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Ethiopia's growing role in maintaining peace in HoA

BY HAILE DEMEKE

As a founding member of the African Union (AU), the United Nations (UN), and other international organizations, Ethiopia has played a substantial role in contributing to regional peace and stability, both within the Horn of Africa (HoA) and beyond. Despite its consistent efforts, Ethiopia's role in ensuring peace in the fragile HoA has been challenged by external forces seeking to destabilize the region.

Speaking to the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA), Musa Sheiko, an analyst and researcher on the Horn of Africa, stated that the region's geostrategic location has attracted the interest of various actors, some of whom are attempting to create instability. "Despite Ethiopia's tireless efforts to promote peace and stability, certain anti-peace elements in the HoA are working to create a security vacuum in order to advance their objectives of destabilizing the region and weakening Ethiopia," Musa said. Nevertheless, Ethiopia remains committed to advocating for regional cooperation and partnership.

According to Musa, Ethiopia's historical enemies have been relentless in their attempts to weaken the country and destabilize the HoA to further their hidden agendas. The geopolitical dynamics of the Horn of Africa have become increasingly complex as

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Ethiopia poised to lead IGAD's 10-Year Sustainable Tourism Plan

BY MISGANAW ASNAKE

ADDIS ABABA – Ethiopia is ready to take the lead in championing the implementation of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) Sustainable Tourism Master Plan, a ten-year initiative aimed at promoting regional integration and sustainable tourism.

Speaking to the Ethiopian Press Agency

(EPA), Tourism Minister Nasise Chali emphasized Africa's vast tourism potential, noting that while the continent holds immense opportunities, it currently secures only 6% of the global tourism market. She indicated the importance of regional collaboration to fully unlock Africa's tourism potential.

The minister underscored that by working

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Tel: +251 116 63 97 53/ 251 116 63 51 22/25
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4th Floor, Dabi Building, Bole road Addis Ababa Ethiopia

Medhin Decor

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Nat'l logistic strategy revolves around alternative ports' quest

BY YESUF ENDRIS

ADDIS ABABA- Ethiopia's quest for alternative port and sea outlet holds no hidden agenda but to explore alternative options as part of the country's national logistics strategy, said Matiws Ensarmo, an Associate Professor of Logistics at Addis Ababa University.

Ratified three years ago, the strategy has been overseen by the Maritime and Logistics Authority, which has been tasked with ensuring Ethiopia's

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Peace policy set to revolutionize conflict resolution, social cohesion

BY ASHENAFI ANIMUT

ADDIS ABABA – The Ministry of Peace (MoP) is in the final stages of approving Ethiopia's first-ever national comprehensive peace policy framework, a groundbreaking initiative aimed at fostering peace across all segments of society.

MoP Peace-building Chief Executive Awoke Atinafu (PhD),

See Peace policy ... page 4



Ethiopia to construct 18 livestock collection centers

BY TSEGAYE TILAHUN

ADDIS ABABA- The Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) has announced plans to construct 18 livestock collection centers across nine pastoralist and semi-pastoralist clusters, aiming to enhance Ethiopia's livestock market.

Program Manager for the De-Risking, Inclusion, and Value Enhancement of Pastoral Economies in the Horn of Africa Project (DRIVE) Jemal Aliye told The Ethiopian Herald that the centers will be built in key livestock areas, with three clusters in Oromia, three in Somali, one in Afar, and two in the South and South West states. Each cluster will have two collection centers in areas with strong livestock resources.

The construction of these centers will strengthen pastoralist cooperatives and improve market access. This fiscal year, bids for the construction of 10 collection centers have already been announced. The centers will feature facilities such as watering, feeding, and resting areas for livestock.

To address health-related challenges, the government and its partners are installing

international-standard laboratories and training experts to meet global market requirements. Jemal noted that a three million USD shipment of laboratory materials is expected, and the MoA is finalizing plans to assess and improve existing livestock laboratories.

Ethiopia's five livestock quarantine centers are crucial to the sector, but a feasibility study suggests that additional quarantine centers and ports are needed. With these initiatives, the country's livestock market is set for significant growth in the near future.

Pastoralist and semi-pastoralist areas generate 90% of Ethiopia's livestock export earnings, making them vital to the national economy. However, challenges such as market access, livestock quality, and limited market information have impacted the sector's full potential, as noted by local abattoir associations.

Ethiopia has abundant livestock resources and is ranked first in Africa and fifth globally in terms of livestock population. The livestock population includes over 71 million cattle, 43 million sheep, 54 million goats, 57 million poultry/chickens, 13.33 million equines, and 7 million bee colonies.

Israel vows to elevate ties with Ethiopia

BY HAILE DEMEKE

ADDIS ABABA – Israel is committed and eager to further elevate the existing ties and strong cooperation with Ethiopia in diverse areas of cooperation, said Deputy Ambassador Embassy of the state of Israel to Ethiopia.

Deputy Ambassador Embassy of the state of Israel to Ethiopia, Burundi and the African Union Tomer Bar-Lavi told The Ethiopian Herald that the two countries have close collaboration and work together in diverse area which is a testament of the strong diplomatic bond between Ethiopia and Israel.

Both have strong connection culturally, religiously apart from diplomatic spheres and the practical relationships between the two countries have been focused on different sectors.

Ethiopia and Israel has close collaboration in health, agriculture, technology, fertilizer, water technology, irrigation and other sectors, he mentioned.

He further stated that Israel is highly involving in promoting innovation and entrepreneurship in Ethiopia. Likewise Israel is also working together with Ethiopia in renewable energy. Israel is very eager to continue to expand collaboration in Ethiopia in difficult times.

Recently the staff of Alert Hospital, along with the delegation from Neonatologists for Africa (NFA), with support from Mashav, Israel's International Agency for International Development Cooperation, has provided training on Neonatal Resuscitation and new born in Addis Ababa, Bahir Dar and Dessie.

The delegation has provided Neonatal Resuscitation and newborn care training with the primary objective of reducing infant mortality at early stage. The recent training aimed at reducing infant mortality is a proof of strong bond between the two countries, he said.

Deputy Ambassador stated that the training is aimed at creating awareness for health



professionals on infant mortality and saving the lives of newborns. "We have already seeing the reduction of mortality and we are very excited about this important collaboration. This activity highlights the close connection between Ethiopia and Israel specifically in the health sector."

Apart from cooperating and working together in diverse areas of cooperation aimed at further elevating the relationship, the two countries are eyeing to the next level of cooperation, he stated.

This week alone there are about four major delegations from Israel dealing with medical and health care sectors. There are delegations dealing with neonatal health, pediatric, cardiac surgery, ophthalmology aimed at strengthening the collaboration between Ethiopia and Israel in the health sector.

The presence of Israelis high profile doctors in Ethiopia during this difficult time for Israel highlights the importance of the relationship between the two nations, he remarked.

Israel is eager to work and collaborate with Ethiopia in different sectors including health, agriculture, technology and other sectors. The delegation has conducting training in different cities apart from Addis Ababa including Bahir Dar and Dessie..

Some 15 org's unite under Tamara to HIV prevention, care

BY MESERET BEHAILU

ADDIS ABABA – Tamra for Social Development Organization has announced a significant step forward in HIV prevention by uniting 15 organizations that were previously working independently in the fight against the virus.

Speaking to *The Ethiopian Herald*, Tamra's Executive Director, Biruk Yirgalem, stated that the organization has been active in HIV prevention and community empowerment for nearly three decades. Its efforts have focused on educating youth, creating safe environments for communities, strengthening economic resilience, and providing quality services.

According to Biruk, the lack of coordination



among 15 separate organizations working on HIV prevention had limited the overall impact of their efforts. To address this, Tamra has brought these organizations

together under a unified strategy to deliver more effective services to people living with HIV.

The collaboration is expected to yield significant benefits, including improving service quality, reducing the burden on government resources, increasing community engagement, and ensuring consistent access to high-quality medications. Additionally, the partnership will help address food insecurity and related challenges faced by HIV patients, which have caused some to discontinue their treatments.

"This unified platform will enable us to work towards common goals more efficiently and effectively," Biruk noted. He emphasized that stopping HIV treatment midway can

lead to severe complications for patients and increase the risk of transmission. Raising awareness and improving support for people living with HIV is crucial for overcoming these challenges.

In partnership with domestic and international organizations, including foreign partners, Tamra and the 15 allied organizations are committed to providing enhanced services for HIV patients.

Recently, Tamra for Social Development Organization secured a 590,000 USD award from the U.S. Embassy to address ongoing challenges in HIV services over the next year. Tamra, originally established in 1998 in Shashamane as a high school HIV/AIDS club, continues to lead the charge in HIV prevention and support.

Editorial

Opportune moment for world leaders

The UN's Summit of the Future must deliver practical solutions to challenges humanity is facing today to chart out a better tomorrow.

Today's world has fallen into its own trap. Certain countries leave no stone unturned to keep their hegemon. Others are vying to dethrone the hegemony. And these two antagonistic relations are proliferating yet unprecedented challenges before us. One can enumerate from terrorism, piracy to cross border war and civil strife that are devastating the present generation. If unabated, these menaces are a complete recipe to perish humanity from the face of the planet.

On Tuesday, 24th September 2024, world leaders are scheduled to make speeches in what is known as the UN 'General Debate'. The theme of the general debate of the 79th session of the UN General Assembly goes: Leaving no one behind acting together for the advancement of peace, sustainable development and human dignity for present and future generations."

What a captivating theme! It wows the reader. Doesn't it?

The terms raised in the theme are powerful—"peace," "sustainable development," "human dignity," "present and future generations...."

No arguing the fact that peace is the bedrock for humanity to thrive. Without durable peace, the world's civilization risks collapse.

But the question is—why is our world lacking peace? Many would agree that the origins of the absence of peace are ill ambitions. A rush to sustain or build the edifice of hegemony is mushrooming problems. Global powers that have already established their hegemon want to perpetuate it. And they frustrate emerging powers from coming to the position they already possessed. The competition and rivalry among these powers are ending up in military buildups and confrontations in regions that are deemed strategic.

One can see the current dynamics befalling the Horn. Superpowers and emerging powers are competing to influence the region. They view the region from its geopolitical, geoeconomical, and geostrategic aspects. All vie to have control over the Red Sea and Gulf of Eden. It is a pity they are shortsighted when it comes to humanity's aspect.

The dynamics are setting a barrier to the region's development. Pure development ambitions are considered an issue of security. This is obviously to appease certain quarters and also to keep the region poor.

A case in point in this regard could be the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD). The flag-ship project is financed by Ethiopians. A sane mind never misses the point that it is a pure development project. GERD is a clean energy project that promises regional economic integration. Ethiopia time and time again demonstrated its position that it does not have intention to harm downstream countries.

By the same token, Ethiopia invited the downstream basin countries—Sudan and Egypt—to witness the dam's site firsthand. It also provides all the necessary documents to the panel of experts (IPoE) for their scrutiny. The three countries—Ethiopia, Sudan and Egypt— signed in 2016 the Declaration of Principles (DoP). Over and beyond, Ethiopia has made it clear that it will prioritize the basin countries in supplying clean energy. But, certain quarters seem to be green eyed with the project. They attempt to taint the project as if it poses significant harm to them. They simply condemn over 60 percent of Ethiopians to continue living in darkness.

Similarly, Ethiopia, as an important player in the Horn of Africa and even beyond, started translating the continental ambition to practice. Africa's vision over the coming decades is to integrate peoples and economies among themselves. A few are telling us that it is a fait accompli for us to remain landlocked. Ethiopia's ambition is to integrate its economy with peoples, and to harness the dividends of mutual benefits.

It is, therefore, the right time for world leaders to debate around this year's theme. This is an opportune moment for world leaders to reach consensus and furnish the way for a constructive engagement thereby leaving behind a rosy future for the generations to come.

Opinion

Another blow to the orchestrated conspiracy against Ethiopia

BY SOLOMON DIBABA

Ethiopia is successfully shattering a constellation of conspiracies that are fabricated on this historical land of peace loving and friendly people. Recent incidents indicate that even countries that are traditionally considered as the symbols of democracy are coordinating official and secret conspiracies to make Ethiopia subservient to their national and global interests of political and economic hegemony.

The big powers in the western hemisphere and their commercial media leave no stone unturned to embolden armed groups and opposition forces organization as a tool for destabilizing not only Ethiopia but the entire Horn of Africa. The western media uses contingents of commercial media outlets in their attempts to demoralize and shame the people of this country by opening up a new front in their psychological war against the growing democratic order in Ethiopia.

Alas, they are suggesting dialogues, peaceful negotiations and state of calm to be conducted in a way that would fit into their own interests and strategic desires. They try to use economic and diplomatic threats to support a terrorist group that has even started to deny that the people of Tigray are not Ethiopians.

The coalition of major western powers would make a grave mistake in subjecting Ethiopia to an intimidation and political pressure including threats to the possibility of show of force.

The coordinated conspiracies on Ethiopia, however, resulted in further promoting the unity among the peoples of the country against ethno-fascism and neo-colonialism. It has boosted the resolve of the peoples of Ethiopia to make further financial contributions to the completion of GERD while the second round of filling the dam is successfully in progress.

What are the implications of the second round of filling GERD? To mention only few, the construction of the dam has reached a point of no return. According to a well-placed Egyptian scholar, tampering with the dam is like triggering off a nuclear bomb which will become a colossal threat to the very existence

of Sudan and Egypt.

Incidentally, both countries are well aware of the fact that the dam pauses no harm on both Sudan and Egypt but instead benefits them by ensuring regular, stable and uniform flow of water. They previously underestimated Ethiopia's capacity to build a dam of such size as they are blinded by their chauvinistic views. When Ethiopia started to build the dam in the highest level of global technological standards, they bragged that the dam will collapse any time.

Having full knowledge of the international laws on the utilization of Trans Boundary Rivers and remaining cognizant of Ethiopia's rights to use its river resources to generate power, Egypt and Sudan are now accusing Ethiopia for violating international laws related to the use of Trans Boundary Rivers. They are attempting to draw double standards and misinterpretation of solid codes of international conventions and laws.

It is also an answer to the irresponsible propaganda and proposal made by the former President of the US, Mr. Donald Trump which hinted that GERD could be bombed. Trying this at this point in time is not only declaring war on Ethiopia but also endangering the safety and security of both Sudan and Egypt.

GERD is indeed the biggest dam in Ethiopia but is not going to be the only dam in the country. According to Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, there are more dams to be built across the country. In few days' time, GERD will again be a topic for discussion at the UNSC but this could never affect Ethiopia's irreversible decision to complete GERD and use it to generate electricity not only for Ethiopia but for the countries in East Africa.

In his recent response to the questions put forward by the members of the HPR, Prime Minister has stressed that GERD is potentially useful for the development programs both in Egypt and Sudan.

Here it is very important to recognize the role played by the public and Ethiopians and citizens of Ethiopian origin in soliciting the necessary fund for the completion of GERD. Ethiopia will certainly continue to fill GERD in all rounds until the project is successfully completed.

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



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Office of the CEO

Tel. 011-126-42-22
Fax. 251-011-156-98-62
email- epa@press.et

Advertisement and Dist. Department

email: etpresspromotion@gmail.com
Tel. 011-156-98-73/011-811-13-15
Telegram :- 0976084707 - press
Editor-in-Chief: Worku Belachew
email- workubelachew@press.et
Address- Nifas Silk Lafto Sub-city
Woreda - 05, House No----
Tel- +251 111 26 41 98

Managing Editor: Wakuman Kudama
Email: wakuma220@gmail.com

Deputy Editors-in-Chief:

Alem Hailu
Elizabeth Mengistu
Zekarias Woldemariam
Desta Geberehiwot
Daniel Beyene

Website: www.press.et
email: ethiopianherald@press.et
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News

Ethiopian celebrates six Decades uninterrupted services to Rome

ADDIS ABABA (ENA) - Ethiopian Airlines Group, Africa's leading aviation group, proudly marks a historic milestone with 60 years of uninterrupted service to the captivating city of Rome, Italy.

The airline hosted a vibrant celebration in the Eternal City, attended by esteemed government officials from both Ethiopia and Italy, corporate guests, stakeholders as well as Ethiopian Airlines executives, to commemorate this diamond jubilee achievement.

The celebration underscored the airline's unwavering commitment to its passengers and the significance of the Rome route in its global network.

The event showcased Ethiopian's dedication to providing seamless travel experiences and strengthening its position as a key player in connecting Africa and Europe.

Group CEO of Ethiopian Airlines, Mesfin Tasew said : "We are incredibly proud to celebrate 60 years of uninterrupted service to Rome."

This milestone is a testament to our unwavering dedication to connecting people and fostering economic growth between Africa and Europe he said, adding "We are grateful for the support of our valued customers and partners throughout these six decades."

Ethiopian Airlines, with Rome as its inaugural Italian destination, expanded to Milan in 2011. The airline offers daily flights to both cities using modern aircraft for passenger comfort.

Starting December 1, 2024, Ethiopian will increase Rome flights to ten weekly, enhancing travel flexibility and connectivity, according to the Airlines.

Nat'l logistic strategy...

access to more regional ports beyond Djibouti port, Mawos said while speaking to local media.

Potential alternatives include Port Sudan, Assab, and Lamu, among others. Political relations in the region need to be improved. Then, Eritrean ports, particularly Assab, and Massawa could offer Ethiopia significantly shorter access routes for imports and exports, Mawos underscored.

The national logistics strategy also outlines future infrastructural developments, including plans for railways, dry ports, trade zones, cargo airports, and information communication infrastructure. However, Mawos noted that these plans would only be feasible once "realistic conditions" such as infrastructure development and political stability are addressed.

Highlighting the critical need for port diversification, he pointed out that Ethiopia's ongoing struggle with seasonal

supply chains, particularly in transporting agricultural inputs like fertilizer. "Delays in logistics are preventing farmers from accessing fertilizers when they need those inputs most in farming seasons, so it is putting Ethiopia's agricultural productivity at risk."

Proximity plays a crucial role in logistics, according to Mawos. "The time and cost for transporting goods along 1,000 kilometers versus a shorter distance cannot be compared." With closer ports, Ethiopia could reduce time and expenses which helps to enhance over all efficiency, he explained.

The dangers of over-reliance on a single port is dangerous and becoming more dangerous. Natural disasters, market price or political disagreements could severely disrupt trade, making Ethiopia's search for alternative ports an urgent priority. The government should continue seeking peaceful solutions to secure new port access, he urged.

Ethiopia's growing role...

external actors exploit regional tensions to undermine Ethiopia's efforts. "These hostile forces are forming unholy alliances, seizing on deteriorating relationships in the region to execute their strategies," he added.

Foreign Minister Ambassador Taye Atske-Selassie emphasized that Ethiopia has chosen not to engage in retaliatory actions against these hostile forces. "Their rhetoric and threats will not deter us from our commitment to peace and stability. Instead, it strengthens our resolve to double down on efforts to combat terrorism and ensure regional security," the minister said.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs Spokesperson Ambassador Nebiat Getachew also reaffirmed Ethiopia's commitment to regional peace, stating that despite external attempts to fuel

conflict, Ethiopia will not stand idly by as efforts to destabilize the region and undermine its development continue. "Ethiopia's foreign policy prioritizes neighboring countries, and we will continue to engage in peaceful diplomacy and foster economic integration," he noted.

Ethiopia's approach remains focused on fostering peaceful relations with its neighbors, recognizing that the country's national interests are inseparably tied to regional stability. "Our national security is directly linked to the peace of the region. This is why Ethiopia continues to push for economic integration and people-to-people diplomacy to safeguard its interests," Nebiat added.

Despite the rising challenges, Ethiopia remains a key player in promoting peace, stability, and development in the HoA.

Ethiopia ...

together based on regional geography, IGAD member states can strengthen their infrastructure, promote cross-border tourism, and market destinations collectively.

Tourism, she said, is a key driver of socio-economic change, and Ethiopia aims to develop a unified tourism space, foster investment and innovation, and promote sustainable growth.

"Ethiopia's goal is to build strong people-to-people connections with neighboring nations based on peaceful relations, brotherhood, and multilateral foreign policy," Nasise stated. She added that easing visa regulations, improving security, and investing together in shared resources are essential steps in making Africa a globally competitive tourism destination.

Ethiopia has played a significant role in the design of the IGAD Master Plan and is committed to ensuring its success. The plan focuses on linking infrastructure and markets, promoting collaboration, and maximizing opportunities for the region's tourism development.

The minister also noted that peace is vital for the growth of the tourism sector. By strengthening regional and economic integration, IGAD member states can benefit from tourism, unite their people, and safeguard natural and cultural resources for future generations.

The recently endorsed IGAD Sustainable Tourism Master Plan aims to enhance the region's tourism potential while preserving its rich cultural and religious diversity. Ethiopia's commitment to the plan also includes the renovation of major cultural and historical sites, such as the Jimma Aba Jiffar Palace, Fasil Palace, and the Axum Obelisk, along with the construction of new tourist attractions.

During the last three years, Ethiopia has successfully inscribed several tangible and intangible heritage sites, further cementing its place as a key player in the region's tourism development.

Peace policy set to revolutionize conflict...

told the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) that the new framework, inspired by South Africa's model, will be crucial in addressing the country's pressing societal issues and promoting peaceful coexistence.

He highlighted its potential to strengthen community capacity, particularly in social capital, and empower Ethiopians to resolve conflicts using local resources and traditional methods.

The policy emphasizes the inclusion of peace actors and thematic areas from all sectors of society, with a special focus on pastoralist regions. The initiative seeks to strengthen

civic, local, and religious institutions, which are vital for peace-building.

Awoke further explained that the government is committed to fostering dialogue at the community level to lay a strong foundation for lasting peace and inclusive development. In collaboration with international peace actors, the ministry has been offering capacity-building programs and advocacy efforts to combat gender-based violence and promote security nationwide.

However, challenges such as limited awareness of the potential roles of women and youth in peace-building, skill gaps, and

the inadequate participation of civil society organizations (CSOs) continue to hinder the peace process.

The Ministry of Women and Social Affairs Youth National and Voluntary Service Promotion CEO Abiy Hailemeleket underscored the ministry's efforts in fostering peace by involving youth through charter initiatives, youth organizations, and voluntarism in higher education institutions.

Abiy stressed the need to align international peace frameworks with local contexts, particularly in empowering youth and women to lead peace-building agendas.

On the religious front, Evangelical Churches Fellowship of Ethiopia Vice President Pastor Senbeto Bashe mentioned the role of the Inter-Religious Council of Ethiopia (IRCE) in promoting peace and reconciliation.

The IRCE has also established the Women's Peace Forum to raise awareness about gender-based violence and advocate for women's rights in peace-building efforts.

Pastor Senbeto reaffirmed the commitment to further engage women in the peace process, recognizing their essential role in fostering national security and reconciliation.

Opinion

Ethiopia's right to access the sea: Legitimate call for justice, economic opportunity

BY LAKACHEW ATINAFU

Ethiopia, a country snatched away its port due to historical circumstances in the Horn of Africa, has faced significant challenges due to its lack of direct access to the sea. Historically, this predicament has impeded its economic development and limited its trade opportunities. As the nation strives for growth and modernization, the quest for maritime access is not merely an economic issue; it embodies a fundamental right that deserves global recognition and support.

Ethiopia's connection to the sea was severed in 1993 when Eritrea gained independence, taking with it Ethiopia's only coastline. Since then, Ethiopia has relied heavily on neighboring countries, particularly Djibouti, for access to ports. This dependence has created vulnerabilities in trade logistics and increased costs for imports and exports. The situation has been exacerbated by political tensions in the region, often leading to disputes over port access and transit routes.

The significance of maritime access for Ethiopia cannot be overstated. With a population exceeding 120 million, Ethiopia is one of the fastest-growing economies in Africa. However, its landlocked status limits its ability to fully capitalize on this growth. Access to the sea would enable the country to achieve various successes.

Among the achievements fulfilled with the ownership of sea outlet is increased competition among ports that could lower shipping fees thereby making Ethiopian goods more competitive globally. Easier access to international markets would also allow Ethiopian agriculture and manufactured goods to reach new customers, boosting foreign exchange earnings.

Improved logistics and infrastructure could attract foreign direct investment, fostering economic diversification and job creation. Ethiopia is always ready to cooperate with Somalia and other neighboring countries to ensure peace and stability in the Horn of Africa (HoA), Government of Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) announced repeatedly.

In a statement issued recently, the Democracy System Building Coordination Centre Head with the rank of Deputy Prime Minister and Vice President of the ruling party, Adem Farah, expressed his government's firm commitment to join hands with neighboring countries including Somalia in order to maintain the peace and stability of the region.

Adem said that recent statements made by Somalia officials deny the reality on the ground and go against the spirit of good neighborliness. Mentioning that Ethiopia and Somalia share a border of nearly 1,700 km and have a common culture, language and religion, Adem said, "Our country believes that this is an unchangeable truth, not subject to reinterpretation by historical narratives."

According to him, Ethiopia has put maximum efforts to stand in solidarity with Somalia,

embracing the idea of growing together – recognizing that Somalia's peace and stability are crucial for its development and prosperity.

Despite this fact, Adem said the recent statements made by Somalia's officials are far from the reality, do not reflect the history of the ties between the two peoples, deny the reality on the ground, and go against good neighborliness and the common interests of the people of the two countries.

Adem further stated that speeches of responsible politicians should always be fair, enduring, and beneficial to the people of the region, strengthening bonds of brotherhood and sisterhood and supporting the peace and stability of the Horn of Africa, where the Somali people play a central role.

He also urged Somali counterparts to do their part in ending actions and rhetoric that go against the long-term interests of the region's people and the relations between the two countries.

Ethiopia's right to access the sea is not merely a matter of economic necessity; it is a question of justice. International law recognizes the rights of landlocked countries to access the sea. The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) emphasizes the importance of equitable access to ocean resources for all nations, regardless of their geographic location.

Furthermore, the right to trade freely is a fundamental human right, enshrined in various international covenants. Denying Ethiopia access to the sea is, in essence, a denial of its right to economic self-determination and development.

The quest for access to the sea could also foster greater regional cooperation. Engaging in diplomatic dialogues with Eritrea and other neighboring countries is essential. A cooperative approach could lead to mutually beneficial agreements that enhance stability and security in the region.

The establishment of joint economic zones and shared infrastructure projects could pave the way for a new era of partnership in the Horn of Africa. Such initiatives would not only benefit Ethiopia but could also stimulate economic growth in Eritrea and Djibouti, creating a win-win scenario.

The international community has a pivotal role to play in supporting Ethiopia's right to access the sea. This support should not merely be rhetorical; it must be translated into concrete actions, such as: Encouraging dialogue between Ethiopia and Eritrea to resolve historical grievances and establish a framework for access to ports.

Supporting projects that improve transportation and logistics networks in the region, thus enhancing connectivity for landlocked states is of paramount importance along with formulating policies that uphold the rights of landlocked nations, ensuring they receive fair treatment in international trade agreements.

Ethiopia's right to access the sea is a

multifaceted issue that encompasses legal, economic, and ethical dimensions. The pursuit of maritime access should be recognized as an essential step toward achieving sustainable development and economic independence.

As Ethiopia navigates its path forward, it is imperative for the international community to support its quest for justice and equitable access to the sea. Only through concerted efforts can Ethiopia unlock its full potential and secure a prosperous future for its people. To regain access to ports and enhance its influence in the Red Sea and Gulf regions, the Ethiopian government can adopt a multifaceted strategy focusing on diplomacy, economic partnerships, infrastructure development, and regional cooperation. Here are key actions the Ethiopian government could pursue:

Initiate and sustain dialogue with Eritrea to resolve historical grievances and negotiate access to Eritrean ports. Building trust can facilitate cooperative agreements. Engage with neighboring countries like Djibouti and Sudan to foster alliances that support Ethiopia's maritime aspirations. Strengthening relationships can create a supportive network.

Seeking assistance from international organizations or neutral countries to mediate discussions with Eritrea and other regional players would also be helpful. Explore partnerships with port operators in Djibouti and other countries to secure favorable terms for Ethiopian cargo is the other issue of concern. This could include joint ventures or long-term leasing agreements. Besides, Investing in upgrading and expanding existing ports to accommodate Ethiopian trade more effectively, potentially through public-private partnerships is commendable.

Advocate for the sustainable use of marine resources, positioning Ethiopia as a responsible actor in regional maritime governance. Launch awareness campaigns to educate the public about the importance of maritime access for national development and security. Mobilize Ethiopian Diaspora communities to advocate for maritime access and investment in Ethiopia's economy are questions that matter.

By taking a comprehensive approach that combines diplomacy, economic initiatives, infrastructure development, and regional cooperation, Ethiopia can work towards regaining access to ports and enhancing its influence in the Red Sea and Gulf regions. This strategic pursuit not only holds the promise of economic growth but also strengthens Ethiopia's position as a vital player in regional and international affairs.

Ethiopia's historical circumstances regarding access to the sea have been shaped by a series of significant events and geopolitical dynamics. Here are key historical moments that have influenced Ethiopia's access to maritime routes:

Among key historical moments that have influenced Ethiopia's access to maritime routes is the Aksumite Empire. In ancient times, the Aksumite Empire (circa 100

AD to 940 AD) controlled trade routes that connected the interior of Africa to the Red Sea. The port of Adulis facilitated maritime trade with various civilizations, enabling Ethiopia to access international markets.

Colonial Era is another political economic and social factor that influenced Ethiopia's sea access, the Italian occupation, for instance. In the late 19th century, Italy attempted to colonize Ethiopia, leading to the First Italo-Ethiopian War (1895-1896). Though Ethiopia successfully defended its sovereignty at the Battle of Adwa, the colonial dynamics in the region shifted impacting trade routes.

Italian Colonization of Eritrea also adversely affected Ethiopia's access to the sea. Italy colonized Eritrea in the late 19th century, effectively controlling the only coastline that Ethiopia had access to. This created a situation where Ethiopia became reliant on Eritrean ports for maritime trade.

Following the coming to an end of the World War II, Italy was defeated and lost its colonial power and Eritrea was federated with Ethiopia in 1952 under United Nations supervision, allowing Ethiopia some access to Eritrean ports.

In 1962, Ethiopia annexed Eritrea, effectively ending its autonomy and solidifying Ethiopia's control over its coastal access, though this was met with resistance and lately resulted in Eritrean War to Independence. The war ended in 1993 with the Eritrean Independence. Following a protracted conflict, Eritrea gained independence resulting in Ethiopia losing its direct access to the sea. This significantly impacted Ethiopia's trade and logistics.

The Eritrean-Ethiopian War, also known as the Badime War, which was a major armed conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea that took place from May 1998 to June 2000 again deprived Ethiopia the right of using Eritrea's ports and made dependent on Djibouti. After losing access to Eritrean ports, Ethiopia became heavily reliant on Djibouti for maritime trade, which has been a point of contention and economic vulnerability.

Political tensions with Eritrea have continued to affect Ethiopia's access to maritime routes, influencing trade and regional stability. The peace agreement between Ethiopia and Eritrea in 2018 opened channels for potential cooperation and dialogue, reigniting discussions about access to ports and trade relations but could not bear fruit.

In a nutshell, Ethiopia's access to the sea has been influenced by historical trade practices, colonial legacies, wars, and diplomatic efforts. Understanding these circumstances provides context for Ethiopia's current aspirations for maritime access and its economic development strategies.

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

Business & Economy

How Ethiopia and Somaliland's partnership can reshape regional dynamics

BY ADDISALEM MULAT

It is worth mentioning that the signing of Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Ethiopia and Somaliland plays a huge role in assisting the progress of the country's economy and smoothing the path of import and export business down the road.

As far as this some groups that have a deep-seated hatred towards the pact have continued going to the ends of the earth for its realization in the shortest possible time. Though Ethiopia's enemies know like the palm of their hand the fact that the agreement does not harm any nation, they have been going to the ends of the earth with the purpose of adding fuel to the flames and putting salt on the wound.

As Ethiopia's arch-enemies and bitter foes move heaven and earth to bring discredit to the breakthrough initiative of Ethiopia and Somaliland, their efforts sustained going for nothing. Despite the possibility that they spared no effort to hoodwink the wider international community with their usual hoax news, accomplishing the desired goal turned out to be an insurmountable obstacle and a wild goose chase.

To everyone's dismay, by giving the cold shoulder to the existing reality on the ground, Ethiopia's foes have been working day in and day out to besmirch the country's positive developments. As Ethiopia does not have a malicious intention of harming any nation, Somalia should work in close collaboration with Ethiopia in a peaceful way and pull out all the stops to get to the bottom of its quandaries through round table discussions.

As no one benefits from war, Somalia ought to distance itself from warmongering acts. It is evident that if the situation keeps going in this way, the Horn of Africa for sure will turn out to be a hotbed of terrorists.

As Ethiopia has been doing everything possible with the intention of resolving the issue peacefully, Somalia should endeavor to make peace happen in the Horn of Africa devoid of batting an eye.

It is true that Ethiopia's accord with Somaliland is a continuation of its amicable foreign policy and not a farfetched move to breach others' sovereignty, social science expertin the recent past said, stressing the need to secure a seaport in a fiercely-contested region.

The experts also slammed doubts and supersized interpretations of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for Partnership and Cooperation between Ethiopia and Somaliland while describing the agreement as valid and reciprocal actions which would serve the entire region.

Accordingly, Dilla University History and International Affairs analyst, Abdu



Mohamed (PhD) told *The Ethiopian Herald* that the country has not reinvented something new and its agreement with Somaliland is part and parcel of its three decades of foreign policy towards Hargeisa.

Ethiopia and Somaliland have been forging commercial and other diplomatic relations devoid of external reactions and standpoint. "And, Ethiopia needs to view the ongoing reactions carefully from diplomacy and peace perspectives," the analyst recommended.

Hawassa University Law Instructor Fekadu Deriba, stated that as the Ethiopian Airlines have been flying to Hargeisa and the country has a share in the Berbera Port, the recent MoU is not a new phenomenon. "It is normal for two parties to seal a mutual agreement so long as it does not affect others."

Ethiopia needs to study the reactions following the signing of the MoU carefully and craft appropriate response mechanisms and continue to create clarity.

No external entity should dictate Ethiopia as to when and with whom it should enter into agreements. It is up to Ethiopia to decide on its foreign policy. The country's quest for access to the sea is historical, legal and geopolitical. Its interest can be achieved through various means. A mutual agreement is one path.

In point of fact, some groups that detest Ethiopia's growth and development have continued confounding the international community with barefaced lies that do not reflect the concrete reality.

Although Ethiopia's rivals know Ethiopia's role in resorting peace and tranquility in the Horn of Africa fighting against al-Shababin Somalia and other militant groups, they have continued turning a blind eye to the unvarnished truth over and over again.

It is worth mentioning that in the absence of Ethiopia's peacekeeping force, making certain peace and tranquility in the Horn of

Africa will be easier said than done. Unless all nations stand in unison to restore peace in the Horn of Africa, the region will move into uncharted waters posing danger to the whole thing surfacing in the Horn.

Beshir Abdullahi Mohammoud (PhD), President of Jigjiga University, said that realizing Ethiopia's quest for seaport would enhance mutual benefits and trade ties in the entire region. Addressing a panel discussion jointly organized by Jigjiga University and Institute of Foreign Affairs Beshir recently said that Ethiopia's quest to seaport is of paramount importance to trade integration in the region.

Stating that Ethiopia's obtaining of seaport is vital for countries in the region to work together for economic benefits, he further noted that seaport is important to reduce the high cost of export and import items and attract foreign investment.

Getting seaport for Ethiopia is also crucial to enhance trade activities especially in the eastern part of the country and benefit the people. To this end, the university will carry out research and diplomatic activities for the realization of the country's effort for seaport, he affirmed.

As long as Ethiopia has the right to strive for sovereignty access to seaports and make a deal on its economic and political matters, Somalia should distance itself from sparing no effort to back the region into a corner.

There is no denying the fact that the port accord gives Ethiopia multifaceted benefits without a shred of a doubt. Apart from its socioeconomic effects, Ethiopia's direct port access would give a green light to the Horn of Africa swarmed with terrorist groups. In a similar vein, access to the port deal would also curtail the ill efforts of Ethiopia's adversaries.

"If Ethiopia regains a sea outlet, the Red Sea region would be relatively more peaceful because of Ethiopia's role in regional stabilization," Mulugeta Debebe (PhD), a Political Science lecturer at Ethiopian Civil

Service University said.

He emphasized that maritime security across the Red Sea requires collaboration, which Ethiopia is currently advocating for. "If Ethiopia achieves its aspiration of securing a sea outlet and establishing a coastline military base, it will significantly contribute to maritime peacekeeping. Conflicts along the coastline would also be more manageable."

As a country that collaborates with global powers on peacekeeping missions, Ethiopia's involvement in the maritime arena would mirror its existing partnerships, according to Mulugeta.

Ethiopia's history is characterized by peacekeeping rather than aggression. Therefore, its presence along the coastline would not be a destabilizing factor. He argued that fighting terrorism in the Horn of Africa (HoA) would be less fruitful without Ethiopia's maritime presence.

Currently, Ethiopia's peacekeeping forces are active in several hotspots in the HoA. Ethiopia's role would be even more significant if it were allowed to deploy its forces at least in one coastline base. Countries opposing Ethiopia's aspirations should reconsider the potential for cooperation. With a population of more than 120 million, Ethiopia's lack of access to the sea could lead to internal crises that would adversely affect neighboring countries.

Apart from fostering bilateral benefits, the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed by Ethiopia and Somaliland would be a cornerstone in bringing peace to the volatile Horn of Africa (HoA) and expedite economic integration, Somaliland's Embassy to Ethiopia said.

In an exclusive interview with *The Ethiopian Herald*, the Deputy Head Mission Barkhad Mohamoud Kaariye (PhD) in recent times stated that Ethiopia's establishment of a naval base in Somaliland would greatly contribute to pacifying Babel-Mandeb, one of the busiest trade routes globally, and prevent rampant piracy.

Having availed a 20-km coastline to Ethiopia, the MoU serves the twin objectives of addressing the former's long-held quest for seaports and contributing for maritime peace in the HoA. Moreover, the pact is considered a bold step taken to create strong economic ties between the two HoA countries that should be replicated by others, Barkhad emphasized.

According to him, the MoU is part of the big plan that aims to transform the two sides' historical relations into new heights and cement the legalization and enhancement of people-to-people and commercial relations. "The people of Somaliland expressed overwhelming support and delight over the pact that is expected to facilitate the long-awaited international recognition."

Planet Earth

Ethiopia working to boost tea productivity

BY FIKADU BELAY

Tea has a long history in Ethiopia, but the country not fully utilized the potential of the tea production. Despite its potential, the Ethiopian tea sector faces several challenges. The lack of infrastructure, such as adequate roads and processing facilities, hampers efficient production and distribution. Moreover, inconsistent quality control measures can undermine the reputation of Ethiopian tea in international markets.

However, these challenges also present opportunities for innovation and investment. Increasing interest from both domestic and international investors has the potential to drive improvements in processing technologies and sustainable farming practices.

The Ethiopian government recognized tea as a strategic crop for economic diversification, encouraging farmers to explore this profitable alternative. Its need to reduce dependency on coffee and to tap into the increasing global demand for tea, particularly in the wake of health trends favoring herbal and green teas.

Many smallholder farmers are now integrating tea into their traditional farming practices, which enhances their resilience against market fluctuations. The rise of cooperatives has empowered farmers, providing them with access to training, technical support, and better market opportunities. This collective approach has enabled them to negotiate better prices for their produce, ensuring a more stable income.

In a recent interview with *The Ethiopian Herald*, the Ethiopian Coffee and Tea Authority, Public Relations and Communication Director, Sahlemariam Gebremedhn stated that Ethiopia has made significant strides in its tea export sector over the past year.

He mentioned that the country exported 1,142.90 tons of tea, earning 2.30 million USD, marking an impressive increase of 292.43 tons (34%) in volume and 0.33 million USD (17%) in revenue compared to the previous fiscal year. Despite this growth, he emphasized that Ethiopia's tea sector still has substantial potential that remains untapped.

He mentioned that Ethiopia is blessed with favorable weather and rich soil conditions conducive to tea cultivation. However, the sector has generally struggled to attract sufficient investment. Foreign currency earnings from tea production have floated around three million USD annually, a figure that pales in comparison to the country's vast capabilities.

The climatic diversity and fertile soils of Ethiopia provide an ideal backdrop for tea cultivation. The tea farming is not merely an agricultural trend; it reflects a broader socio-economic transformation and a growing recognition of tea's potential to enhance rural livelihoods and foster sustainable development. Also, it offers numerous benefits to rural communities, including job creation, income diversification, and improved living standards.

Ethiopia's diverse climatic zones are conducive to producing a variety of



As Ethiopia's tea industry continues to grow, the government's commitment to enhancing production and attracting investment is crucial

tea production, the highland regions, characterized by their altitude and temperate climate, are particularly suitable for tea cultivation. Areas such as the Southern parts of the country and some parts of Oromia are emerging as key tea-growing regions. The interplay of altitude, rainfall, and soil types allows for the cultivation of unique tea varieties that possess distinct flavors and aromas, setting Ethiopian tea apart in the global market.

Underscoring the suitability of the country for the tea production, he further called for increased investment and participation from both local and foreign investors to enhance production capabilities. The government is committed to creating a more conducive environment for investment through regulatory reforms, he urged.

Furthermore, to address the issues, the country is actively working to expand tea production, with ambitious plans set in motion for the coming years. The Ethiopian government is also offering various incentives to entice investors into the tea sector, highlighting the need for collaboration between farmers and commercial investors.

Regardless of the progress made, Sahlemariam emphasized that much work remains to be done to realize the full potential of Ethiopia's tea sector. He mentioned in past year 2016 E.C. alone, the government propagated 460 million tea saplings and initiated the planting of tea leaves across 30,000 hectares.

The efforts are particularly focused in the Oromia region, where the Jimma Zone Agricultural Bureau is collaborating with local communities and farmers to enhance both production and productivity through various development activities. This grassroots approach aims to empower farmers and integrate them more deeply into the tea production process, he said.

He stated that the cultivation of Tea crop once prioritized by the government was limited to just 5,000 hectares. In contrast, the new focus on tea production underscores a critical shift in agricultural policy, recognizing tea as a vital cash crop that can contribute significantly to the national economy.

He stated one of the key transformations in the tea industry has been the shift from scattered planting to a more organized approach. Since 2014, tea planting in the Oromia region has been consolidated into cluster-level production efforts. This method is aimed at maximizing land use and improving efficiency in tea cultivation.

Looking ahead, the Ethiopian government has set ambitious goals for the tea sector. Over the next three years, plans are in place to cultivate an additional 30,000 hectares of tea across the Jimma, Buno Bedele, and Iluababora zones. In 2016 alone, over 7,813 hectares were planted with tea seedlings, contributing to a total of more than 48 million seedlings planted nationwide, he said.

The long-term benefits of this initiative are significant. Once fully established, tea plants can produce leaves for 30 to 40 years, allowing for harvests every 15 days. This yields a sustainable source of income for farmers and contributes to the country's foreign exchange earnings, he noted.

Also the governments promoting environmentally friendly methods are gaining traction, with farmers being trained in agroforestry and integrated pest management. This not only enhances the quality of the tea but also contributes to biodiversity conservation and soil health, aligning with global sustainability goals.

As Ethiopia's tea industry continues to grow, the government's commitment to enhancing production and attracting investment is crucial. With the right strategies and collaborative efforts, Ethiopia has the potential to secure its place as a key player in the global tea market, transforming its agricultural landscape and bolstering its economy.

Besides, while the recent export figures reflect promising growth, there remains a clear call to action for stakeholders across the sector to leverage Ethiopia's natural advantages and invest in the future of its tea industry.

Through harnessing the country's agricultural potential, Ethiopia can transform its tea industry into a key player on the global stage, ensuring that the rich heritage of Ethiopian tea is standard and notable worldwide.

Art & Culture

How to make Addis a blooming and leading tourist destination

BY MULUGETA GUDETA

I was search for some of the African times that are attractive to tourists or where the tourism industry has grown in the last few years. For my purpose, I chose the four main African cities listed under the title of best places to visit in Africa. The full list comprises some 20 African cities and venues for tourism while the four leading cities include Cape Town, Johannesburg, Marrakech and Nairobi. The Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa is also mentioned on the list of must visit African cities.

Addis Ababa has also great potentials as a tourism destination or a place to visit such a status, the Ethiopian capital has also the potential to be listed among the top four tourist destination cities. Yet in order to attain this status, Addis Ababa needs to be massively promoted, popularized or advertised in the global tourism market, among foreign tourists or institutions dealing with advancing the cause of tourism in Africa biggest or historic cities.

City planners in Addis Ababa should therefore learn from other African cities that are mentioned as leading tourist destinations. The city planners should also include into the reconstruction of Addis features that are found in other big African cities. They can for instance include the construction of bigger zoos that would give visitors the opportunity to see some of Ethiopia's endemic wild animals like the Mountain Nyala and others. Big museums need to be built at strategic places around Addis Ababa in order to include in their collections the major collections that reflect Addis Ababa image as a capital of a multiethnic country and as the centre of African cultures and traditions. Addis Ababa has also the potential for being the centre of African culture in general.

Cape Town is considered the second most popular tourist destination in Africa with 1.6 million tourists the city in 2014. Cape Town is a port city on South Africa's southwest coast, on a peninsula beneath the imposing Table Mountain. Slowly rotating cable cars to the mountain's flat top from which there are sweeping views of the city, the busy harbor and boats heading for Robben Island, the notorious prison that once held Nelson Mandela which is now a living museum.

Johannesburg is South Africa's biggest city and capital of Gauteng province. It began as a 19th-century gold mining settlement. Its sprawling Soweto Township was once home to Nelson Mandela and Desmond Tutu. Mandela's former residence. It is now the Mandela House museum.

Marrakesh is a former imperial city in the western Morocco. It is a former economic centre and home to mosques, palaces and gardens. The medina is a densely packed walled medieval city dating to the Berber empire with mazelike alleys where souks

Addis Ababa is fast becoming the most important African metropolis not only economically but also diplomatically and culturally

thrive or market places sell traditional textiles, pottery and jewelry. A symbol of the city and visible for miles is the Moorish minaret of 12th century Koutoubia Mosque.

Nairobi is Kenya's capital city. In addition to its urban core, the city has the Nairobi National Park, a large game reserve known for breeding endangered black rhinos, and home of giraffes, zebras and lions. Next to it is a well-regarded elephant orphanage operated by the David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust. Nairobi is also often used as a

jumping-off point for Safari trips elsewhere in Kenya.

Is Addis Ababa a potential candidate to claim the top spot as an African capital city worthy of visits by foreign tourists? The answer is a definitive yes. Addis Ababa shares similarities and differences with the other African capitals selected as tourist destinations or places worth visiting. One of the similarities is that Addis is a city under construction and reconstruction while that it is home to various tourism sites and historical landmarks. Contrary to many other African capital cities, Addis Ababa was built not as a colonial outpost but as an independently and autonomously evolving African capital city that is absorbing both local traditions and cultures as well as global heritages of some of the biggest metropolises.

There are many capital cities in Africa known for their touristic attractions and as centers of traditional and cultural exchanges among the various tribes and ethnic groups. Dakar, the capital of Senegal; Brazzaville, the capital of Congo; Cairo or the capital of Egypt, and Addis Ababa, the capital of Ethiopia are a few of the culturally most dynamic, diverse, and vibrant capital cities in the continent. The reason why Addis Ababa enjoys such a status is clear to identify. It is one of the historic cities in Africa where Indian and Italian as well as Islamic architectures are the main features that reflect its global heritages. The modernization of Addis Ababa should therefore take into consideration these heritages, and the process of rebuilding the city should take these concerns into consideration. The ongoing demolition of some of the oldest neighborhoods in the capital should take into consideration the need for carefully preserving historical relics that may one day be used to show the various stages of growth that the city has passed in order to attain its present status as a modern African metropolis.

The Ethiopian capital is not only famous for its diverse traditions and cultures that result from a long historic process of inter-human connections. One of the most important features that make Addis Ababa such an important city is the historic process that led to the convergence people from different ethnic groups that were driven or attracted to Addis for various reasons.

War may be one of the reasons and an important factor that brought people from other ethnic groups from the centre and the south of the old empire during the Battle of Adwa against Italian invaders who brought many irregular army detachments to Addis and to the northern parts of the country where the resistance was most active. Through time, this has led to the amalgamation of different ethnic groups whose members settled sporadically and interacted with the local populations in order to create big and small towns that bear the marks of past demographic interactions

and cultural and traditional features.

Addis Ababa is fast becoming the most important African metropolis not only economically but also diplomatically and culturally. Addis is the melting pot of Ethiopia's diverse cultures and languages. It is also what we may call, "little Ethiopia" or "Ethiopia in miniature". All the traditions, cultures and languages of the eighty plus ethnic groups are represented in Addis Ababa. There are even neighborhoods in Addis known for serving as residential areas of specific ethnic groups. Mercato or one of the biggest markets in Ethiopia is known for serving as the place of residence and work for the Gurage ethnic group famous for their hard work, diligence and economic acumen in general.

The Dorze ethnic group from the south of the country, also known for their artistic abilities and craftsmanship are concentrated in the northern part of Addis, a place popularly called "Shiro Meda", a name probably inspired by the reddish soil similar to the color of one of the traditional dishes made of crushed beans or peas. Shiro Meda is home to some of the best traditional dressmaking in the country. People from the Dorze ethnic group are famous for their colorful dressmaking abilities. That was the site for the largest marketplace for traditionally woven men's and women's wears that have become fashionable. Modernized, expensive and enjoying a great demand these days.

People from the northern part of Ethiopia, from the Amhara and Tigray ethnic groups are known for their business acumen, similar to the famous or infamous American carpetbaggers who travelled from Northern US to the South seeking commercial opportunities following the American Civil War. The early travelers from northern to central Ethiopia were likewise tradesmen who specialized in taking staple crops like wheat and teff to the south and central Ethiopia and bring products like salt, coffee and other industrial goods to the rural north thereby facilitating exchanges between the two areas.

The commercial exchanges that started a long time ago have in turn served as catalysts for the intertwining of traditions and cultures among the people coming from southern and northern Ethiopia. Marriages and other cross-cultural interactions have cemented the peaceful coexistence and interactions of people from the respective ethnic groups through long-term intermarriages.

Addis Ababa is also home to people who are the products of these kinds of intermarriages among different ethnic groups. It is also a capital city where all members of the different ethnic groups have contributed to making it a truly national capital city where tradition and modernity continue to coexist not in an atmosphere of competition but one of complementarity. This is also one of the characteristics that have made Addis a vibrant and modern African capital city.

Society

Transforming the provision of medical services

BY MENGISTEAB TESHOME

Across the world, governments and health professionals are increasingly striving to practically exercise the principles of operational excellence and continuous improvement in health facilities to ensure affordable, comprehensive, and quality healthcare services to their respective citizens regardless of any differences.

True achieving affordable, equitable, and continuous healthcare services that lead to attaining improved health outcomes requires a systematic and sustainable approach. In fact, establishing a culture for constant improvement is not a quick fix. Rather, it is a journey that demands ongoing commitment, coordination, investment, and persistence between and among actors.

According to documents, transforming the healthcare system involves integrating advanced technologies that are vital to improve patient care, streamline administrative processes, and enhance overall efficiency within the healthcare system.

These days, the landscape of healthcare services is undergoing a profound transformation, driven by the advancements of digital technology, changing patients' expectations, though the need for more efficient healthcare delivery in many countries still lags and there are huge differences.

The Ministry of Health is also working to advance the country's health system and transform its services by providing sustainable, quality, equitable and efficient health services that meet the health needs of the population, digitizing the community health information system. As a result, following the efforts undertaken, it was made possible to lay a strong foundation for long-term success in the health system. It was enabled to create a paperless system, automated workflows, digitalize patients' medical history, and create a unified health information system, aside from benefitting the communities, especially those low-income segments, by expanding the health insurance system.

In connection with this, recently the Ministry of Health has reviewed the implementation of the just concluded Ethiopian budget year (2016 E.C) plan, and activities that require due attention in the medical services sector in this fiscal year in the presence of senior officials, stakeholders from states and city government health bureaus and hospitals, as well as pertinent institutions at Adama Town, according to the Ministry's social page.

Speaking on the occasion, Health Minister Mekdes Daba (PhD) said that activities that increase access to medical services in various parts of the nation, and strengthen the capacity of states have been implemented. It was also a year that hospitals can register remarkable achievements, following the numerous efforts, they received and by their own initiations.

In this fiscal year, by reaffirming that the community receives quality medical services and; ensuring fair access to both urban and hinterland communities, activities would be



Health Minister, Mekdes Daba (MD) along with State Minister Dereje Duguma (MD)

Ensuring transformation in the healthcare system could allow healthcare organizations to provide more convenient and accessible care options to patients

carried out to address the compliance of the society related to the services.

State Minister Dereje Duguma (MD) for his part noted the work done to improve and modernize the medical services. "We should work hard to improve the provision of medical services by addressing gaps early."

At this juncture, the leadership has double responsibility and commitment to leveraging quality and ensuring fair access to the community. Winning the expectations of patients is a propelling force behind the need for transformation in healthcare. Patients in today's age expect expedient services, high-quality care, personalized experiences, and seamless communication with healthcare providers. To meet these evolving expectations, healthcare institutions must embrace technologies that enable patient-centric care delivery and engagement.

Ensuring transformation in the healthcare system could allow healthcare organizations to provide more convenient and accessible care options to patients. For instance, efforts are underway in the areas of telemedicine platforms, mobile health applications, and online appointment scheduling systems. These all could empower patients to access care remotely by reducing the need for in-person visits and overcoming barriers such as geographical distance and transportation challenges. By providing virtual care options, and organizing platforms in a bid to enhance patient convenience, it is possible to improve access to care and increase patient satisfaction.

Medical Service CEO within the Ministry, Ilubabor Buno (MD) said that, in the past Ethiopian budget year, concerted support efforts were exerted in states and hospitals coupled with periodically supervising activities. The department also staged training and dispatched over 33 manuals and guidelines and related documents to respective destinations.

"We delivered training to emergency departments on how to execute ambulance services. Moreover, the department has

exerted unwavering effort in providing professionals with how to manage oxygen plants, and ensure accessibility."

According to him, his department also executed tasks in assisting respective health facility professionals in the areas of emergency and intensive care patients; and specialty medication and medical services to enhance the quality and accessibility of the services.

According to him, the consortium of hospitals in this budget year should be strengthened further to provide quality services and perform better in managing emergency cases, improving intensive care unit services, and providing medical tourism and diagnostic services, he underlined.

Mentioning that the discussion forum was productive and an important platform to discuss the success and challenges of the sector, participants of the meeting pointed out matters that should be further considered and improved. Addressing the shortage of rehabilitation medical services, and if there is the possibility to produce the equipment used for rehabilitation medicine in the country, as well as the provision of quality ambulance services were some of the points discussed thoroughly.

The transformation of medical services is reshaping how healthcare is delivered, making it more accessible, efficient, and patient-centered. As technology continues to evolve, there will also be opportunities for improving health outcomes and enhancing the patient experience. Embracing these changes while addressing the accompanying challenges will be crucial in building a healthier future for all.

On the occasion, the Chief Executive Officer of the Medical Service of the Ministry signed a Memorandum of Understanding with states and city government health bureaus on key parameters. States and hospitals that registered superior quality performance were also recognized by the hospital alliance. The discussion was concluded by paying a visit to Adama Hospital Medical College.

Law & Politics

The world is indebted to Ethiopia for regional peace

BY STAFF REPORTER

Ethiopia in the last weeks has hosted special envoys to the Horn African region signaling the increasing importance of the country in the dynamic region. Ambassador Mike Hammer, US Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa, Hanna Tetteh, Special Envoy of the UN Secretary-General for the Horn of Africa and President of the Horn of Africa Friendship Group of the Parliament of France, Senator Hugues Saury and the officials have emphasised the big role Ethiopia plays in the complex region.

Ethiopia has been a crucial peacemaker and dependable ally in the unstable Horn of Africa. The nation has played a pivotal role in the unstable area, profoundly influencing the stability and safety of neighbouring countries. Ethiopia has been a steadfast ally of its neighbouring countries during instability or conflict, from Sudan to Somalia. Ethiopia has assisted war-torn nations in reestablishing peace and getting back on their feet by sending anything from a peacekeeping force to a mediating team. Additionally, the nation prevented the breakup of nations that bore the brunt of ongoing combat and assisted in reducing regional tensions through the sacrifices made by its service members.

The foundation of the nation's friendly foreign policy toward its neighbours is its people's deep belief in the virtue of peaceful coexistence and their good intentions. Somalia is one of those nations that is dependent on Ethiopia for vital assistance. Ethiopia has supported the people of Somalia in their battles against terrorism and extremism and has assisted in improving the country's peace.

Ethiopia sent its battle-hardened forces into Somalia because it firmly believed that peace there may lead to peace there. Even the greatest price was paid by Ethiopian men and women in uniform for the cause of Somalia, despite the nation still lacking official recognition.

Ethiopia, a country that places great importance on independence and sovereignty, has not only been striving for regional peace and stability but also for noninterference with Somalia. However, the other side does not return the favour. Ethiopian forces are at a clear advantage due to their familiarity with the terrain and the methods used by Al-Shabab. Having this first-hand knowledge is crucial to effectively resist the terrorist group's activities. The bravery and experience of Ethiopian forces are expected to be crucial in accelerating Somalia's transition to stability.

However, the Somalia government has been trying to collude with Ethiopia's arch-foes to harm the national interest

Ethiopia, a country that places great importance on independence and sovereignty, has not only been striving for regional peace and stability but also for noninterference with Somalia

of Ethiopia. This plot comes under the pretext of the Ethiopia-Somaliland sea access deal. Somalia openly and subtly has been trying to stage a plot with other foreign entities. And, the recent move to bring enemies to the doorstep of Ethiopia spills the beans on the hidden agenda and collusion.

This even became clear as the AU and UN are advancing plans for an AU-led peacekeeping mission in Somalia after the current AU mission expires at the end of 2024. The African Union (AU) endorsed plans for a successor mission in June 2024, adopted a strategic concept of operations (CONOPs) in early August, and forwarded the CONOPs for the new AU Support and Stabilisation Mission in Somalia (AUSSOM) to the UN Security Council for approval in mid-August.

Somalia's recent unfriendly gesture and the growing interest from other external entities to increase their unholy presence in the region present a clear and present danger to Ethiopia.

Ethiopia's expressed concerns about the post-ATMIS arrangement, and the country's continued efforts to de-escalate tension in the region.

Ethiopia's foreign policy emphasizes its neighbours as the country holds a mammoth place in the Horn region in promoting peace, stability, and expediting economic integration. Regional cooperation founded on reciprocity and principles, as well as peace, security, and mutual development, are Ethiopia's top diplomatic priorities.

In its latest presser the newly appointed Spokesperson of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Nebiat Getachew remarked Ethiopia will not passively observe any attempts to destabilize the region as well as to thwart its development efforts,

While addressing geopolitical dynamics in the Horn of Africa, Ambassador Nebiat said, Ethiopia's foreign policy prioritizes neighbouring countries and anchors Ethiopia's pivotal role in the region's peace, stability and development.

In this regard, he added that Ethiopia will not passively observe any attempts to destabilize the region as well as to thwart its development efforts, ENA reported.

The spokesperson reiterated that Ethiopia's diplomacy prioritizes peace, security, mutual development, and regional integration based on principle and reciprocity.

Meanwhile, the country is monitoring the recent acts of its neighbours, he noted.

According to him, Ethiopia will avoid engaging in hostile rhetoric aimed at distorting its focus. However, we will not only continue monitoring actions

in neighbouring countries affecting Ethiopia's national interest but respond, Nebiat emphasized.

Nevertheless, he reaffirmed Ethiopia's commitment to peaceful resolution of disputes and regional cooperation.

The country is actively engaged in diplomatic efforts to promote peace, security, and sustainable development in the region and on a global scale, according to him.

During the General Assembly, the Foreign Ministers of East African countries contributing troops to the African Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS) will discuss their ongoing efforts and the way forward, the spokesperson disclosed.

Yet, Ambassador Nebiat revealed that the third round of Ethiopia-Somalia discussions, facilitated by Turkey, which was set for September 17, 2024, has been postponed due to the clash of schedules with the United Nations General Assembly meetings.

Ethiopia's foreign policy is centred on fostering strong relationships with its neighbours and promoting regional integration based on mutual respect and cooperation for sustainable development.

In the area of economic and citizen-centred diplomacy, the Spokesperson underscored the fact that the Ministry together with Ethiopia's diplomatic and consular missions as well as other key stakeholders is focused on leveraging opportunities around the world to market Ethiopian products, to expand market options, and to attract foreign direct investment towards realizing our national development aspirations.

For the last few months, Ethiopia has been in constant contact with the African Union and United Nations to express its concern about the security implications of the involvement of some forces in the region. In its latest statement, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia once expressed the danger and uncertainty hanging over the region due to the intrigue and far-fetched interest of foreign entities to gain hold in the pretext of peace.

With the new mission, it must also address the evolving security threats and political complexities in Somalia. The success of AUSSOM hinges on the commitment of all stakeholders, including the Somali government, the African Union, and the international community, to work together to ensure a stable and peaceful future for Somalia. It is crucial that the international community, particularly the African Union, addresses the concerns raised by Ethiopia and other stakeholders to ensure that AUSSOM is a force for good.

BY EPHREM ENDALE

Between you & me

Pat or Punch! - It's as Simple as That!

This one is an issue we somewhat touched previously. You know, about people changing one way or another. Take the diehard alcoholic who, after maybe decades of dedicated heavy guzzling, others have given up on him. The conventional wisdom would be that trying to talk him out of his habit would be the stupidest thing to do as whoever tries would end up frustrated. People would say that since alcohol is already in his bloodstreams and there's nothing anyone can do. And the guy himself is so 'comfortable' with his drinking who the hell is anybody to tell him otherwise? He could be a well-educated family man and father who wouldn't be accused of illiteracy as to knowing about the consequences of regular alcohol consumption.

There was this guy well into his late forties who somehow divides his time to living here for a couple of months usually on business and moving to his regular residence in the US for much of the time. The catch here is in both places he drank, and drank like hell. Being well placed economically expenses were never the issue. And also he looked after his family like any true family man does. One thing you seldom hear with other alcoholics and he does is that he never, and I mean never, drinks more than a glass of wine at home. Isn't that wonderful? As they say he also seldom comes home drunk or anywhere near that. While here he lives it up with quite a crowd of friends.

With a few weeks to the Ethiopian New Year he lands in Addis. Now the usual routine was

that his friends were told of his arrival weeks before touchdown. This time that didn't happen. He arrives in Addis in the first week of the Ethiopian month of Nehase. Almost a week on a Friday he phones a couple of his friends. They were surprised as they should have been. It has been years since they have been going through that routine and when things suddenly snap here and there surprise comes as a very human reaction. They agreed to meet next afternoon. "Aha!" His friends must have said, "This one is going to be a Saturday to remember. Payday still a few weeks away and the holiday expenses hovering over them as dark scary clouds having someone treating them to a wonderful Saturday afternoon and perhaps, if luck was on their side, evening too would be a blessing.

When they finally meet in one of their favorite hangouts he was smart enough to play down things as to why he didn't phone earlier with what they later said were incomprehensible reasons. Indeed right from the start it was becoming a Saturday to remember. The only thing was that things didn't go as they thought they would or they were accustomed to. All of them had their beer in front of them but he opted for a soft drink. What! Their friend must have some real medical reason. He was having soft drink! Yes, he was in one big trouble and they were probably readying themselves for the dark news to come. It did indeed come; but again not in the way they expected. One of them gathered enough oxygen to ask him "Is anything wrong with you?"

"No, why do you ask that?"

You're having drink. As the guy who narrates the story says their friend lets out a hearty laughter and throws a few words that have more effect than the ballistic missiles and drones flying all over Ukraine and Russia! "I'm alright. I've stopped drinking." What! The totality of the shock was so much so it was as if a collective anesthetic or something was applied on them. (After the 'pager explosions' stories of the last few days, nothing, absolutely nothing seems impossible!) Before they could pump in enough oxygen and, of course, alcohol into their blood streams he says he couldn't stay with them much longer as he had an evening business meeting. Now he is forcing them to pick the tab? No, he is not. He pulls out a wad of thousand birr probably fresh out of the bank, puts it on the table he wishes them to have a good time, promises to call and leaves. He never called as he left the next day.

This couldn't have been about them, could it? I mean any guy who throws a wad of ten thousand birr your way is either the craziest dude within a few thousand square miles or he's an innocent guy who wants to avoid his friends misunderstanding his actions.

When the guys meet the next day after working hours he was the main and only agenda. Arguments and sometimes shouting matches ensued. Among the five only one has any good words for the guy. He tried to argue that people are bound to change moving away from their bad habits and that their friend finally kicked away his drinking

habits. He tried to convince them their friend must have been under good professional scrutiny back in America and things weren't about them but about him. He convinced none of them. They said it was about them and what came after that was typical of many of us with them berating him for a hundred and one ills. (I have to tell you that the story was narrated to a couple of us by one of the four who later scolded himself for having been so negative about such a wonderful friend who always gave what he can and didn't expect any return for them! We need more of such people!)

If the narrative we heard was to go by this guy wasn't only inviting them all over town when he as here but he regularly sent money, and things like mobile apparatus laptops and what have you. And just because he called it quits when it comes to his drinking habit he was transformed into 'enemy number one!' sad!

It's indeed very sad that many tend to throw you out of the widow not because you have done any bad thing against them but because you have reviewed your behavior and actions and decided to make a complete housecleaning. Of course one factor of the housecleaning would be passing lesser time with the crowd as you'd call it "Enough is enough!" when it comes to overdrinking and such harmful behaviors.

People indeed change for the better and what they need is the big pat on the back and not the big punch on their reputation!

Pat or punch changes everything in relationships!

'The Click'-- and Us!

Some weeks back there was this news item which shook Ethiopians at home and abroad so much that the social media was bursting at the seams with the volume of comments; most of them full of anger and rage. Indeed the anger and rage was to be expected. Even though we say we're in times when the human assets which largely set us apart from the animal kingdom were withering thin and thinner at least we know the whole human game's not lost. Again though these days many of us react to events in our own unique and personal ways some events draw us so close together those differences, even if temporarily, weaken, even disappear.

What happened a few days back was not only a heinous and brutal crime of the most despicable kind but also barbarity the likes of which you'd see in Hollywood flops. It happened in a town in the northern part of the country where a very likeable and innocent child was raped by some evil person who was also accused of taking her life. I think the case was in the courts and we hope justice would finally be served.

The news as mentioned was all over the social media and the volume of comments was so much so that it was practically impossible to turn one's back with, "No, I'm not ready to hear this kind of barbaric news. The world has more than enough of such news and I'm dodging all such news as carefully as I can. No thank you. That's not for me!" Well, quite a number of

people could think across this line. It'd also be difficult to put any blame of irresponsibility on them as most of these days try to disengage our hearing apparatus from news items we deem negative or disturbing, this world of ours being full of them. But this case we raised wasn't that easy. As mostly the compassionate and heartfelt comments attest this piece of news was taken personally by many as if they knew the little girl, even though most of them lived hundreds even thousands of miles far from where her family resided.

On the other hand the mother's emotional plea for justice was so genuine that you could practically 'see' and feel her wounded heart. It's indeed an astound display of wider understanding when things come to such issues which 'knock! knock!' the locked and bolted doors of anyone's heart. Even those who claim to be string-boned, hard-skinned no-nonsense guys would find it hard to resist such an impassionate plea from a devastated mother for the perpetrators of the crime to be brought to justice. That was the outstanding call; "JUSTICE!" With some mostly unverified and at times too sensational news no wonder many were worried if indeed things would run their way as they should.

On the other hand we've to take this opportunity and talk about the issues which cast some shadows on the news item though they failed to write it off. There were those of

us who openly and with no shame at all tried to turn the said event into some sort of promotion and self-serving opportunities. A couple of weeks back we raised the issue of helping the needy. Philanthropy is something we wouldn't be parting with anytime soon. Also that's one of the better things holding the world together however feebly. But trying to manipulate them for personal gains in whatever way is not the nicest thing to do.

By the way talking about that sad event we can't just ignore one incident which indeed was one evidence of modern-day human barbarity disseminated through the social media. There was this guy oceans away who usually posts such crude and vulgar narratives many shudder at the very idea listening to him even for a fraction of a second. This guy's comments on the rape/murder case of the innocent child was so inhumane even the most timid persons couldn't hold back their emotions. There were all kinds of calls from emotion-driven, and illegal, calls to have him to be beaten up black and blue to the rational calls for him to be dragged to court. All this rage was because he tried to blame the innocent victim and sort of justify what happened to her! Such a person must be sharing some genes with whichever evil incarnations dominating this world. What we have been hearing was he was forced to remain locked in his house for fear of being attacked. There was also this news of lawyers

coming together to sue him for hate crime. I'm not sure if they went all the way but the talk was he later apologized. Now we're not talking some young man who was after as much likes as he could manage which allow him to boast later." You should have seen how many 'likes' my post last night got!" to levels were too much but about some guy who probably was in his late thirties or early forties or anywhere beyond that!

Look, generally speaking of the social media you could consider this writer as one of the guys not comfortable with many things they see on the social media. "So what!" Maybe it isn't currently viable for us to respond that. After all it isn't one simple question of two words but a whole lot of questions which feed each other. But one thing we can do is try to convince social media followers not to believe or be driven by what they see on the social media. Because believe me, that is a very crucial problem dragging people off the tracks they should keep sticking onto tracks of doom and gloom. Maybe we could tell those who engage with the social media to at least see the many sides there are before coming to conclusion on any issue. Yes, that isn't as done as it's said! But there is no damage in trying.

That single 'Click!' could be far more damaging than we imagine! Yes, 'The Click' makes or breaks the day! Simple!

In Pictures

Discover IGAD: Developing tourism in IGAD region

BY DARGIE KAHSAY

World Tourism Day is celebrated every year on 27th of September and this

year's World Tourism Day will be celebrated under the theme "An entire world to explore."

In connection with World Tourism

Day, Ethiopia's Tourism Ministry with other stakeholders has organized Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) tourism forum

in Addis Ababa this week. The forum was attended by IGAD member states tourism ministers and hundreds of invited guests.

IGAD launches 10 year regional Sustainable Tourism Master Plan

The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) region member states tourism ministers' forum was organized in Addis Ababa in connection with World Tourism Day.

During the forum, IGAD has launched a ten year sustainable tourism master plan aiming at unifying fragmented efforts of individual member countries in the area of tourism development. IGAD Secretary General, Workneh Gebeyehu, Ethiopia's Tourism Minister Nasise Chali, Tourism Ministers of IGAD member countries and other invited guests attended the launching ceremony held at the Adwa Victory Memorial Museum here in Addis Ababa.



IGAD member states tourism ministers visit Addis Ababa tourist sites

Parallel to the IGAD tourism forum held in Addis Ababa, tourism ministers and invited dignitaries from IGAD member states were visited Addis Ababa's iconic landmarks and tourist spots. Following their visit, the guests appreciate the tourism destination developments of Addis Ababa.

Ethiopia's Tourism Satellite Account launching ceremony

In addition to organizing IGAD region tourism forum, Ethiopia's Tourism Ministry also launched its first ever Tourism Satellite Account (TSA) this week aiming at strengthening the country's tourism sector.

The new system is a commendable step in improving data collection in tourism sector which helps to foster the tourism sector sustainably. The launching ceremony of TSA was held colorfully at Adwa Victory memorial here in Addis Ababa. Launching TSA is historic for Ethiopia's tourism industry and the new system was launched alongside the IGAD region's 10 year tourism master plan.



Yahode: Hadiya people New Year

The people of Hadiya, a nation found in central Ethiopia regional state, are celebrating Yahode (Hadiya people New Year) yesterday with various events in Hosaena city. Ethiopia is home to over 80 nations and nationalities and these nations and nationalities have their values and traditions.

Yahode (the Hadiya people New Year) is among the traditional calendars celebrating by the people of Hadiya. Yahode was celebrated yesterday by different events in Hosaena city and across the Hadiya.