investment, green growth, digitalization, and new energy. This strategic partnership not only boosts business-to-business relations but also solidifies Ethiopia’s role as a key player in China-Africa relations.

Under the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC), Ethiopia is not only amplifying its bilateral relations, but also serving as a critical bridge facilitating broader Chinese cooperation across the continent. Ethiopian Foreign Minister Taye Atskeselassie has referred to the deepening ties as “all-weather” cooperation, built on mutual respect and high-level diplomacy.

“Ethiopia is striving for development, much like the path the Chinese people and government have traveled. For a country like Ethiopia, with rosy futures, cooperation with China is crucial,” he remarked.

Bilateral agreements between the two countries focus on strengthening cooperation in innovation, education, and trade. Cooperation in industrial parks and construction has been central to their economic relationship, a point emphasized by both Prime Minister Abiy and President Xi.

On the multilateral relations, Ethiopian and Chinese leaders have exchanged views on addressing global imbalances through South-South cooperation. China is also expected to play a crucial role in supporting Ethiopia’s debt restructuring claims. As chair of the global creditors’ association, China has a decisive role in ensuring the voices of borrowers like Ethiopia

are heard, the Foreign Minister said.

In support of Ethiopia’s economic activities, the Chinese government has pledged a 400 million Yuan donation, according to Finance Minister Ahmed Shide. Ethiopia is currently implementing macroeconomic reforms that aim to create a better environment for foreign direct investment. As Ethiopia’s largest FDI source, China is expected to enhance its engagement moving forward.

The currency swap agreement between the Ethiopian Birr and the Chinese Yuan was also a major agenda item in bilateral discussions. “The two leaders expressed their commitment to guiding their national banks,” Finance Minister Ahmed said. This deal, which is same as Ethiopia’s agreement with the UAE, is expected to improve Ethiopia’s access to foreign currencies. Further details regarding the currency swap are expected to be announced soon.

Despite the ongoing trade imbalance, Ethiopian exports to China are growing at an annual rate of 46%. Minister Ahmed remains optimistic about the continued progress in cooperation across sectors such as manufacturing, agriculture, construction, innovation, and technology.

Albeit to challenges, Ethiopia advancing ...

capacity building, accumulated experience, and improved performance, as the country has shown promising results in these sectors despite various challenges.

Ethiopia has historically relied on wheat imports for over 60 years, with production primarily dependent on the *Meher* season. However, the country has shifted its policy, implementing agricultural mechanization and irrigation to revolutionize the sector. As a result, annual wheat production has increased from 50 million quintals to 230 million quintals. The adoption of agricultural technology, cluster farming, and irrigation has played a crucial role in this success.

Additionally, local innovations in agriculture

have enabled the successful production of summer wheat by developing seeds that withstand summer weather conditions. These advancements have saved the nation over one billion USD previously spent on wheat imports, underscoring Ethiopia’s transformative journey in wheat development.

She also noted that the manufacturing industry has seen substantial improvements compared to previous years. Efforts to enhance the sector have increased foreign direct investment and boosted its global competitiveness. Industries that were previously halted due to infrastructure issues, conflict, and other challenges are now operating at 60% of their production capacity.

Industries such as food, textiles, medical

supplies, and technology have significantly increased their production capacities, substituting imports worth two billion Birr. Furthermore, around 13 industrial parks, three agro-processing centers, and several privately-owned industrial parks are currently operational.

Given Ethiopia’s rich cultural and historical heritage, significant attention has been given to maximizing the economic benefits of the tourism sector. Ethiopia has launched initiatives like *Dine for the Nation* to leverage its tourism potential and has restored several tourist sites, including the rock-hewn churches of Lalibela, Aba Jifar and the Grand Palace. New hotels and resorts developed under the *Dine for the Nation*

project, now managed by Ethiopian Skylight Hotel, are also noteworthy accomplishments.

The near completion of the Abbay Dam, referred to as a “new victory of Adwa,” is another significant milestone in the nation’s transformation. According to Minister Fistum, the dam represents not only a triumph but also a catalyst for urbanization, industrialization, and economic growth.

“The overall achievements that have transformed Ethiopia’s journey towards realizing its goals would not have been possible without the dedication, energy, and knowledge of those who contributed to the success across all sectors. I extend my deepest appreciation to everyone involved,” she concluded.

Opinion

The way forward to transcend: Acumen against delusion

BY LAKACHEW ATINAFU

Ethiopia, a nation rich in history and cultural diversity, has undergone significant transformations since the time of transcend and reform that began in the late 2010s. This period marked a pivotal shift in the country's political landscape, economic strategies, and social dynamics. While there are bright hopes on the horizon, challenges remain formidable.

The appointment of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed in 2018 heralded a new era of political openness. His administration initiated a series of reforms aimed at democratization, including the release of political prisoners, the lifting of bans on opposition parties, and the promotion of dialogue among various political factions. These changes have fostered a more inclusive political environment, sparking optimism among citizens.

Ethiopia has experienced impressive economic growth over the past decade. With a focus on industrialization and infrastructure development, the government has attracted foreign investment, particularly in sectors like manufacturing and services. Initiatives such as the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) promise to enhance energy production and support economic self-sufficiency.

There has been significant progress in education and healthcare, with increased enrollment rates in schools and expanded access to medical services. The government's commitment to improving women's rights and empowerment has also gained momentum, fostering a more equitable society.

Ethiopia's role in regional diplomacy has strengthened, particularly in its relationship with neighboring countries. Efforts to mediate conflicts and promote peace in the Horn of Africa have positioned Ethiopia as a key player in regional stability.

Despite the political reforms, ethnic tensions have escalated in various regions. The twisted perception of Ethiopia's ethnic federalism has led to conflicts and violence in some areas, undermining the sense of national unity. Addressing these tensions remains a critical challenge for the government and civil society.

While economic growth is noteworthy, disparities in wealth and access to resources persist. Rural areas often lag behind urban centers in terms of development. Ensuring that economic benefits reach all segments of society is essential for sustainable growth.

The political landscape remains fraught with challenges related to human rights. Reports of repression and violence against dissenters have surfaced, raising concerns about the government's commitment to democratic principles. Balancing security with the protection of individual freedoms is vital for long-term stability.

Ethiopia faces significant environmental challenges, including deforestation, soil erosion, and climate change impacts. These issues threaten agriculture, which is the backbone of the economy, and require urgent attention to ensure food security and sustainability.

Ethiopia stands at a crossroads, facing both new bright hopes and substantial challenges. The reforms initiated in recent years have laid the groundwork for a more democratic and prosperous future. However, navigating the complexities of seemingly ethnic relations, economic disparities, human rights, and environmental sustainability will require concerted efforts from the government, civil society, and the international community. The path forward is filled with potential, but it demands a commitment to inclusivity, dialogue, and resilience.

Some desperate regional actors intending to enter Somalia are less likely to set aside their plans. Even if they don't, their diplomatic action poses less of a threat to them than it does to Ethiopia. So Ethiopia must stand firm in this position.

But government needs to acknowledge diplomatic mismanagement that led to this situation. All these developments are not unforeseen.

The Somalia government's diplomatic efforts appear to be bearing short-term fruits, frustrating the Ethiopian side. Yet, Somalia and Ethiopia will be the most affected by the recent diplomatic developments and decisions concerning the Somalia peacekeeping.

Ethiopia, with its rich history and cultural heritage, has the potential to transcend its challenges and emerge as a role model for the rest of Africa. By leveraging its unique strengths and addressing its shortcomings, Ethiopia can inspire other nations on the continent. Here are several ways Ethiopia can achieve this:

Ethiopia can strengthen its political institutions by ensuring that governance is inclusive and representative of all ethnicities and regions. Encouraging citizen participation in decision-making processes can build trust and foster a sense of belonging among diverse groups.

Developing effective mechanisms for conflict resolution can serve as a model for other African nations facing similar ethnic or regional tensions. Promoting dialogue and reconciliation can enhance national unity.

Ethiopia should continue to diversify its economy beyond agriculture. Investing in technology, renewable energy, and manufacturing can create jobs and stimulate growth. Establishing innovation hubs can encourage entrepreneurship.

Encouraging collaboration between the government and private sector can attract investment and drive economic development. Successful partnerships can be showcased as examples for other countries.

Ethiopia, as already has begun, should focus on improving education quality and accessibility, particularly in rural areas. A well-educated workforce is essential for economic growth and can serve as a model for other nations in building human capital.

Implementing programs that equip young people with practical skills can address unemployment and drive economic progress. These initiatives can serve as a blueprint for similar efforts across the continent.

Ethiopia can lead by example in environmental conservation and sustainable agricultural practices. Initiatives to combat climate change and promote biodiversity can inspire other African countries to adopt eco-friendly policies.

Investing in renewable energy sources, such as hydro, wind, and solar power, can not only meet domestic energy needs but also position Ethiopia as a leader in sustainable energy solutions for Africa.

Ethiopia can play a pivotal role in fostering regional trade through the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). Promoting trade and economic collaboration with neighboring countries can enhance regional stability and prosperity.

Actively engaging in peace building efforts in the Horn of Africa can position Ethiopia as a regional leader in conflict resolution and diplomacy. Successful mediation can serve as a model for other nations facing similar challenges.

Supporting civil society organizations that promote human rights and social justice can enhance Ethiopia's reputation as a leader in these areas. Ensuring freedom of expression and protecting minority rights are crucial steps.

Ethiopia can champion initiatives that promote gender equality and empower women in leadership roles. Successful strategies can serve as a model for other African nations striving for gender parity.

By embracing inclusive governance, fostering economic innovation, prioritizing education, promoting sustainable development, strengthening regional cooperation, and advocating for human rights, Ethiopia can transcend its challenges and become a beacon of hope for the rest of Africa. The journey requires commitment, collaboration, and a vision for a brighter future, but the potential for Ethiopia to inspire change across the continent is significant.

Ethiopia, a nation steeped in rich history and cultural heritage, stands at a pivotal moment in its journey. Despite facing numerous challenges, the country is brimming with bright hopes that can lead to a prosperous and inclusive future. These hopes are rooted in political reforms, economic potential, social progress, and a commitment to regional stability.

The political landscape in Ethiopia has undergone significant transformation since Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed took office in 2018. His administration has initiated a series of reforms aimed at promoting democracy, enhancing political freedoms, and fostering dialogue among diverse sections of the people. The release of political prisoners and the encouragement of opposition voices have sparked a renewed sense of hope among citizens.

The establishment of a more inclusive political environment has the potential to strengthen national unity and build trust among various communities. If these reforms continue to evolve positively, Ethiopia can serve as a model for democratic governance in the region.

Ethiopia has experienced remarkable economic

growth over the past decade, positioning itself as one of the fastest-growing economies in Africa. The government's focus on industrialization, infrastructure development, and foreign investment has created new opportunities for job creation and economic diversification.

Projects like the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) promise to enhance energy production and provide the foundation for sustainable economic growth. By leveraging its natural resources and fostering a business-friendly environment, Ethiopia can pave the way for a more resilient economy that benefits all citizens.

Significant strides have been made in improving access to education and healthcare in Ethiopia. Increased enrollment rates in schools and expanded healthcare services reflect a commitment to social progress. The government's focus on women's empowerment and gender equality has also gained momentum, promoting a more equitable society.

Investing in education and skill development is crucial for the nation's future. A well-educated workforce will not only drive economic growth but also foster innovation and creativity, positioning Ethiopia as a leader in various sectors.

Ethiopia has a youthful population, with a significant percentage under the age of 30. This demographic dividend presents a unique opportunity for the country. By fostering youth engagement and supporting entrepreneurship, Ethiopia can harness the energy and creativity of its young people.

Initiatives that encourage innovation, such as technology hubs and startup incubators, can empower the youth to contribute to the economy and address societal challenges. The potential for a vibrant entrepreneurial ecosystem is a bright hope for Ethiopia's future.

Ethiopia's strategic position in the Horn of Africa allows it to play a crucial role in promoting regional stability and cooperation. The country has been actively involved in peace building efforts, mediating conflicts and fostering dialogue among neighboring nations.

Strengthening relationships within the region can enhance economic ties and promote collective security. By positioning itself as a leader in regional diplomacy, Ethiopia can inspire other African nations to work towards peace and collaboration.

Ethiopia is at a crossroads, filled with bright hopes for a prosperous future. Through continued political reforms, economic development, social progress, youth engagement, and regional cooperation, the nation can transform its challenges into opportunities. The resilience and determination of the Ethiopian people, combined with a commitment to inclusivity and innovation, can pave the way for a brighter tomorrow. As Ethiopia moves forward, it has the potential to become a beacon of hope for the entire continent.

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

Editorial

Resilience amidst the odds!

From the signing of the Ethiopia and Somaliland sea access deal to the launching of the power generation of the 3rd and 4th turbines of Ethiopia's Grand Renaissance Dam (GERD), Ethiopia has remained resilient in the face of adversaries and against all odds.

Despite the ongoing instability in some pockets of Amhara and Oromia states, the country has seen various successful progresses in terms of restoring peace, completing development projects and economic reforms.

The completion of the 3rd and 4th turbines and the commencement of power generation have heralded a new energy revolution for the country. To enter this stage, the construction of the colossal dam has been through various odds. The project has been a target of constant barrages of misinformation and smear campaigns. However, the reliance of the Ethiopian people here and abroad coupled with the unwavering resolve of the incumbent has made it possible to put the dam into the final lap. Now the project will connect millions to the grid.

Above all, despite some chaos in some parts of the country, Ethiopia has been making much bigger progress in ensuring peace and stability. There have visibly been significant improvements in humanitarian situations and security status in the country. With the country poised to stage national dialogue and transitional justice, there has already been some headway in restoring stability.

Diplomatically, the country has been walking a fine line between the west and east. Being the anchor state in the Horn, Ethiopia continues to maintain a balanced and neutral position in its relations with the global community. The country has been admitted to the BRICS bloc and also has been taking center stage in global frontiers.

In another important development, Ethiopia and Somaliland have entered a breakthrough sea access deal. This grand deal sent a new dawn of cooperation in the Horn of Africa. Ethiopia's signing of a memorandum of understanding with Somaliland—which is in line with the former's legitimate quest for access to the sea, also came as a vital event opening the door for regional cooperation. However, since the signing, there has been a collusion of internal and external forces to disrupt the cooperation although the signatories remained resilient and resolute to implement the deal. Despite the ongoing efforts to derail the path, Ethiopia is navigating the region towards economic integration.

In terms of the economy, the year has been marked by the vigorous implementation of "the Home Grown Economic Reform," and sweeping economic reform which aims to address the nation's economic problems with the active support of international financial institutions like the World Bank Group and the International Monetary Fund. On 29 July, the National Bank of Ethiopia bank introduced a floating exchange rate regime. The same day, the IMF Board approved an Extended Credit Facility (ECF) arrangement of about USD 3.4 billion, with a USD 1 billion immediate disbursement. The World Bank followed the IMF announcement with the pledge of USD 16.6 billion of funding over the next three years, including a USD 1 billion IDA grant and a USD 500 million concessional loan.

These institutions attest to the country's correct economic direction, even though the adjustment made to foreign exchange rates has resulted in an immediate inflationary tendency. To lessen inflation, lower foreign debt, and promote self-reliance, the government has been promoting increased production and the replacement of imported commodities.

In the same year, Addis Ababa had the most extensive reconstruction and renovations ever, transforming the city into a contemporary, clean, and ecologically pleasant place to live. The corridor project has been completed one after the other giving the city a fine look. All these achievements did not come without challenges. The country has been facing security problems in Amhara Oromia and other parts of the country. Inflation continues to pose economic hardships and the Horn region heading to increased uncertainty. These internal and external woes pose tremendous challenges to the country. Yet again, the above success stories also showcase that with hardwork and commitment; the country can bypass challenges and meet its priorities.



The Ethiopian Herald

Established in 1943

Published daily except Mondays
By The Ethiopian Press Agency

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Tel. 011-126-42-22
Fax. 251-011-156-98-62
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Advertisement and Dist. Department

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Opinion

Ethiopia's transition to a new horizon of prosperity is inevitable

BY SOLOMON DIBABA

Despite the painstaking zigzags and loopholes the country had to cruise through, Ethiopia is gradually transiting from a backward, poverty ridden country into a new horizon of meaningful socio-economic and political development.

As the nation is on a threshold of marking a New Year with higher optimism, the author of this article wishes to highlight on the major indicators of Ethiopia's national transition.

Ethiopia has recently adopted a new path to prosperity by employing a comprehensive macroeconomic policy which included financial, fiscal, technological and social reforms that are already being implemented in an integrated and speedy manner. The transition from importing wheat to substituting it locally including rice production for self-sufficiency in the context of National Basket Bounty and Made in Ethiopia Campaigns, promotion of eco-tourism resorts, the speedy pace in which GERD and other hydropower dams are being completed, massive accomplishments on National Green Legacy Initiative and corridor development projects across the country, promising strides on Digital Ethiopia are all vivid indicators of the fact that Ethiopia's national transition on the ground for all to witness.

Ethiopia has made significant strides in its foreign policy and diplomacy in recent years, focusing on regional integration, conflict resolution, and economic partnership.

Ethiopia has played a crucial role in promoting regional cooperation within the Horn of Africa. The country's efforts in mediating peace processes, particularly in South Sudan, have been significant. Ethiopia has also been a driving force in the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), which focuses on peace and development in the region.

Ethiopia has continued to engage actively in multilateral diplomacy, particularly within the African Union (AU), which is headquartered in Addis Ababa. Ethiopia's leadership in AU initiatives, such as the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), has positioned the country as a key player in African diplomacy.

Despite the recent negative stance, propaganda and belligerency from Somalia, Ethiopia remains one of the largest contributors to UN peacekeeping missions, particularly in conflict zones in Africa.

Ethiopia has been pursuing economic diplomacy to attract foreign investment, enhance trade relations, and secure development assistance. The country's efforts to deepen ties with emerging economies, such as China and India, have resulted in significant investments in infrastructure and industrialization projects.

Ethiopia has been actively involved in

diplomatic negotiations regarding the GERD with Egypt and Sudan. Despite the challenges, Ethiopia has maintained its stance on the equitable use of the Nile waters, seeking a fair agreement that ensures its development needs are met while addressing the concerns of downstream countries.

These achievements reflect Ethiopia's growing influence in regional and international diplomacy, as well as its efforts to balance its national interests with broader global and regional goals.

Ethiopia has made several strides in strengthening its democratic institutions over the past several years, focusing on political reforms, institutional capacity-building, and increasing public participation.

The country has undertaken significant electoral reforms aimed at ensuring free, fair, and transparent elections. The establishment of an independent National Electoral Board of Ethiopia (NEBE) has been a critical step towards enhancing the credibility of electoral processes. The board was restructured to improve its independence, transparency, and accountability, leading to more inclusive and competitive elections.

Judicial independence has been a priority, with efforts to depoliticize the judiciary and enhance its capacity to uphold the rule of law. Transitory reforms include the restructuring of the court system, improving the appointment process for judges, and ensuring the judiciary's autonomy from political influence.

Despite the irregulars on misinformation and propaganda on the social media and some mainstream media outlets, Ethiopia has made progress in promoting media freedom, which is a vital component of a functioning democracy. Reforms include repealing restrictive media laws, reducing censorship, and allowing greater freedom of expression. The government has also taken steps to ensure that state media operates independently and that private media outlets can function without undue interference.

The government has introduced reforms to empower civil society organizations (CSOs) and allow them to operate more freely. The revision of the Charities and Societies Proclamation, which had previously restricted the activities of CSOs, has allowed greater civic engagement and participation in the democratic process.

Moreover, Ethiopia has strengthened its federal system by promoting greater decentralization and autonomy for regional governments. This has allowed more localized governance, enabling regions to address specific needs and concerns of their populations. The move towards decentralization has been seen as a way to address ethnic tensions and ensure more inclusive governance.

See Ethiopia's transition ... Page 14

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

Business & Economy

Investment: The other side of economic reward

BY MENGESHA AMARE

Companies, organizations, government bodies and development partners are increasingly adopting the goal of long-term value creation, which integrates financial, social and environmental values in the transition towards a sustainable economy.

Besides, institutional investors struggle to invest for long-term value creation and perform the social function of finance. The long-term investment approach includes short investment chains, active management that assesses companies' transition preparedness, concentrated portfolios, and deep engagement.

Taking all this into account, *The Ethiopian Herald* conducted an interview with Abdisa Lemma, an agro economist graduated from Haramaya University. He said that investments are regulated by multiple regulatory bodies. This depends on the type of investment the nation does have.

He said, "Investment is an important factor that influences the growth of the gross national product. It is highly volatile, and its variability is much more flexible than the variability of the gross national product. Technical and technological developments in one sector can cause rapid and intense investment in some other related sectors of the economy."

He further elucidated that capital accumulation is the result of net investment which in turn is made possible by the economy's flow of aggregate net saving out of current income. This establishes a savings-investment-growth nexus which gives economic growth its essentially dynamic character.

As to him, every sector or segment has its growth regulator. The regulators oversee investments and offer unbiased and interactive resources to help operators get started with investing. Since last year, Ethiopia has been developing and investing in mission-driven customized portfolio solutions for investors, investing across the growing market opportunity and leveraging resources, and importantly, it has well identified and report on impact metrics of underlying investments.

The country has been striving for generating measurable social and environmental impact in addition to financial returns as well as investing with a focus on the core impact sectors for investment, he said.

The public-private partnership model is not an easy solution to the capital funding gap. Because capital investment is so challenging, many organizations compensate by finding strategic investors; that is, investors who can provide not only capital but also experience and expertise on how to invest that capital wisely. There are several potential strategic investors in the country with deep experience in capital management and infrastructure investing, the 'dine for the nation bounties like *Gorgora, Wonchi* and *Koyisha*, and the recent corridor project commenced in Addis Ababa.

As to Abdisaa, to ensure that capital



Ethiopia emerges as leading destination for foreign direct investment in East Africa- photo FanaBC

investment projects align with the needs of those they are intended to benefit, it's important to engage community stakeholders, to be transparent with respect to the business case and to choose project outcomes that are relevant to communities and can be measured over the long term.

According to Abdissa, since attracting foreign investment is a policy and country situation issue, the influence of marketing on investment promotion and how investors should be viewed as consumers who have needs to be satisfied has to be well capitalized.

With globalization, many nations have liberalized their trade policies and removed trade barriers. The transaction costs decreased and the integration of economies has contributed to increases in foreign direct investment (FDI), he added.

"Investment in Ethiopia is giving rise to matters of national security may entitle the withholding of classified information only, and an investor must have an opportunity to tailor its capital to the development engagements across the nation. In equilibrium, all investors hold the market portfolio, which is replicated in the market index. It suffices to adopt a passive investment approach by investing in the market index. That is a very strong idea indeed. And in practice most investors indeed seem to be positioned close to the market. But the problem is the narrow view on financial risk and return, ignoring the social and environmental dimensions."

Investments in new technologies, equipment, and infrastructure he added help increase production efficiency. This, in turn, leads to an increase in gross output, reduce unemployment rates and increase the level of employment.

The goal of any country is to achieve a high level of economic growth, as this would lead to better living standards, better prosperity, and a more comfortable life for its people. Therefore, achieving economic growth requires governments to adopt different types of policies such as promoting savings, stimulating investment, and increasing internal production, he opined.

Undoubtedly, investment contributes to aggregate growth; however, investment cannot be raised without increasing the amount of savings. In order for Ethiopia to

achieve sustainable economic development, it needs to increase its aggregate savings, which will in turn contribute to greater investments and higher GDP growth. This also means that more savings, specifically in developing countries like ours would lead to less consumption, which could also result in a larger amount of capital investment and finally a higher rate of economic growth.

True, businesses in Ethiopia have varying financial resources available at low cost; they also have a major investment in infrastructure, technology, and development and do not necessarily need to attract foreign investors. However, this trend has to be well altered to help the nation make a difference in all aspects.

On the effects of domestic investment on economic growth, the country has meaningfully embarked on a significantly positive—that is, increasing domestic investments has confidently contributed to the country's economic growth.

According to Abdissa, there is co-integration between gross domestic savings, gross domestic investment, and Gross Domestic Product. Both the short-and long-term investments showed a significant positive impact on economic growth. The current savings of the nation have served as the main potential of financial resources for capital investment in Ethiopia and have made an indisputable and irreplaceable contribution to the development and growth its economy. Increasing the accumulation of domestic savings would offer multiple benefits to national economy, too.

Yes, Ethiopia needs to mobilize internal savings to achieve the desired economic development. For this strategy to be implemented, it would require well-organized, competitive, and flexible financial institutions. Lending is the main mechanism through which savings are transformed into investment in the country. The biggest improvements in due course of booming modern production lines, machineries, and technology utilization for reducing production costs, increasing productivity, and improving competitiveness, have now been given due attention on behalf of the government.

Developing countries like Ethiopia need to quench an ever-growing volume of financial resources, and investment

resources in Ethiopia come largely from abroad, especially foreign direct investment and loan. However, this high dependence on external sources limits the country's independency and it might face coercive policies for misusing its resources. Even a small change in external capital flows can cause internal economic downturn, and the accumulation of domestic savings will help reduce the vulnerability arising from dependence on foreign financing and provide a sustainable long-term financing base for investments in the country.

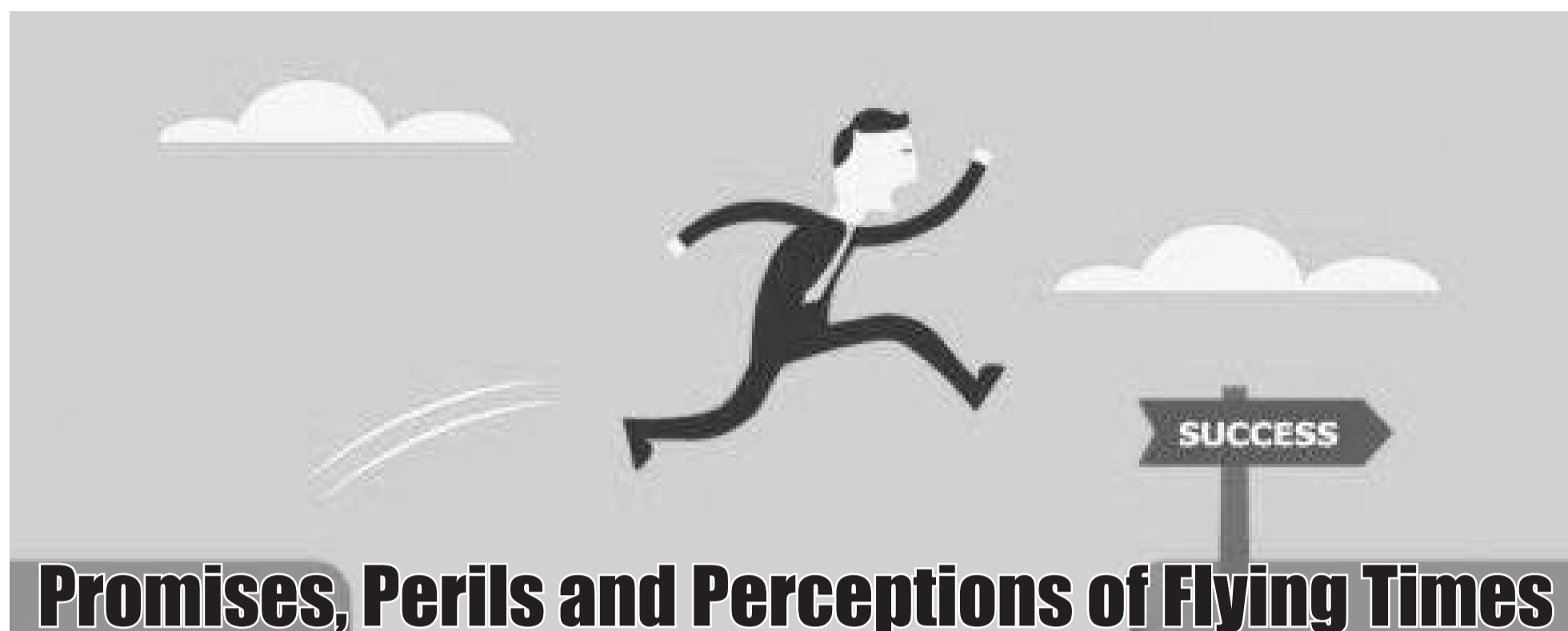
Responding to the question revolves around the relationship between savings and economic growth, Abdisa said it cannot be denied that an increase in aggregate savings would boost investment and promote economic growth.

Therefore, increasing the level of accumulation of domestic savings in the Ethiopian banking system will help reduce unemployment, enable greater technological development, and increase the country's GDP and citizens' well-being. This strategy will reduce the risks to the country's economy, as a major problem faced by the nation is typically the burden of external debts and dependence on aid providers. Hence, the state of the nation should initiate strategies to promote the accumulation of domestic savings to accelerate sustainable economic growth in the country.

Abdisa said, "Investment is an important factor of economic growth. Accumulation of social capital is possible due to investment, too. Investment contributes to additional revenue, which is determined by the state of general economic activity. It also represents one of the most important economic categories, one of the components of GNP, the most variable and at the same time determining the development of the economy. The amount of investment is very difficult to predict at the macro level if consumption is functionally related to the income, government spending and net export are fairly predictable."

It should be emphasized that investment as an economic category during the evolution of economic science is closely connected with the categories of sustainable growth, the economic system in general and macroeconomic equilibrium in particular, he stated.

Art & Culture



Promises, Perils and Perceptions of Flying Times

BY MULUGETA GUDETA

As we approach yet another Ethiopian New Year, our thoughts inevitably turn to the meaning of time and its consequences on our lives as individuals or as communities. New Year is not only a time of festivities but also a time of sober reflection about our lives and their meanings, the topics we avoid addressing on ordinary days.

Have you noticed how time flies these days? It is passing so fast that you have the impression that after Monday comes Friday and after Sunday comes Thursday. It is as if a major shift in time and space is taking place leaving us in awe and surprise. Our lives seem to be shorter than usual. It is as if time and space are shrinking, or their elasticity is becoming less pronounced. It is as if Einstein's relativity theory does not work anymore, and the time-space continuum needs some kind of revision. Maybe we should be living in the fourth dimension by adding time to the three dimensions we are used to. I am simply kidding.

When was it that we celebrated New Year in Ethiopia? Eleven months back! But the impression that we have now is that New Year was only a month or two back while another New Year is right in front of us, beckoning us to prepare for its celebration. Time is accelerating indeed although we may not be sure whether this acceleration is only a matter of subjective impression or a real shrinking that can be experimentally proved.

Anyway, we are going to celebrate Ethiopian 2017 after a few days. How time is flying! In the mind of the public, there is wisdom, attached to the flight of time. It says: "Time is flying, so is our age!" Although this sounds a banal statement, it hides a deep-seated subconscious regret or a sudden awakening that we are getting older without realizing how time has passed so fast.

This assertion in turn leads us to another quasi-philosophical musing: what have we done or what are we doing with our time? Are we properly using our time or our stay on this planet? Is our life worth living or are we simply surviving? The consensus is that it does not matter whether we live to be one hundred or fifty years old as long as we use time properly and usefully. However, this is

not always a valid assertion. Many people who are lucky or unlucky enough to live to be hundred might have spent half of their lives sleeping although most of us are scientifically entitled to spend one third of our age in sleep. Mind you, this is too much time.

The question we almost always evade is the following? What have we done or what are we doing with our time, apart from celebrating it every year as we reach new milestones in our lives? Many people might be proud of living to be ninety or one hundred. This is considered to be a blessing from God or a manifestation of human endurance as expressed in their longevity. The question we often avoid asking is the following: it is good that we have a long life but what have we done to make it worthwhile?

In the final analysis, what is important is not the number of years we count or celebrate each year but what we have done with our time. That is why the notion of proper time management has nowadays assumed such importance in the management of our daily lives. There is also this deeply engrained attitude of not giving the necessary value to our time. Maybe this is because time is given to us for free. Many things that are given freely lose their value as we are accustomed to measuring the worthiness of something by the amount of money we spend on it.

One of the tricks time plays on us is that it passes so silently that we realize its passage when it is only too late. When people are in their youth, they seldom worry about the passage of time. They may have the impression that they will never get older or that old age is unattainably remote from them. Or that aging is not for you but for other people. Yet, when the signs of aging start to appear, they seem to be waking up with panic and come to the realization that the much-feared time of reckoning has indeed come.

It often depends on how we are dealing with the first signs of aging. Many of us deplore the signs and try our best to hide or eradicate them by any means possible. We make urgent corrections to stop something that is natural. We dye our hair; we stretch our facial skin that has lost its elasticity. We often visit eye clinics or resort to self-treatments with under the counter drugs. Our eyesight starts to blur

and reading becomes a daily challenge.

The corrections we make to hide our aging from public view depend on the nature or the signs of aging itself. Some of the signs or symptoms are easier to manage while others are more difficult. It is easier to hide our grey hairs with hair colorants and wear glasses for our weakened sights. Yet, other symptoms of aging are more difficult to deal with such as the cracking of our bones, the pain in our knees and the excruciating ache in our lower backs and the morning discomforts that we often feel before we even step out of our beds.

The wake-up call often comes too late because most of us tend to deny the fact that we are aging. We try to trick nature in many ways, bordering on denial. There are many people in our society that are very sensitive about aging or their age. While going to be seventy, many of them declare that they are only fifty or fifty five. They know that they are lying but they do not tell you their real age. The first reason is self-defense. The message they want to relay is this: "I am still young!". I remember a late veteran journalist who often declared that he was only sixty years young. This is human nature. Generally speaking, we tend to accept what is comfortable and not what is alarming.

We are increasingly living in a culture that does not celebrate aging. In former times people felt proud of aging because it brought to them respect and love from society. Life was lighter than it is now, and the pressure was hardly felt. It did not really matter whether they were in their fifties or in their eighties. There were privileges they enjoyed back then. When travelling in a bus, they did not worry about finding an unoccupied seat.

Everybody used to scramble to leave their seats for the septuagenarians. Their casual conversations with younger folks were highly enjoyed. Their adventures sounded like scripts from famous war movies. Stories of their young years were avidly absorbed by young people. On official occasions, their speeches and ideas were highly regarded or respectfully accepted.

Nowadays, many people think that being older is similar to a death sentence. Living on pension pay can create a mentality of dependency that was seldom known or felt in older times. This is often unacceptable to many

aging folks who lived in dignity and pride throughout their lives, lacking nothing and thankful of God who has provided them with the means of survival however small it might have been. Nowadays, older citizens enjoy less respect and sometimes endure alienation as they are often considered hopeless. Many younger folks are less respectful of their elders who do not command the same high opinion their predecessors enjoyed. To live a long life is not often a source of pride and gratitude. It is rather regarded as burdensome. Senior citizens are forced to spend most of their times sleeping or sitting and gossiping with their equally jobless neighbors or acquaintances.

The story is different nowadays. Old age is rarely celebrated unless you are well off or without worrying how you are going to make ends meet until the next pension payday that is not a big occasion judging by the amount of money that goes into your pocket. Many senior citizens prefer to send their children, mainly the girls abroad for work so that they become their safety nets, so to say. The main duty of immigrants anywhere is to meet the monthly needs of their parents before saving anything worthwhile.

This is in fact the extension of a culture whereby older people relied on their children's incomes during their twilight years. In rural communities, children used to take over the duties of farming or take over what their parents had been doing before age caught on them. This culture is disappearing nowadays. First, children from the rural communities dream about leaving their villages when they reach a certain age and thereby escape the grinding poverty that has characterized their lives.

As arable land is in short supply these days and income from farming is not often attractive, youngsters prefer to leave the rural areas to the big cities or towns where there are opportunities for jobs and better incomes. Others choose the perilous journey to a foreign country sometimes in despair and often eager to live their dreams, achieve success and bring about a better life for themselves and their families.

New-year is a period of transition. Getting bad things behind us let us brace up to embrace a better tomorrow.

Science & Technology

Public Key Infrastructure: timely resource to secure digital data exchange

BY DARGIE KAHSAY

According to cyber security professionals, people, processes, and technology are the three key pillars of cyber security. In today's digital era, cyber security has become a national security issue. Due to the development of virtual transactions, digital security has become a top priority of security issue for nations. To build secure and safe cyber and to protect the digital infrastructure, nations must develop the capacity of the three important components of cyber security, people (human resource development), process, and technology.

This implies that cyber security training and awareness (human resource development), preparing a set of producers and policies to guide the interaction between people and technology (process), and technological advancements (technology) are essential components to secure a nation's cyberspace. Integrating these three pillars of cyber security is essential to secure digital sovereignty.

Ethiopia is striving to realize digital transformation with fast-growing digitalization and virtual transactions. Parallel to realizing digital transformation, Ethiopia focuses on securing its digital sovereignty by investing on the three pillars of cyber security, people, process and technology.

While inaugurating the Public Key Infrastructure (PKI), a national infrastructure builds by Information Network Security Administration (INSA) on 31st of August; Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) stated that in the digital era, national security does not merely mean physical security. As to him, cyber security or digital sovereignty becomes a serious national security issue for countries. Hence, to ensure national security and realize development, developing the capacity of cyber security and ensuring digital sovereignty is urgent task for countries.

In this regard, Prime Minister Abiy stated that Ethiopia is investing its maximum capacity to develop the nation's cyber security by integrating the basic pillars. Interim of human resource development in the cyber sector (people), Ethiopia gives due attention in training cyber professionals and invests in awareness creation for the mass. In this regard, to develop digital literacy, Ethiopia has launched a five million coders initiative to train five million Ethiopians in the digital sector, mainly to equip individuals with foundational skills in data science, android development, web development, artificial intelligence, and related courses. "Achieving the five million coders program will help Ethiopia to develop its human resource in the digital sector," PM Abiy said during the launching ceremony of PKI.

Similarly, in terms of process, Ethiopia has



INSA expert briefing the PKI to Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD), Deputy Prime Minister Temesgen Tiruneh and INSA Director General, Tigist Hamid at INSA headquarter

set national cyber security institutions, laws and producers and guides to administer the cyber security sector of the nation. In this regard, INSA is undertaking the administrative and related activities of the nation's cyber activities. To develop the technology pillar Ethiopia is implementing the latest and advanced digital technologies like the Public Key Infrastructure (PKI). Realizing the digital ID initiative and the five million coders program will be essential to developing digitalization and securing digital transactions integrating the activities with the latest technologies like PKI is essential.

This indicates that Ethiopia is striving to develop the three pillars of cyber security and integrating these pillars to ensure its cyber sovereignty. Appreciating the activities and efforts of INSA's in protecting Ethiopia's digital sovereignty, PM Abiy underlines that the launching of PKI by INSA would enhance the security of virtual data transactions. "Launching of the Public Key Infrastructure is historic for INSA and Ethiopia as well. This is a public infrastructure to provide service for the general public," PM Abiy stated. As to him, from the beginning, INSA was created to own and build such key infrastructures like the PKI.

For the premier, transactions are becoming virtual due to digitalization. "Before 25 years ago, the world's transaction was dependent to manual transactions," PM Abiy stated adding but today, transactions are becoming virtual transactions thanks to digitalization. "During the initial period of virtual transactions, security and reliability of the transaction was the major question by users as they care to secure their private resources and data," PM Abiy stated.

As security issue was a critical question for users to use virtual transactions,

cryptography was created to answer the security question, encrypting the data between two poles during virtual transactions. Cryptography includes data encrypt system and advanced encrypt systems, which encrypt information transmitted virtually to protect the security of the information between the two actors. After creating crypto, encrypting the virtual communication between individuals was another question and countries created a safe system by building Public Key Infrastructure. With continued efforts to secure digital security and national cyber security, INSA has able to launch this key public infrastructure which is essential to secure virtual transactions.

A digital signature is the most important element in cryptography to ensure a secure and virtual safe transaction. A digital signature helps to identify a person from others and to build trust in virtual transactions. The PKI is essential to ensure all these key elements in securing virtual transactions. The financial system in Ethiopia is automating, mobile money is growing rapidly, the civil service sector is also automating its services, and Ethiopia is expanding one-window services, PM Abiy stated adding developing the capacity of securing these infrastructures is a timely task for Ethiopia and the KPI is a new hope for Ethiopia to ensure its capacity in this regard. The generated key, according to PM Abiy, can serve up to 40 years.

"The virtual transaction is growing fast. If we are not able to own PKI at this time at national level, it is difficult to achieve proper and secure virtual transaction," PM Abiy underlined. "We officially launched Public Key Infrastructure (PKI) with the Information Network Security Administration. This will facilitate reliable and secure digital data exchange," Abiy stated following inaugurating PKI.

Digital information security is crucial to realizing Ethiopia's modernization, prosperity, and sovereignty. Digital security is essential to safeguard national sovereignty, and Ethiopia will continue investing in strengthening its digital security. The PKI infrastructure includes hardware, software, professionals, and a legal framework, which by itself integrates the three pillars of cyber security.

By encrypting data using mathematical formulas and decrypting it with secret keys, PKI enables digital signatures and data confidentiality verification. PKI encrypts data using mathematical formulas, requiring a secret key known only to the sender and receiver for decryption. It also enables digital signatures and data confidentiality verification through digital certificates. PKI is a vital component of information network security management.

The launch of PKI services demonstrates the institution's capacity and growth, reflecting Ethiopia's rapidly evolving digital landscape. PM Abiy highlighted the need for a robust virtual security system to support digital development and the newly launched PKI system addresses this requirement.

The government is striving to ensure digital security by implementing all necessary measures. Still, to ensure safe and secure cyber security, there is a call for a strong participation and involvement of individuals and institutions. Especially, the youth generation has to develop digital literacy and be aware of the basic cyber threats. Ethiopia has launched the 5 million Coders initiative, an open chance for the youth generation to provide free online training in basic digital literacy courses. The youth should properly use such initiatives to develop digital literacy.

Society

Yelemat Tirufat initiative toward ensuring food security

BY TEWODROS KASSA

Ethiopia ranks first in Africa and tenth in the world in its cattle population, respectively. However, it has not met the needs of the community in terms of supplying quality and quantity of milk.

As a result, the per capita milk consumption of our country does not exceed 66 liters and even the purity of the milk is getting less. Therefore, Ethiopia has unveiled the National Dairy Development Strategy to tackle such problems.

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed launched “*Yelemat Tirufat*” development campaign, which focuses on nutritional opulence on November 3, 2022.

“In Arba Minch city, we launched *Yelemat Tirufat* development campaign, which focuses on nutritional opulence. The traditional food container, *Lemat*, represents a link between farmers, pastoralists, and consumers,” the Premier tweeted following the initiative.

According to him, *Yelemat Tirufat* development campaign aspires to get adequate nutritional food.

Abiy noted that food self-sufficiency is directly linked to national sovereignty and dignity, and *Yelemat Tirufat* campaign accelerates efforts to achieve food self-sufficiency at the family and national levels.

Experts in the agriculture sector also lauded the PM’s initiative as a milestone to re-energize the agriculture sector and create a conducive environment for sector practitioners and farmers to boost the sector’s productivity.

ILRI Director General’s Representative to Ethiopia Dr. Namukolo Covic underscored the significance of rebuilding livelihoods and empowering women in regions that have been impacted by conflict.

She delivered powerful messages in her speech titled “Tracking Evidence and Informing Policy to Rebuild Livestock-Based Livelihoods and Empower Women in Conflict-Affected Areas of Ethiopia.”

According to the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), the vision for Ethiopia’s food systems transformation entails “a holistic approach that encompasses production to consumption” enhanced food safety, nutrition, improved livelihoods, land preservation, and restoration, as well as resilience to shocks and stresses, she said.

The National Dairy Development Strategy emphasized the importance of the six food groups outlined in Ethiopia’s food-based dietary guidelines. Among these groups, the one comprising milk and dairy products, as well as meat, fish, and eggs, holds particular relevance, Covic stated.

This food group plays a pivotal role in promoting a healthy and nutrient-dense food basket, exemplified by the “*yelemat*



Tirufat” initiative, which focuses on livestock livelihoods.

She emphasized the need to enhance food safety, nutrition, livelihoods, land preservation, restoration, and resilience to shocks and stresses in conflict-affected areas.

Special attention was given to the challenges faced by the National Policies and Strategies initiative team in preserving and restoring land, she said.

Dr. Covic emphasized that women’s livelihoods are vital for rebuilding communities and improving resilience in conflict-affected regions.

Dr. Covic’s speech shed light on the critical work being done to rebuild livestock-based livelihoods and empower women in conflict-affected areas of Ethiopia.

State Minister of Agriculture Fikeru Regassa (Ph.D) highlighted that Ethiopia’s livestock sector received limited investment, hindering its ability to contribute fully to the country’s development.

Despite the immense genetic diversity and potential for dairy development in Ethiopia, the current contribution of the dairy sector to the national economy and livelihoods is below its capacity, he pointed out.

Now, the government has recognized the immense value of livestock-based livelihoods, job creation, income generation, and foreign currency earnings, as to the State Minister.

The National Dairy Development Strategy aims to leverage the potential of livestock-based livelihoods to aid in post-conflict and drought recovery and empower women, he noted.

To address these challenges, the Ministry of Agriculture has developed a Ten-Year Development Plan and associated programs like Ten-in-Ten Development Initiative and “*Yelemat Tirufat*.”

The National Dairy Development Strategy provides a clear roadmap for the development of the dairy sub-sector that aligns with the Ten-Year Perspective Plan,

concrete results in terms of development and benefiting citizens.

Accordingly, the initiative enables boosting productivity and production of dairy, eggs, chicken, honey, and related products as well as intensifies efforts to achieve food self-sufficiency and ensure nutritional opulence at the family and national levels.

So far, the program contributed immensely to job creation, increasing exports, and hastening import substitution.

Executive Director of Animal and Fish Resources Development at the Ministry of Agriculture Tsigereda Fikadu told ENA that the program has made overall achievements in the past one year.

She explained that under “*Yelemat Tirufat*” development campaign, more than 20,000 villages have been identified and put to work in honey, milk, and egg production in all areas of the country.

Monitoring, supplying resources, and awareness creation activities have been carried out for the selected villages, she said, adding the production of milk has increased from 5.8 billion liters to 8.6 billion liters, and it is expected to increase to 11.7 billion liters in the coming years.

She also mentioned that effective activities have been done in egg production and distribution of chicken, where the number of chickens has increased from 26 million to 42 million.

Thus, the program has recorded tangible results in development and benefiting citizens, Tsigereda elaborated.

Moreover, she mentioned that the development campaign has contributed to the efforts being made to become self-sufficient in food at the family and national level, especially to farmers who have benefited more from livestock resources.

Noting that the campaign has achieved great results in a short period, she underlined that efforts are being made to strengthen it.

On the other hand, she elaborated that the Ministry of Agriculture is providing necessary support in collaboration with various stakeholders for the achievement of the program.

In sum, “*Yelemat Tirufat*” is a four-year development program that aims to boost productivity and production of dairy, eggs, chicken honey, and related hive products. The development initiative also plays a crucial role in improving the daily nutrient intake of households, ensuring food security at the family level, and generating substantial economic returns through supplying extra products to the market. Creating job opportunities is also another advantage of the initiative. 59,000 jobs have been created annually through the development of livestock resources alone. Most importantly, the initiative has laid a solid foundation to ensure food security at the national level.

The initiative enables boosting productivity and production of dairy, eggs, chicken, honey, and related products as well as intensifies efforts to achieve food self-sufficiency and ensure nutritional opulence at the family and national levels

the Ten-in-Ten initiative, and “*Yelemat Tirufat*.”

The strategy focuses on organized, rationalized, scientific, and sustainable development programs, facilitating knowledge and technology transfer, and enhancing institutional service delivery.

The National Dairy Development Strategy, Ethiopia is poised to unlock the full potential of its livestock resources, enhance livelihoods, and promote the empowerment of women.

Moreover, the Ministry of Agriculture disclosed that the implementation of “*Yelemat Tirufat*” program has recorded

International News

Africa: U.S. Initiative Aims to Fuel Job Growth in African Creative Industries

Lisa Walker, Managing Director of Africa Operations for Prosper Africa speaking at FAME Week Africa, a premier pan-African celebration of arts, film, television, animation, music, fashion, and media in Cape Town, South Africa.

Cape Town, South Africa — *In recognition of the potential of Africa's creative industries, Prosper Africa strives to harness these sectors for job creation and sustainable development.*

Prosper Africa's initiative aimed at increasing trade and investment between the United States and African nations, is promoting creative sectors as drivers of economic growth. The U.S. government's Prosper Africa is participating in [FAME Week Africa](#), a premier pan-African celebration of arts, film, television, animation, music, fashion, and media in Cape Town, South Africa.

It is [estimated](#) that the U.S. contributes [\\$660 billion](#) to the global \$2 trillion media and entertainment market, making it one of the world's leading exporters of creative goods and services. Streaming services such as Netflix and Amazon Video have already established significant interactions between the U.S. creative sector and African creators, with Netflix leading the pack with over two million subscribers, and Disney Studios and Amazon Video partnering with African creators to finance and produce content, reports [Prosper Africa](#).

Through FAME, the U.S. delegation will connect U.S. and international film distributors with African producers and distributors.

"Prosper Africa is a groundbreaking U.S. presidential initiative to scale two-way trade and investment on a transformative basis to strengthen the economic and strategic partnership between the U.S. and African countries," said Lisa M. Walker, Managing Director of Africa Operations for Prosper Africa.

"We have a number of priority sectors, but creative is one of them, and it's one for several reasons," she said. "We see really strong cultural ties that we want to build on, but it's for the job creation potential, especially for young people."

"We view the creative sector as a key area where we can upskill talent and generate future-oriented jobs. I believe the youth of Africa will be at the forefront of developing new job opportunities - many of which we



can't even envision yet. We aim to shift the narrative between the U.S. and Africa, particularly in how Africa is perceived in the U.S."

Walker said "One of our key roles is to attract investment from the U.S., including high-net-worth individuals, pension funds, family offices, and venture capital. We've identified a gap where there's an exaggerated sense of risk and a lack of understanding about African markets. To mitigate this, we need to enhance the narrative around Africa, showcasing it as a land of opportunity, innovation, and entrepreneurship. People must see the continent as it truly is - a vibrant hub of progress and potential."

What's Next? Atlanta's Future in U.S.-South Africa Relations

"Prosper Africa is a continental initiative that spans both sub-Saharan Africa and North Africa, reaching up to Egypt and Morocco," said Walker.

"Our long-term vision is to foster a truly mutual partnership. As U.S. Ambassador to South Africa, Reuben E. Brigety II often puts it, we aim for U.S. companies and individuals to offer genuine value to African partners and businesses. We're committed to providing transparent capital that supports long-term sustainability and partnerships based on mutual benefit. This means prioritizing labor, job creation, the environment, and climate issues."

The [Atlanta Phambili](#) project, which means "forward" in Zulu and Xhosa, aims to deepen bilateral ties between the U.S. and South Africa through the City of Atlanta's educational and research institutions, Diaspora connections, creative industries, and economic dynamism.

In terms of securing funding, Prosper Africa's creative strategy focuses on strengthening the financial ecosystem for Africa's creative industries. "We're working to make creative entrepreneurs more bankable, offering the business expertise they need to thrive, and replicating successful banking products from the U.S., like those from J.P. Morgan and Citi, which are tailored for the film sector. Our goal is to become the partner that African countries, entrepreneurs, and creatives actively seek out and wish to collaborate with," she said.

"They have dedicated film units in the U.S., and we'd love to see similar structures established here in Africa," Walker said. "We aim to facilitate matchmaking between investors focused on social impact and creatives on the continent. Our goal is to bridge the gap and connect those who want to invest with the vibrant creative community in Africa."

"Our initiatives span across various countries, not just South Africa. We have strong connections with Kenya, exemplified by President William Ruto's recent [visit](#) to Atlanta, where he toured Tyler Perry Studios. Kenya, South Africa, and Nigeria are key partners. Nigeria, with its Nollywood industry, is particularly significant. The U.S. Department of State has active programs there to accelerate talent and link creatives with universities that supply Hollywood with skilled professionals," said Walker.

Ruto said that the Tyler Perry studio tour inspired him to channel additional resources into Kenya's creative economy. Ruto noted the importance of investing in the creative sector and highlighted the possibilities for collaboration between Kenya and leading international creative industries, providing greater opportunities for Kenyans.

Walker also said that they're also exploring opportunities in countries like Mauritius, which has a growing film sector, and Morocco, known for its thriving movie industry. "Our goal is to replicate successful incentives and partnerships across these regions," she said.

"While the outcomes are still in development, I'm seeing promising signs from content creators and producers who are close to finalizing deals. Our strength lies in convening and matchmaking, alongside attracting capital and developing impactful programs. One crucial takeaway is the importance of training. Unlike other sectors where training may not lead to employment, the creative industry's high demand ensures that trained individuals will likely be quickly absorbed into the workforce."

However, Walker said one of the key challenges is data.

"Creatives often struggle to build a history and balance sheet that banks can easily interpret," she said. "In other parts of Africa, Prosper Africa has worked on establishing credit and bankability through various proxy measures, such as contracts with distributors and completion contracts, as well as ensuring the presence of insurance products. This approach helps address both the information and financing gaps."

"I believe the creative sector holds immense potential for driving change and engagement. It's deeply cultural and personal, and it captures people's imagination. By harnessing storytelling, music, and fashion, the creative sector can influence views and behaviors, making it a powerful channel for transformation," said Walker.

Source: [Allafrica.com](#)

Ethiopia's transition to a new horizon...

Ethiopian Human Rights Commission (EHRC) has been restructured to operate more independently and effectively. The commission has taken on a more proactive role in monitoring human rights abuses and advocating for the protection of fundamental rights and freedoms.

Efforts have been made to strengthen the capacity of key democratic institutions, including the parliament, election bodies, and watchdog institutions. Training programs, institutional reforms, and international partnerships have been critical in building

the technical expertise and operational effectiveness of these institutions.

These achievements represent significant steps towards establishing a more stable and democratic Ethiopia, although challenges remain in consolidating these gains and ensuring that democratic practices are deeply entrenched in the political culture.

Ethiopia has continued to find solutions to the conflicts that flared up in the country by promoting the rule of law and simultaneously engaging in the rehabilitation of infrastructure

facilities destroyed during the two years' war in the Northern part of the country. Huge tasks have been accomplished in rehabilitating displaced citizens, restoration of services on airstrips, telephone lines, internet and restarting of banking services and land transport.

As a country of a population that has exceeded one million as a prerequisite for consolidating the rapid economic development of the country, Ethiopia has been working on having access to the sea as a legitimate right. The signing of

an agreement on access to port between Ethiopia and Somaliland is a new and historical venture which is expected to end the landlocked nature of the country which in turn may make a greater shift in the geopolitical and geostrategic shift in the Horn of Africa.

Over the last several years, Ethiopia has accomplished a lot in transiting the administration of the economy and sector offices into a digital technology and AI which is now showing marked transition to the promotion of digital economy.

Major tourism sector achievements...

the economic benefits of the Dine for Nation projects and wide societal impacts. Economically, the construction of such projects will turn up local communities' income as they come up with alternative sources of earnings. In addition to this, it also teaches how the country's tourism sector resources are worthy and potentially important.

While stating the development of tourism sites across the country, Tourism State Minister Sileshi Girma said that Projects constructed under the Dine for the Nation project accommodate a greater number of tourists.

All projects are eco-friendly and expected to attract more tourists than usual thereby promoting the overall development including job creation, he indicated.

Currently, after the completion of such ecotourism projects, the government is undertaking enormous steps towards changing the look of various cities aiming at attracting more tourists and making cities suitable for residents.

The other important initiative that the government has launched and it is working persistently is the Corridor Development project. This latest project aimed at improving the social, economic, and environmental well-being of individuals, communities, and nations by upgrading outdated drainage systems, and utility networks among others, and transforming Addis Ababa into a smart and modern

city. The projects carried out in different areas of the country are well underway and expanded to states.

In his recent speech, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed also underlined the need to prepare Ethiopia's cities for the future with a focus on dignified living for citizens.

Prime Minister Abiy has also given recognition to the leaders of Addis Ababa corridor development, institutions, and individuals who contributed to the successful implementation of the projects.

"I want to extend my appreciation to everyone involved in developing our corridors. Today's recognition reflects the hard work and dedication you have shown in creating a better urban environment for our people," he underscored.

Abiy added that urbanization will continue to be a growing trend. "We have all the tools necessary to create sustainable cities. We have learned many lessons from the first phase, and now we look forward to the second phase, aiming to enhance what we have accomplished with continued growth and ethical considerations."

The Prime Minister further stated that the current corridor development pace will assist the mayors of eleven other cities across the country as we expand this necessary initiative.

Of like mind, various cities across the country are replicating the steps of the Addis Ababa Corridor Development

project. Hawassa, the capital of Sidama State, is the one in this regard. The city has initiated a corridor development project under the theme 'Corridor Development for the Super Beauty of Our City' to create a more conducive environment for residents and visitors thereby boosting tourism.

According to Hawassa City Mayor Mekuria Meresha, the development of corridors is designed to enhance living conditions and increase tourist attractions in the area. So far, the corridor project in the city is being implemented in two phases. The first phase focuses on expanding the area, covering 10 roads stretching over 35 kilometers. The second phase aims to upgrade existing roads in the city center, spanning three roads and covering over 5.7 kilometers. The area includes a stretch from South Spring to Haile Resort, with construction covering 3.7 kilometers of road, ranging in width from 40 to 50 meters up to Shafteta Square.

Mayor Mekuria also noted that the City Administration has allocated 140 million Birr for green development projects, specifically in the area from Membo to the Referral Hospital, covering one kilometer. This is considered one of the city's most significant green initiatives.

He emphasized that various activities are underway in collaboration with stakeholders to improve public service delivery. For example, 25,000 land files have been registered under the cadaster system in partnership with the Ministry

of Urban and Infrastructure. Modern municipal services and a one-stop service center have been completed resulting in a reduction in public complaints.

"The corridor development includes standard public toilets, fountains, and recreational areas, fostering a new culture of public space utilization. The project is set to be completed in three months, as per the agreement with the contractor," he added.

Hawassa's Development and Construction Department Head Mihertu Gebrie stated that the corridor development is crucial for attracting foreign direct investment (FDI), increasing tourist inflow, and creating a more livable environment for residents by bridging infrastructure gaps. The project also provides a sizeable number of jobs for the youth, with around 200 jobs already created in just a 1.1-kilometer stretch of the corridor.

Aside from Hawassa, cities such as Bahir Dar, in the Amhara State, and Arba-Minch, in South Ethiopia State, have also initiated their own corridor development projects to facilitate urban transformation and economic growth, emulating Addis's practice.

Such initiative and commitment coupled with the ever-growing capacity to implement projects by the set timeframe even before, will heighten the success of efforts exerted to transcend the country to a higher level.



Partial view of Addis Ababa City



Gorgora Resort

Major tourism sector achievements over the year

BY TEWODROS KASSA

The 'Dine for the Nation' project which encompasses the development of Gorgora, Wonchi, and Koysha projects, which are situated in the Amhara, Oromia, and southwest Ethiopia State respectively, was launched in 2020 by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) aiming to develop country's tourist attractions. Hence, since the initiative was launched, various activities have been

carried out to successfully complete the projects and turn the plan into a reality.

As a result, the projects that were the segments of the 'Dine for the Nation' project were accomplished in less than two years. On December 23, 2023, the Elephant Paw Lodge, built inside the Chebera Churchura Park in South-West Ethiopia State and several species of animals like elephants, lions, buffalos, leopards, and greater kudus are sheltering in the park, was inaugurated by Prime Minister Abiy

Ahmed. Likewise, the Hallala Kella Resort was also inaugurated in May 2023. The Wenchi-Dendi and Gorgora Eco Resorts were also inaugurated in the current year- in January and July 2024 respectively.

The successful completion of the attractions in less than two years has exhibited the government's commitment to developing the country's untapped tourist attractions, promoting tourism, and generating significant amounts of earnings, thereby improving the livelihood of the community

residing in the areas in particular and Ethiopians in general.

The construction of tourist attraction sites not only has advanced the country's tourism sector but also created job opportunities for the community. For instance, during the construction phase of developing the Wenchi-Dendi Eco-Tourism Village, 8,000 to 12,000 jobs have been created.

Experts in the tourism sector underscored

See Major tourism ... page 15