



# The Ethiopian Herald

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## Ethiopian Airlines soars higher with new destinations

BY HAILE DEMEKE

Ethiopian Airlines, the fastest-growing airline on the continent and beyond, has seen steady growth over recent years, delivering cutting-edge services. Since its inception, the flag carrier has provided efficient and effective operations. In over

*See Ethiopian Airlines ... page 3*

Vol LXXXI No 024 8 OCTOBER 2024 - Meskerem 28, 2017 **Tuesday** Price Birr 10.00



## Ambassador Taye sworn in as president

BY STAFF REPORTER

**ADDIS ABABA** - Taye Atske-Selassie Amde was sworn in as the President of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia yesterday. It was leant that the 6<sup>th</sup> and the 4<sup>th</sup> tenure

joint opening session of the House of People's Representatives (HoPR) and the House of Federation (HoF) approved Taye, as the country's president with 5 abstains and majority votes. During the swearing in ceremony, the outgoing

President of Ethiopia, Sahle-Work Zewde handed over the Constitution to the incoming Head of State. Prior to the endorsement of Ambassador Taye's appointment as a new president HoPR

*See Ambassador Taye ... page 3*

## President Taye reaffirms Ethiopia's commitment to HoA's peace

BY YESUF ENDRIS

**ADDIS ABABA**-Newly elected President TayeAtske-Selassie reiterated Ethiopia's commitment to peace and stability in the Horn of Africa (HoA) through a balanced, give-and-take diplomatic approach. Speaking at the opening ceremony of the joint session of the 6<sup>th</sup> and the 4<sup>th</sup> tenure of House of People's Representatives and House of Federation yesterday, President Taye emphasized Ethiopia's dedication to pursuing foreign policy initiatives that prioritize peace and cooperation with neighboring countries. In his address, the President acknowledged the challenges facing Ethiopia, particularly regarding the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed with Somaliland.



*See President Taye reaffirms ... page 3* President Taye Atske-Selassie Amde

## Ethiopia's festivals enchant foreign tourists

BY MISGANW ASNAKE

**ADDIS ABABA** – Tourists from various nationalities have expressed their deep appreciation for the immersive cultural and religious celebrations they experienced during their stay in Ethiopia. Among them is Zaki Ayzarie, an Afghan currently residing in Norway, who traveled to Ethiopia at the invitation of Ethiopian friends living in Norway. This marked Zaki's first visit to the country, where he participated in the Meskel and Irreechaa festivals held in the capital and in Bishoftu, respectively. "Being here in Ethiopia is amazing; the rich cultural traditions, diverse dressing styles, and beautiful people living together harmoniously have truly captivated me," he shared. Zaki noted



Zaki Ayzarie



Yusus Omar Bocha

*See Ethiopia's festivals ... page 3*



# News

## Korea keen to fortify partnership with Ethiopia: Ambassador

BY MISGANAW ASNAKE

**ADDIS ABABA** - Having enjoyed a historic friendship and seen limitless potential for growth, Korea is committed to strengthening its partnership with Ethiopia, South Korean Ambassador to Ethiopia Jung Kang said.

“During the Korean War, Ethiopia sent the brave Kagnev Battalion to defend the values of freedom. This bond of friendship is unique and enduring. Ethiopia holds a very special place in the hearts of Koreans,” he said.

The ambassador’s remarks came after the Commemoration of National Day of Korea last week in Addis Ababa.

“Ethiopia is a political hub of Africa and home to the African Union Headquarters of AU and also an economic powerhouse with a dynamic labor force, and a major aviation hub.”

Ambassador stressed that Korea actively engages in various Official Development Assistance projects in Ethiopia with an annual contribution of about 100 million USD the largest allocation to any African country.

Korean organizations such as KOICA, EXIM Bank, KOPIA, KOFIH, and KOTRA, are on the ground working to enhance bilateral ties.

Moreover, “Korea provides humanitarian aid annually to support peace and stability in Ethiopia. This year assistance raised by triple than last year’s amount.

He further noted both are boosting high-level diplomatic exchanges. In June, during the Korea-Africa Summit, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) paid an official visit to Korea and held in-depth discussions with the President of Korea on a range of issues, including politics, economics, and development.

“We are expanding our cultural cooperation in this case Korea is working to bring more of its culture, music, dance, food to Ethiopia.”

“Ethiopia is actively implementing its macroeconomic and foreign exchange reforms and these efforts will foster stronger economic ties between our nations and attract more Korean businesses to Ethiopia and Korea will actively support this endeavor.”

The Republic of Korea has maintained a strong partnership with the AU that extends across various sectors including peace, security, economics, and health. This includes a contribution of 6 million USD to support the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) for economic integration, he added.

Korea is building reciprocal, sustainable, and long-term partnerships with African nations. At the Korea-Africa Summit held in June, Korea laid the foundation for elevating this partnership to new heights.

“Korea is eager to demonstrate its commitment to shared growth, sustainability, and solidarity with Africa in order to overcome today’s crises and build a prosperous future for tomorrow and will continue to strengthen for the AU peace and security initiatives.”

Furthermore, the AU’s accession to the G20 last year was a historic event, reflecting Africa’s growing influence on the global stage.



Photo: Degne Abera

## Ministry pushes for cultural showcases through festivals

BY MESERET BEHAILU

**ADDIS ABABA** - The Ministry of Tourism (MoT) is encouraging citizens to celebrate and promote Ethiopia’s rich cultural heritage through various festivals, with a special emphasis on Irreechaa.

This message was delivered by MoT Minister Nassise Chali during her recent visit to “Tourism Week,” an event organized by the Oromia Tourism Commission in Addis Ababa.

Speaking to local media, Minister Nassise stressed the importance of leveraging Ethiopia’s diverse cultural assets to boost tourism. “Ethiopia is home to a multitude of ethnicities and languages; we must share our tourism potential with the world through unique celebrations like Irreechaa, cherished by the Oromo people,” she stated.

She underscored the role of festivals in

promoting cultural heritage, particularly in September, a month that marks the conclusion of the Ethiopian rainy season and is filled with religious and cultural observances, including Enkutatash (Ethiopian New Year), Meskel (The Finding of the True Cross), and Irreechaa. September also coincides with World Tourism Day, serving as a global platform to highlight tourism’s social, cultural, and economic impacts.

The minister indicated that her ministry has been actively working to promote Ethiopia’s underutilized tourism resources throughout September and encouraged all segments of society to participate in these initiatives. “We have a wealth of historical sites, natural beauty, and diverse cultures that can attract international visitors,” she added.

Supporting this initiative, Oromia Tourism Commissioner Lelise Dhugaa emphasized the importance of festivals in building

connections among people and businesses. “Ethiopians must collaborate to showcase our culture and heritage to the world,” she noted. This year’s Irreechaa festival drew attendees from African countries such as Kenya, Rwanda, and Burundi, as well as visitors from Nepal and the Ethiopian Diaspora, demonstrating its potential as a platform for cultural exchange.

This year’s Irreechaa festival featured a vibrant showcase of Oromo cultural foods, drinks, music, and dance, with participants also celebrating their own cultural identities. The colorful event was held in both Addis Ababa and Bishoftu in Oromia State, drawing thousands of participants and fostering an atmosphere of unity and celebration. The event not only highlighted Oromo culture but also reinforced the broader Ethiopian identity, marking a significant moment for the nation’s tourism sector.

## ENDC concludes agenda collection activities in Afar

BY TSEGAYE TILAHUN

**ADDIS ABABA** - The Ethiopian National Dialogue Commission (ENDC) said it has concluded district level agendas collection process for the national consultation in Afar state.

Briefing the media, the ENDC Commissioner Ambassador Ayyorit Mohammed (PhD) stated that the process of district level agenda collection for national consultation has completed in Afar state. The commission held a consultation forum with over 800 representatives drawn from all districts or woredas in Semera for the national consultation for the consecutive three days.

The representatives identified agendas for national consultation. The ENDC received

agendas identified by participants and chosen 54 representatives for consultation with stakeholders, she said.

For her part, Commissioner Bilen Gebremedihin said that the selected 54 representatives drawn from political parties, associations, government representatives and others would discuss on agenda issues. Agenda collection processes at Afar state level would be completed for national consultation soon.

Hence, agenda identification and collection planned to finalize in September. However, in some areas the process is not finalized due to manmade and natural problems.

Furthermore, agenda collection consultation forum held in Addis Ababa

City Administration, Benishangul Gumuz, Gambella, Harari, Sidama, Central Ethiopia and Dire Dawa, he noted.

During the past few years, Ethiopian governments and the people have experienced the same thing as the country has been in continuous turbulence for a number of reasons. The country and its people have been going through some difficult and challenging times due to the bad seeds sown by some bodies.

Those entities have intentionally created narratives to disturb the people and the government and stretch the nation between poles. So, every stakeholder in the country could not find the opportunity to come around the table and discuss the differences, it was learnt.



# News

## President Taye...

He affirmed Ethiopia's commitment to remaining a stabilizing force in the region. "Our country is dedicated to continuing its constructive efforts toward regional peace, guided by the principle of give-and-take," he stated, underscoring the vital role of diplomacy in resolving ongoing disputes.

A key focus of Ethiopia's foreign policy has been its relationship with Somaliland. President Taye noted that tensions have emerged following the MoU, leading to undesirable disputes. The Ethiopian government is actively working to de-escalate these tensions while countering slanderous campaigns aimed at discrediting the nation. "Our diplomatic efforts are concentrated on preserving Ethiopia's positive standing in regional peacemaking processes," he added.

Ethiopia has taken a firm stance on the conflict in Sudan, engaging both bilaterally and through the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) platforms. The president emphasized that Ethiopia's commitment to the Sudan peace process will continue until lasting peace is achieved.

In addition to regional diplomacy, President Taye highlighted Ethiopia's strengthening relationships with key global powers, particularly in the Gulf region. "Diplomatic ties with nations possessing significant military and economic influence are now firmly established. Ethiopia's growing cooperation with strategic partners has been further enhanced by its recent membership in BRICS," he noted.

On the economic front, President Taye outlined ambitious goals for the 2024/25 fiscal year. He projected the country's economy to grow by 8.4%, with government revenue from tax and non-tax sources expected to reach 1.5 trillion Birr. The export sector is anticipated to experience significant growth, with income from value-added commodities projected at 5 billion USD and total export revenues expected to reach 10 billion USD.

Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) is projected to see a sharp increase, with expectations of over 5 billion USD flowing into the country. Job creation remains a major focus of the government's economic plan, with President Taye announcing an aim to create 4.3 million new jobs, including 700,000 positions specifically targeted at foreign employment seekers.

Sustainable development is a top priority for Ethiopia, with key initiatives in climate-resilient agriculture, fiscal policy reform, and the expansion of the construction and service sectors. "With the recently introduced macroeconomic reforms and the second phase of the Homegrown Economic Reform, we are confident in achieving our growth targets," the president remarked.

The appointment of Taye-Atseke Selassie as the new president was endorsed during the same session, following his previous role as Ethiopia's Foreign Minister. His remarks convey a clear vision for Ethiopia's regional and global role, supported by a robust economic agenda for the years ahead.

## Ethiopia's festivals enchant foreign...

that his time in Ethiopia has provided him with new insights and perspectives, leading to a deeper understanding of the country's unique culture. "I cannot fully express my feelings about the festivals of Ethiopia," he added.

During his two-week stay, Zaki felt safe as he explored historical sites throughout Addis Ababa and its surrounding towns, including Bishoftu. "When we moved around, we felt secure and were greeted with kind, welcoming faces. The warmth of the people adds so much to the experience," he said. He encouraged others from around the world to visit Ethiopia and experience its beauty and

rich traditions firsthand, especially during its vibrant festivals.

Another tourist, Yusus Omar Bocha from Kenya, echoed Zaki's sentiments, highlighting the significance of outdoor festivals in fostering unity among diverse communities. He noted that events like the Irreechaa festival are open to everyone, making them uniquely inclusive. "These festivals bring people together from all walks of life to celebrate," he stated.

Yusus expressed admiration for the hospitality he encountered during his journey from Kenya to Addis Ababa and

Bishoftu. He emphasized that gatherings like these enhance relations between Ethiopia and Kenya, as both countries share many cultural and historical commonalities.

Both tourists were impressed with the quality of hotel accommodations and transportation services during their travels, which contributed to their overall enjoyment of this vibrant country. They departed Ethiopia with fond memories and a strong desire to return, encouraging others to discover the warmth and richness of Ethiopian culture for themselves.

## Ambassador Taye sworn in...

speaker Tadesse Chafo read out the biography of Amb.Taye Atske-Selassie as follows;

Ambassador Amb.Taye Atske-Selassie was born in Debark, North Gondar zone of Amhara state. He obtained his first degree from Addis Ababa University in Political Science and International Relations.

He received post-graduation from Addis Ababa University and Lancaster University in England in Political Science International Relations, and Strategic Studies.

The newly elected president also attended short-term international relations and political science trainings and courses in

different countries.

In his early career, President Taye has served as a consultant at the European Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the head of the Western Europe Department, the Acting Director of Information, as a consultant at the Federal Embassy in Stockholm and as a consultant at the Ethiopian Embassy in Washington.

He was appointed as Ethiopia's Consul General in Los Angeles with the rank of Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary. Afterwards, he served as Director General of European and American Affairs, and Minister of State of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA).

He has served as Ethiopia's Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to Egypt and Ethiopia's Permanent Envoy to the United Nations in New York.

Upon his return from his diplomatic missions abroad, he became the Prime Minister's Foreign Policy Advisor with the Rank of Minister on January 20, 2023.

Earlier to his election as the new President of the country, Taye served as the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia since February 8, 2024, succeeding Demeke Mekonnen upon the latter's resignation on 26 January.

## Ethiopian Airlines soars higher with...

seventy years, the airline has established itself as one of Africa's leading carriers, earning numerous international awards for its operational success and commitment to seamless travel experiences for passengers worldwide.

Currently flying to 139 cities globally, Ethiopian Airlines aims to expand its international destinations further as part of its growth strategy. The airline is continuously enhancing connectivity and has added new destinations each year, utilizing Addis Ababa as a central hub.

Recently, Ethiopian Airlines announced plans to add five new international destinations during the current fiscal year. Group Chief Executive Officer (CEO) MesfinTasew revealed this expansion, which underscores the airline's commitment to broadening its international services. The airline plans to increase its reach to 207 destinations by 2035.

The newly confirmed destinations for the 2024 fiscal year include Amsterdam (Netherlands), Monrovia (Liberia), Port Sudan, and Dhaka (Bangladesh), among

others. This strategic expansion aims to enhance connectivity across Africa and beyond, fostering regional socio-economic growth and facilitating trade and tourism. Additionally, preparations are underway to launch flights to Australia within the next two years, marking a significant milestone as the airline has never previously operated flights there.

Mesfin emphasized that this expansion is part of Ethiopian Airlines' ongoing efforts to strengthen its global service and fleet size. With a fleet of 147 aircraft, the airline serves 139 international and 22 domestic destinations, continually boosting connectivity. Ethiopian Airlines is exploring options for fleet expansion, including leasing arrangements, to ensure comprehensive travel options for its customers.

With these new destinations, Ethiopian Airlines reinforces its position as a leading African carrier and a preferred choice for travelers seeking convenient and affordable air travel. The airline is ambitiously targeting 25 billion USD in revenue by 2035, with plans to transport 67 million passengers annually.

Furthermore, Ethiopian Airlines Group has signed a technical advisory and consultancy contract with Dar Al-Handasah Consultants (Shair and Partners) in collaboration with the renowned Zaha Hadid Architects. This partnership aims to design and oversee the development of a Mega Airport City in Bishoftu, located just 40 km from Addis Ababa Bole International Airport. Once completed, the new airport is projected to accommodate 110 million passengers annually, quadrupling the current capacity. With its exceptional facilities, this project promises to elevate African aviation standards and strengthen regional partnerships, marking a significant advancement in air travel infrastructure for the region.

Founded in 1945, Ethiopian Airlines is the national flag carrier of Ethiopia and one of the oldest and most respected airlines in Africa. Operating from its hub Addis Ababa, the airline not only excels in aviation but also plays a crucial role in the Ethiopian economy by providing jobs and contributing to tourism and trade-key drivers of the country's development.



# Opinion

## Peaceful dialogue key for making stabled, prosperous nation

BY GETACHEW MINAS

Ethiopia is known for its full-fledged preference for peaceful settlement of disputes through dialogue. Culturally, local disputes are settled by elders within the community before disputants reach a dead end. Once these disputants succumb to the decisions of the elders, they totally become forgetful of the hard feelings towards each other.

The peacemaking role of the elders is not limited to individual disputants, but it covers conflicts at social, regional and country levels too. Conflict resolution is preceded by free, open and fair discussions among disputants. These groups of people that are at loggerheads may have been engaged in disputes over ownership of material resources. These resources may be related to factors of production such as land, labor, capital and other productive entities.

The disputes may also involve politicians representing different interest groups. Whatever the causes of disputes may be, Ethiopia has various types of dispute settlement strategies that end in peace. The objective of dispute resolution through dialogue is not just satisfying one and neglecting the other.

Experts of peace and development are of the opinion that in the developing countries such as Ethiopia peace is “not granted” but constitutionally guaranteed. It is, therefore, protected by the governments in power as a right of the people. The constitution itself is designed and approved by the representatives of the people.

Experts also noted that the people of Ethiopia have been fighting against external intruders, invaders and occupation forces. They fought against several invaders and they engaged in internal conflicts and wars instigated by invaders. The Ethiopians have endured painful and unforgettable local conflicts and external invasions. These domestic and alien invasions had ravaged the country for millennia. In these wars of attrition, the country suffered from destruction of religious entities including churches and mosques. These entities had preserved traditional materials, books and various religious entities that attract the attention of citizens including tourists. It is on record that these institutions have spiritual values that attract people from all over the globe. These entities have also initiated peaceful dialogue in the country.

The history of the country reveals that it has never claimed or invaded any country at all. However, it has been invaded by colonial forces which had been repulsed repeatedly. Also, those forces attempting to disrupt the territorial integrity of Ethiopia had been repeatedly defeated. The people and governments of the country have defended their country in the most conspicuous manner.

Consequently, the country has never been

colonized by any alien forces. Its people had never been subjected to the shameful acts of colonial slavery and subjugation within their own land. However, the colonial forces tried to recruit local saboteurs that serve as agents of their mission. These agents have shamelessly attempted to divide the people by region and ethnic, tribal and clan allegiance. This attempt has been a total failure during the imperial regime that ruled for decades. Following the imperial era, the alien agents tried to disrupt the country by antagonizing the “communist military” regime, known as Derg. But, again they failed to divide the country using ethnic allegiance.

The military regime has been overthrown by the TPLF/EPRDF that has continued to rule the country using a divide and rule strategy using ethnic divisions. This strategy of ruling the Ethiopian people has been approved and adopted by the Constitution. It has been translated into practice through rules and regulations that emanated from it. It has not, however, provided for any practical “peaceful dialogue” to be applied when settling political disputes.

In recent years, however, attempts are being made to settle both domestic and external disputes, conflicts or wars through peaceful dialogue. Externally, Ethiopia implements its strategy of peaceful settlement of disputes with neighboring countries. Over the past years, the country has faced challenges of foreign terrorist and ethnocentric conflicts. These social disturbances have plagued the country in a manner that is unprecedented.

Those who are busy seeking to create troubles have seriously labored to deny Ethiopia its rights to economic development, utilization of its natural resources for improving the living standards of the people. Those engaged in party politics have just copied strategies of their predecessor that are devoid of peaceful dialogue.

Ethiopia’s quest for peaceful dialogue emanates from the fact that social conflict emerges from divergence, disagreement and inconsistency on minor issues. If not settled in time through peaceful dialogue, these issues grow into uncontrollable disputes between neighboring countries. Peaceful dialogue, therefore, serves as the major prerequisite for the economic development and progress of countries, including Ethiopia.

Developing countries, therefore, demand for the full implementation of the rights of people to access basic necessities. Since the inception of the national reform program, the Ethiopian government has attempted to promote peace and reconciliation for sustainable development. To achieve this, it has simultaneously focused on good governance and sustainable development programs. These programs are implemented by institutions responsible for fulfilling the aspirations of people to enhance political, economic and social developments in the

country.

It is on record that the government has released thousands of inmates and political prisoners who have been suffering in secret prisons. This has been a gesture for the promotion of peace in the country. Political parties that have been operating abroad have been able to return to Ethiopia and engage in peaceful activities. The government has also made efforts to ensure peaceful dialogue and compromise with the liberation fronts that unfortunately responded with devastating wars. The conflict has been covering the major regions of the country.

It has been noted that the right of Ethiopia to enforce law and order had been responded with challenges by some external intruders that encouraged interneine wars among Ethiopians. The war could have been avoided, but it has resulted in the fatalities and casualties of thousands of innocent people. It has also caused massive dislocation of people and devastation of infrastructural facilities, including electric power, roads and bridges, residential houses, villages and towns, etc. It has also resulted in damages of public and private enterprises and properties.

These wars have only created favorable opportunities for alien forces to intensify their false campaign of disinformation by their global media. The goal of these alien powers is nothing but destruction of the unity of Ethiopians that survived for centuries. The war in northern Ethiopia that had been undertaken for a long time has now been resolved through peace agreement. After the conflict ended in northern parts of the country the government has continued with its relief and rehabilitation support to war affected regions.

As the government has been making efforts to provide humanitarian assistance, the international agencies and countries have not yet given full support. Their support is crucial in restoring and providing basic services to those areas affected by the wars. Also, the building and restoring of destroyed infrastructure facilities in conflict affected areas is absolutely necessary for the socioeconomic development of the country as a whole. All the promises of assistance by donors which had been expressed on global media have not fully materialized even after peaceful dialogue had been conducted between the government and the opposition forces.

Global aid should be distributed to children who have been out of school due to war, hunger, poverty and severe depression and trauma. These children have suffered from separation and disruption of their families during wars. The separation of children from their families has resulted in social crises. These children need support from international organizations in addition to the efforts of the government to provide basic food and non-food supplies. These children have to join schools and continue with their education. They also need basic

health services that enable them to continue with their education.

The prerequisite for providing education and health services to families and their children is the maintenance and consolidation of peace through dialogue. In particular, the post-war situations reflect disruptions of social services which should be reinstated to provide basic services based on peaceful consultation and dialogue with the affected people of Ethiopia.

People aspire for peaceful dialogue that keeps social conflict and war at bay. This aspiration may take time to translate social ambitions into a reality. These aspirations are to be expected after the end of conflicts that led to the shedding of blood.

Also, the Ethiopians have sacrificed themselves to defend peace and territorial integrity of their country from external forces. These forces wanted to engage the country in an endless conflict and war using antagonistic factions and ethnic, tribal and clan groups. Using these groups, the alien powers have the goal of permanently destabilizing the country. Creating mistrust among these groups, the alien forces intend to keep Ethiopia in a vicious circle of poverty. To stop these foreign powers from interfering in the domestic affairs of the country, its people have to engage themselves in peaceful dialogue. The best instruments of dialogue, as mentioned earlier, are the elders that could create the platform for dialogue, discussion and agreement among disputants and politicians, etc.

The political elites and the state must respect the role of the elders in settling disputes through peaceful dialogue. In so doing, it is possible to address the aspirations of the general public. Of course, peace requires unadulterated and authentic dialogue and discussions. The Ethiopians should be consulted and engaged in building peace among various communities in the country. In this regard, the National Dialogue Commission would resolve fundamental issues of the country through peaceful dialogue.

It is an important forum for all peace loving entities in Ethiopia that would like to promote peaceful dialogue in the country. Experts assert that peace would never be achieved through weapons or violence. This is true as reflected in the history of the country in the past several centuries. Currently, Ethiopians must draw lessons from what their country has experienced in the past. If “all political entities” effectively utilize it, the Commission is a necessary forum that will pave the road to a bright future for all. It should be utilized to openly explain similarities and differences for “building on common interests” among Ethiopians through peaceful dialogue.

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

# Editorial

## Resilient growth

Ethiopia's economy has exhibited remarkable resilience and growth, particularly following the implementation of pivotal reforms. Yesterday, at the opening ceremony of the sixth House of People's Representatives and the Fourth Year of the Federation Council, President Taye Atsikilase underscored the importance of unity in overcoming challenges to ensure a prosperous future. He called upon all stakeholders to commit to a shared vision of progress and sovereignty, emphasizing that collective efforts are essential for navigating the complex landscape of economic development.

Despite facing numerous challenges, Ethiopia's economy continues to expand, driven by various factors that create ample opportunities for foreign investment across multiple sectors. The country boasts significant advantages, including abundant water resources, a youthful and available labor force, and vast arable land. Furthermore, the government's favorable policies are designed to attract international investors, positioning Ethiopia as an appealing destination for investment.

Central to this economic vision is the understanding that peace and stability are foundational to development. The government has consistently advocated for dialogue and collaboration to create a peaceful environment conducive to growth. This emphasis on harmony is critical, as a stable society fosters an atmosphere where economic activities can thrive.

Ethiopia's narrative of resilience is also supported by effective diplomacy and robust foreign relations. The government's diplomatic initiatives not only enhance international ties but also play a crucial role in securing support for national development programs. For example, establishing strong diplomatic relations can facilitate discussions regarding Ethiopia's access to port facilities, which is vital for trade and economic expansion. Such initiatives help contextualize Ethiopia's historical and geopolitical situation, reinforcing its strategic significance in the region.

The country has made significant strides in both macroeconomic and microeconomic sectors. However, challenges such as inflation and rising living costs continue to demand attention. Agriculture remains the cornerstone of the economy, with the government focused on enhancing productivity and achieving food sovereignty. Transforming agriculture into a more industrialized sector is essential for ensuring economic stability and resilience in the face of external shocks.

Since financial capacity is a critical component in sustaining Ethiopia's economic initiatives, the government recognizes the necessity of developing a robust financial infrastructure to support growth. By fostering an environment that encourages investment and innovation, Ethiopia can better position itself to tackle challenges and seize opportunities for advancement. Furthermore, promoting national dialogue and creating a democratic framework are fundamental to fostering sustainable growth, ensuring that all voices are heard and represented in the economic narrative.

Ethiopia's ongoing economic development illustrates the vast potential inherent within the nation. The introduction of national reforms has opened doors for increased foreign investment and collaboration. As Ethiopia charts its path forward, maintaining a focus on peace, diplomacy, social justice, and economic productivity will be vital in realizing its vision for a prosperous future.

The success of these endeavors hinges on collective action and a commitment to shared goals. It is imperative for all sectors of society, from government to private enterprises, to collaborate in fostering an environment that nurtures growth and resilience. By reinforcing the notion that Ethiopia's strength lies in its unity and diversity, the country can transform challenges into opportunities, ultimately leading to a thriving economy that benefits all its citizens.

In conclusion, the resilience of Ethiopia's economy is a testament to its potential and determination to overcome obstacles. With strategic reforms, diplomatic engagement, and a commitment to sustainable development, Ethiopia stands poised to achieve its economic aspirations. As the nation continues to evolve, it must remain steadfast in its pursuit of peace, stability, and inclusive growth, ensuring that every Ethiopian can partake in the fruits of economic progress.

# Opinion

## Tourism potential requires significant promotion

BY GIRMACHEW GASHAW

Ethiopia is a country blessed with numerous cultural, historical, and natural attraction sites. However, due to various reasons, the country has not yet reaped the expected benefits from the tourism industry. Although there are promising tasks in terms of developing new tourism sites, the country has not been promoting the tourism potential it possesses.

This does not mean that there are no promotional activities. The visits of higher officials and diplomats to different countries, for instance, serve as a good example. They wear traditional clothes representing the nations and nationalities of Ethiopia and invite international meeting participants to spend additional time visiting tourist destinations.

The effort to register tangible and intangible resources on the UNESCO heritage list itself is a form of promotion. Tourists who refer to the UNESCO heritage list know where these heritages are located. Renowned athletes also serve as a source of promotion, inspiring foreigners to learn more about Ethiopia.

Ethiopian Airlines, which has been increasing its travel destinations year after year, also promotes the country through various means. Passengers can easily learn about Ethiopia by viewing the mini TVs in front of their seats on the plane or by reading magazines placed in the seat pockets.

Promotion may not yield immediate results, but over time, it will generate the desired income. The country is eagerly anticipating the results of the promotional work it has done so far. Additionally, tourists are still visiting, albeit in fewer numbers. As the country continues its promotional efforts, it believes there will be a chance for more widespread tourism in the future.

In my opinion, the projects undertaken in the country have yielded very good results. There has been a significant improvement in the professional aspect as well. Projects completed for Sheger, Entoto, Friendship Park, and Unity Park have been successful. Unity Park, in particular, attracts over 300,000 visitors annually, making it a popular tourist destination.

Other tourist spots are also seeing an increase in visitors, especially those offering sports activities, events, and recreational opportunities for families. By enhancing the image of these places and increasing visitor numbers, the

country is effectively developing the tourism sector.

The tourism sector in Ethiopia is still in its early stages and gaining political support and attention. It is primarily an agriculture-led industry, with many destinations and infrastructure yet to be developed. Service quality has improved, but it remains a key area for improvement, particularly in hotels, restaurants, and tour operators. The government is working on quality control and rating systems to ensure consistent standards across the sector.

Creating jobs and generating foreign currency are notable achievements of the tourism sector. Addis Ababa is emerging as a prominent city in Africa, attracting residents and visitors from diverse backgrounds. The development of various recreational and cultural sites has enriched the city's offerings. These projects have not only contributed to the economy but have also enhanced the overall appeal of Ethiopia as a tourist destination.

While Ethiopia boasts 16 UNESCO World Heritage Sites, there is still room for growth and improvement in the tourism sector. Registering heritage sites is essential, but infrastructure development, service quality, and other factors play a crucial role in attracting tourists. The country has focused on enhancing these aspects to make Ethiopia a top choice for travelers.

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has been challenging for the tourism sector, but many countries, including Ethiopia, have managed to recover to pre-pandemic levels. However, the recent conflict in the north has posed additional challenges for the movement of people and tourism activities. Despite these setbacks, we are adapting by organizing conferences and events to promote tourism and attract visitors.

As the country enters the peak tourism months from September to January, there is a need to focus on promoting Ethiopian tourism and improving service quality. Encouraging domestic visitors to explore different regions and fostering a culture of travel will further boost the sector.

Collaboration between the public and private sectors, along with media support, is essential for the growth of Ethiopia's tourism industry. By working together and investing in the sector, the country can achieve great results and create a prosperous future for tourism in Ethiopia.

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



## The Ethiopian Herald

Established in 1943

Published daily except Mondays  
By The Ethiopian Press Agency

Office of the CEO

Tel. 011-126-42-22

Fax. 251-011-156-98-62

email- [epa@press.et](mailto:epa@press.et)

Advertisement and Dist.

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Tel. 011-156-98-73/011-811-13-15

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The Ethiopian Herald



# Business & Economy

## Role of Banks for buttressing economic drive

BY MENGESHA AMARE

Financial sectors in Ethiopia have been playing a pivotal role in backing the economic growth and fueling the fight against poverty and underdevelopment. In today's time indeed, the banking sector has become most relevant for everyone as citizens can do their respective transactions from anywhere and at any time through online banking. The Internet has made sending money and transferring funds from one account to another at no cost currently thanks to the proliferation of science and technology.

Taking this fact into account, *The Ethiopian Herald* conducted an exclusive interview with Alemayehu Lemma, an agro-economist graduated from Haramaya University in agro-economics, to receive a professional comment on the role of banks in promoting economic progress.

He said, "The banking sector is crucial to the modern economy. As the primary supplier of credit, it provides money for people to buy homes and whatever they like as well as for businesses to buy equipment, expand their operations, and meet their payrolls. Besides, banks help finance large-scale projects such as roads, dams, airports, which can provide jobs, increase productivity, and drive economic growth. By providing financing for these projects, banks help stimulate economic development and create opportunities for communities."

He further stated that needless to state, no country can ever, especially in the era of innovation and technology, have a healthy economy without a sound and effective banking system. In the system of modern economy, banks play a very sound role in economic development of emerging nations like Ethiopia.

He said, "Banks in Ethiopia, both public and/or private, collect the surplus savings of the large group of population and make them available for those economic agents who have best investment opportunity. They create new demand deposits in the process of granting loans and purchasing investment securities. They also stimulate country's economy through facilitating economic activities. Especially public sector banks are the backbone of the nation's economy via playing a crucial role towards buttressing the economic progress of the country."

As to Alemayehu, it is also good news for banks, if conditions are made conducive for them to improve their services and compete more aggressively to retain customers. The banking sector in Ethiopia has been undergoing transformation, driven by public sector banks.

Alemayehu further elucidated that banking is the process of storing money for future use, either in cash or by investing it. Banks are where people get money from, when they need it to make payments or buy goods and services. Businesses can also borrow money to grow or expand.

To make all these activities much more reliable, banks must have a wide network of branches across the country and overseas



to perform these functions effectively. They must also be able to keep their records safe in computerized databases that cannot be easily hacked. It is well recognized that banks give credit using rules such as easy repayment conditions, minimum interest rates, and the like. Regular credit users take advantage of these rules and can repay their debts regularly.

"To make long story short, banking is an important aspect of any country's economy. And like any other industry, it has its standards, sets of documents, and procedures. Such streamlined actions help the industry ensure that banks carry out transactions with ease and efficiency."

Ethiopian banking sector has been experiencing a wave of change over the past decade, of course. The growth in mobile banking has, to some extent, affected the traditional business models of banks. However, most banks have shown tremendous resilience to these changes through adaptability and innovation, he opined.

He said, "When we talk about banking system especially in the current epoch; mobile banking has to come to the forefront. Yes, it is all about bringing into the digital age. The use of spare and personal mobile phones and other handheld devices has popularized mobile banking. Several banks have developed mobile sites for their customers, making it easier for customers to conduct banking transactions independently."

True, banking plays a big role in the development of the economy of the nation as

it is the backbone of any country's economy, and its well functioning is essential for nation-building and move towards coming up with economic sovereignty. Ethiopian banking sector plays an important role in providing funds to different priority sectors like agriculture, small scale industries, trading enterprises, real estates, etc, he added.

The system helps a lot in business development by developing strong ties with foreign countries through establishing branches even. Banks in Ethiopia, be they are state owned, commercial or private ones, are also of paramount importance in facilitating trade and commerce by providing payment facilities to various local and international business houses, he opined.

As to Alemayehu, banking system in Ethiopia provides financial security to the people by providing loans at competitive rates, paying reliable remittance services, etc. It also helps citizens save their money and invest it in different financial instruments like government securities, long-term bonds, etc.

Thanks to the advent of science and technology, the Ethiopian banking sector has been providing, peculiarly since recently, safe and secure financial services through money orders, cash deposits, and cash card services.

"Small businesses are often the engines of regional and national economies. Banks support these businesses by providing access to capital and credit, as well as other financial services such as cash management

and payroll processing. By supporting small businesses, banks help create jobs, stimulate economic growth, and promote entrepreneurship," Alemayehu said.

He further elucidated that banks play an important role in encouraging savings and investment, which are essential for economic growth and development. By offering saving accounts and investment products, banks help individuals and businesses build wealth and plan for their future. This in turn helps to stimulate economic growth and development at national level.

In Ethiopia, he said the common suppliers of funds for supporting domestic economic activities are commercial banks, development banks and micro-finance institutions. However, other financial institutions such as pension funds, unit trusts, and insurance companies also play a role in providing funds for domestic investment purposes, in that they also create a platform for raising domestic savings.

Furthermore, he stated with the introduction of new technology such as cell-phone banking and internet banking, existing banks and new entrants in the market have been able to improve their efficiency in terms of service delivery over the years and increase access to their product to clients without bank accounts and those with limited access to branches of banks.

This is clearly indicating as the causality run from economic growth to financial development. The homegrown economic model which entails that economic growth is determined by endogenous factors rather than by external forces has two folds, one that considers economic growth to be significantly determined by investments in innovation, knowledge and human capital at home and the second one focuses on externalities and positive spillover effects that can lead to economic growth.

Yes, the rate of increase in skills and capacities of a workforce ultimately increases the economic growth of Ethiopia. Infrastructure development, economic progress and increased investment in physical capital such as roadways, machinery, and factories will increase the efficiency of economic output following cost-effective approach.

The good thing is Ethiopian banks play an important role in the country's economic development by providing sufficient money supply to support growth, guiding funds to proper investment lines, and promoting the development of financial institutions and markets despite shortcomings that need to be bridged well.

In a nutshell, the role of banking in economic development is multifaceted and essential. Banks have the ability to promote economic growth and development by financing infrastructure projects, supporting small businesses, promoting financial inclusion, help to create jobs, encouraging savings and investment, supporting international trade and more. As the financial sector evolves, it is imperative for banks to maintain their dedication to supporting economic development and creating opportunities for everyone.



# In the Sphere of Diplomacy

## Is treating Africa as single entity fair?

BY FIKADU BELAY

Some countries in the global north counts Africa as a country; this leads to violating the sovereignty of the country among the continent. However, some argues this thought creates opportunity for African unity as well to endure diplomacy cooperation.

Many people often share their travel experiences by listing countries like Spain, Germany, the US, France, and London, yet when it comes to Africa, they simply say “Africa” without specifying a country.

Due to this inconsistency, many people or the global north mistakenly view Africa as a single entity rather than a diverse continent made up of 54 distinct countries, each with its own cultures, languages, and histories.

Not only has the tourist, some argues, various discussions held by global north with African nations often reinforced this mistaken continent of Africa as a single entity. For instance, the meetings like the United States’ call the Africa summit in New York and the dialogues between Russia and African, China with African representatives, illustrated how these engagements can unintentionally perpetuate the idea of Africa being a single unified country rather than a collection of distinct nations, according to experts.

Having a stay with *The Ethiopian Herald* scholars assumed the misconception often stems from historical factors, such as colonialism, that have contributed to a homogenized view of African nations, overshadowing their individuality. It can lead to oversimplified narratives that ignore the unique identities and contributions of African countries, ultimately limiting a broader appreciation for the continent’s diversity.

Bekele Habtamu, a researcher on African affairs at the Department of Political Science and International Studies at Wachemo University, stated, due to Africa’s abundant natural resources and strategic geopolitical position, the global north is increasingly identifying the necessity of aligning their futures with Africa.

Instead of approaching each African country separately, they advocate that addressing their needs within a unified framework rooted in the idea of entity will allow for more effective implementation of their interests and the policy on African, he added.

Furthermore, media portrayals frequently emphasize stereotypes and

generalizations, which can spread the idea of Africa as a monolithic place rather than a rich tapestry of nations.

Director of Interaction for Change in Africa (ICA), an Independent Think Tank, Worku Yakob (PhD), argued that viewing Africa as a single country rather than a diverse continent is a significant misconception. The oversimplification often leads to misunderstandings about the continent’s complexities, cultures, and political dynamics.

He stated that this misinterpretation can have real consequences, particularly when it comes to diplomatic relations and negotiations. One of the serious issues, Worku highlighted is the exclusion of certain African countries from international meetings. When a global north organizes a conference, it may avoid specific African countries from participating.

As to him, this practice diminishes the ability of African nations to form cohesive relationships with developed countries, effectively violating the sovereignty of the excluded states. Such actions not only elevate some countries over others but also threaten the unity of the African continent, he said.

In this sense, these thought leads when the African Union (AU) issues statements or positions aimed at protecting the continent’s rights, these declarations are sometimes interpreted by the international community the continent as representing a single national viewpoint.

Worku elucidated that these concepts disrespects the continents nations and hinders them from functioning and independently entities. Also, the senses of inferiority among the continent nations are becoming more and more, which converts the cause of conflict between the one continent.

On the other hand, some scholars argue worku’s thought, the arguers believed that these narratives are a unique opportunity for Africa as a unified entity, which has fostered a sense of solidarity among African nations.

Researcher of African Studies, researcher center at Addis Ababa University, Dechasa Abebe (PhD), highlighted the significance of utilizing various forums and gatherings that occur throughout the year as platforms for strengthening unity. These arguments can serve as valuable opportunities for African countries to come together, share experiences, and tackle internal issues collaboratively.

In his part, Bekele mentioned that the concept of Africa as a cohesive entity

fosters competition among developed countries to gain favor with its wealthier nations. This dynamic not only enhances demand for African resources but also opens up opportunities for multilateral collaboration. The resulting economic, political, and social benefits will greatly outweigh the drawbacks, he added.

He emphasized that dialogue between the global north and Africa is essential for strengthening diplomatic relations and ensuring that both individual and collective interests are adequately represented.

However, Worku stressed that the unity of Africa is not derived in this way, the nation’s stand along with the AU in making and implementing policies that promote the rights and interests of the continent as a whole, otherwise not archiving the unity.

Moreover, he calls for a collective effort among Africans to refrain from signing agreements or discussing policies on behalf of the continent without proper representation. He argued that such actions often serve individual interests rather than the collective good of African nations.

Dechasa noted that true African unity can be achieved when countries collaborate rather than confront one another individually. He believed that by prioritizing collective interests over nationalistic agendas, African nations can address common challenges more effectively, he said. Bekele shares the Dechasa’s concept.

He also stated that by using the forum that held global north with the continent, African nations can work towards a more cohesive future, ultimately enhancing their collective strength and resilience in the global arena.

Worku highlighted a critical issue regarding the insufficient inclusion of experts from various fields in Africa’s decision-making processes, both nationally and continentally that can be undermining governance and policy effectiveness. It’s also shaping the continent’s future and fostering an inclusive environment that values diverse perspectives.

He underlined the AU should lead this initiative, respecting the unique identities of African nations and addressing the misconception of Africa as a single entity. These require collaborative efforts from African leaders and the international community to acknowledge the continent’s diversity and promote genuine representation.

**S**cholars assumed the misconception often stems from historical factors, such as colonialism, that have contributed to a homogenized view of African nations, overshadowing their individuality

# Law & Politics

## Making the national dialogue open to all

BY DANIEL ALEMAYEHU

Passing through all the up and down, Ethiopia has experienced so many challenges in the past few years of its history. Internal instability, economic burdens, political woes made things hard for the country. Those challenges seek due attention to be resolved in a peaceful manner.

The conflict in the northern part of the country, and the prolonged conflicts in various parts of the nation are some of the prominent issues that bold intervention. To end those challenges, the country needs a national consensus and dialogue without leaving anyone behind. Everyone must be heard and its idea should be the cornerstone to build a greater nation that holds everybody.

Achieving the desired objective, the incumbent has established the Ethiopian National Dialogue Commission (ENDC) to address those prominent hurdles the country could not pass. It plans to achieve its mission by creating conducive conditions for national consensus by: identifying the root causes of deep division and discord among the Ethiopian society through research, and public dialogues; conducting national dialogue and presenting recommendations to the concerned bodies as well as designing the implementations monitoring system thereof. The commission has started to implement its mandates and responsibilities and has been taking all possible steps to reach to its goals.

Those goals could be achieved if the commission exercises some values. Commission also states that inclusivity, clarity, credibility, neutrality, rationality, content orientation, and among other are its values throughout the process.

The commission has established different segments to gather the agenda from the people. Its bold moves started when the commission kicked off its duties by gathering people's agenda from Addis Ababa residents. Residents of the capital from every corner have gather in the Adwa Memorial to bring all the major agenda. Again, the agenda gathering process has passed to State Government of Harari and Dire Dawa.

Ethiopia is carrying out several activities to conduct an inclusive national dialogue. As part of this process agenda-gathering, activities have already been completed in several parts of the country.

The notion that the commission uses is that everyone must be heard and ideas and agenda points must be incorporated in each process. To this regard, the commission has recently received agenda points from the Ethiopian Diaspora and diplomatic communities as bringing those the communities in will foster wholeness



of the entire process.

The agenda-gathering effort aims to collect diverse perspectives and issues from across Ethiopia to inform the upcoming national dialogue process and make the process more inclusive. Accordingly, Ethiopian National Dialogue Commission has today received agenda items gathered from the diaspora.

The Addis Ababa Diaspora Association handed over the agendas and a video clip to the Chief Commissioner of the Ethiopian National Dialogue Commission, Prof. Mesfin Araya today.

At the occasion, Ethiopian National Dialogue Commission Chief Commissioner, Prof. Mesfin Araya expressed gratitude to Addis Ababa Diaspora Association for bringing their agenda and the video clip that helps to facilitate the national dialogue process.

The commissioner said the commission is committed to incorporate agendas proposed by Ethiopians living abroad, emphasizing the importance of fostering dialogue on national issues and enhancing inclusive participation.

The chief commissioner added that the commission is ready to embrace agendas of the diaspora community, urging the diaspora community to bring their issues for national dialogue and consultation.

Highlighting ongoing efforts to bridge fundamental national differences and facilitate engagement through established operating guidelines, the chief commissioner stated that the commission remains open to receiving agendas from

Ethiopians at home and abroad.

To date, the commission has conducted over ten online consultations with Ethiopians across Africa, the Middle East, Europe, North America, and beyond. Drawing on examples from other nations, he noted that many have successfully navigated internal challenges through similar consultations that lead to peace and development.

Addis Ababa Diaspora Association Vice President Solomon Gizaw on his part echoed the activities of the commission as a beacon of hope for peace and security. Peace brings benefit, not losses, he noted, reaffirming his association's commitment to support the commission for the betterment of the country.

On top of that, people who are participating in the agenda gathering process praised the ongoing practice. Participants comprised from Afar town administrations and woredas pinpointed that the dialogue would be viable towards addressing differences and sustaining lasting peace and development.

Speaking to the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA), Clan Leader from Dulecha Woreda Ibrahim Ali the National Dialogue would be a powerful platform to suggest solutions on the rolling out communities' disparities and grabbing national development agendas in unison. Ibrahim has also noted that it is also highly important to table common national and trans-boundary pressing issues inclusively.

He said, "Communities living in Afar have

exemplary home-grown conflict resolution customs. The National Dialogue would be an opportunity to share and contribute our own experiences in this regard."

Similarly, representative from zone 4 Wolina woreda pastoralist Aden Agdissa Aden underscored that the dialogue has a paramount significance to sustainably address long-aged disagreements thereby ensuring national sustainable development.

Aden, on behalf of pastoralists, traders, government employees, students, women, youth among many other segments of the societies, said that dialogue which is being held in the Afar capital Semera helps foster sustained peace to the generations.

He said, "I firmly believe that the ongoing dialogue has generational value."

For her part, Semera City Representative Medina Ibrahim echoed that the agenda collection phase helped the residents not only for the state but also for the country at large to raise collective issues.

Urging the people in all walks of life not to miss the historic milestone and golden opportunity that flickers hope to the future, she emphasized the need to leverage properly to tackle natural and manmade calamities once and for all.

By the same token, Wuhaji Mohammed from Awash City Administration said that they are raising and identifying core agendas which are being tabled in the ongoing dialogue to settle lasting peace across the country. The agenda gathering process is expected to finalize within three days, EPA learnt.



# Society

## Corporate Social Responsibility in action: Redat Healthcare provides service to EPA

BY LEULSEGED WORKU

Corporate Social Responsibility is increasingly recognized as a fundamental aspect of modern business practices, particularly within sectors that directly impact the wellbeing of the communities. In this regard, for civil servants, the interplay between CRS and access to healthcare service has significant implications for enhancing industriousness, productivity and overall job satisfaction.

In the realm of health services, CSR can manifest in various forms, including offering health and wellness programs, ensuring access to quality healthcare, fostering a supportive workplace environment, and participating in community health initiatives.

As indicated by Berhane Gebremedehen (MD), Senior Internist at Redat Healthcare, whom The Ethiopian Herald interviewed recently while providing healthcare service to Ethiopian Press Agency workers, providing healthcare service is a moral responsibility to every health center.

According to him, it is also important to every citizen to know about his/health status. An institution such as EPA has workers who are industrious and carry out their responsibilities committedly that may put pressure on their health. In this regard, having proper healthcare service has a significant role for individuals working at the Agency to the organization they are working and to the country as a whole. This is for the reason that every individual's health has a direct or indirect implication to the Agency as well as to the economy of the country. Creating a healthy working environment and healthy workers enables every institution to be productive and add more income to that particular organization.

Berhane also said that the experience of EPA can be a model to other institutions of the society. The old culture of getting healthcare treatment when the health situation of an individual is critical is now being replaced by early treatments. This avoids health related complications and additional economic burden. It also has a significant role in fighting against those Non Communicable Diseases which are killing people silently these days. Berhane also said that these Non Communicable Diseases are claiming the life of several people. The best remedy to fight such diseases is through health screening and counseling services. Early disease detection and prevention are necessary steps towards avoiding health related complications.

Regarding the role of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), Berhane emphasized that it is the fundamental duty of every healthcare center to provide essential services to the community. In this regard, Redat Healthcare is exemplary in discharging its responsibilities, setting a



whenever a new health institute is established in the country, its primary mission should be to save lives, underscoring that healthcare should extend beyond mere profit-making

standard for other institutions to follow. He stated that whenever a new health institute is established in the country, its primary mission should be to save lives, underscoring that healthcare should extend beyond mere profit-making.

Berhane further articulated that the moral responsibilities of healthcare providers should be woven into the fabric of their operations. This notion is not only vital for the ethical framework of healthcare but also essential for fostering trust within the communities they serve. Redat Healthcare embodies this principle, integrating its mission and goals with a commitment to social responsibility.

If every health institute in Ethiopia adopts this approach and prioritizes CSR, the

potential impact on public health could be transformative. By focusing on delivering quality healthcare while actively engaging in community welfare, these institutions can significantly contribute to saving lives. Berhane called on all healthcare providers to embrace this vision, noting that a collective effort in upholding social responsibilities could lead to improved health outcomes across the nation.

Health service providers can offer wellness programs, including regular health screenings, fitness initiatives, and health education workshops. These programs empower civil servants to take charge of their health, promoting physical well-being and reducing absenteeism.

Speaking to EP, Redat Healthcare CEO Misgana Solomon emphasized the organization's commitment to early disease detection and preventing unnecessary health complications. "Our program provides free screenings for blood pressure, diabetes, breast cancer, and cholesterol levels among EPA staff. This initiative aligns with our mission to promote early disease detection and prevent avoidable health issues."

EPA Multidisciplinary Affairs Department Head Birhane Solomon on her part highlighted the importance of these screenings for employee well-being. "Annual screenings and check-ups are critical for preventing health crises. We are grateful to Redat Healthcare for offering this valuable service, which plays a vital role in early detection and treatment, benefiting both our staff and the broader community,"

The correlation between employee health and productivity is well-documented. Healthy civil servants are more efficient, deliver quality services, and contribute positively to the community.

What is more, as indicated by Dr. Berhane and

other members of EPA, when corporations and health service providers adopt CSR strategies that prioritize the health and wellbeing of civil servants, they not only fulfill their ethical obligations but also recognize the intrinsic link between employee health and organizational performance.

Civil servants often face unique challenges, including high workloads, public scrutiny, and the pressure of serving the community. These factors can lead to stress, burnout, and a decrease in productivity. By implementing CSR initiatives focused on health services, organizations can play a pivotal role in mitigating these challenges.

Integrating CSR into the health services provided to civil servants fosters a culture of responsibility within public sector organizations. When employees feel valued and supported through comprehensive health initiatives, they are more likely to exhibit increased commitment and motivation in their roles.

Moreover, a robust CSR policy can enhance the public perception of civil service organizations. When communities see that their civil servants are supported by employers who care about their health, it fosters trust and confidence in public institutions. This positive perception can lead to increased collaboration and support from the wider community, thereby enhancing the effectiveness of civil servant initiatives.

In conclusion, the integration of corporate social responsibility within the healthcare sector is not merely an ethical obligation; it is a strategic imperative that can ultimately enhance the quality of life for countless individuals. By prioritizing the health and wellbeing of the community, healthcare institutions can fulfill their true mission and create a healthier, more equitable society for all.



# International News

## Kenya: Visa Removal for Kenians Boosts South African Tourism Industry

**Nairobi** - The recent removal of visa restrictions between Kenya and South Africa has been celebrated by South African businesses as a significant boost for the tourism industry.

This sentiment was prominently voiced during the three-day Magical Kenya Travel Expo, which concluded on Friday.

South African representatives expressed optimism about the implications of this policy change.

Duncan Muriuki, who runs Destination Africa, a travel agency based in South Africa, highlighted that the easing of travel requirements has already increased the flow of tourists between the two nations.

“Ten years ago, we set up in Cape Town. We want our companies to know they have a reliable partner in South Africa,” he stated, emphasizing the region’s investment potential for Kenyans.

Zintle Mtsi, Product and Communications Coordinator for Wesgro, a tourism promotion agency, echoed Muriuki’s enthusiasm.

“We see great potential in the Kenyan market and expect significant developments moving forward,” she said.

Airlink, a budget airline that began operations in Kenya in May 2023, says it has reported a substantial rise in passenger volumes since the visa changes were implemented.

Sales Manager William Omondi noted that many Kenyans are now choosing South Africa as a travel destination over Dubai due to more affordable options.

“The uptake has been overwhelming,” he said, revealing plans to increase flights from Nairobi to Johannesburg by the end of the year and introduce a flexible payment option under the “lipa pole pole” arrangement.

President William Ruto and his South African counterpart Cyril Ramaphosa had in November last year agreed on the removal of visa requirements between the two nations to ease trade and movement.

The removal of visa restrictions is expected to enhance travel dynamics between the two countries, fostering greater cultural exchange and economic cooperation.

Source: [Capital FM](#).



Several international airlines have withdrawn their cargo services from Nairobi’s Jomo Kenyatta International Airport in search of “better pay” in other markets. File| Nation Media Group

## Cargo airlines leave Kenya fresh produce exporters stranded

Kenya’s fresh produce sub-sector is staring at massive losses at the onset of the peak season, as several international airlines withdraw their freight services from the Jomo Kenyatta International Airport (JKIA) for “better pay” in other markets ahead of the festive season and lack of a binding agreement for the airlines to serve the local market.

The situation inflicting the horticultural sector has been compounded by the Red Sea crisis, which has increased the cost of transit through the Egyptian waterway, Suez Canal, by \$200 per refrigerated (reef) container, and prolonged the transit period by 10 days as vessels take the longer route through the Cape of Good Hope in South Africa to Europe.

The horticultural sector generated KSh157 billion (\$1.21 billion) in export earnings in 2023, according to data from the Agriculture and Food Authority (AFA).

The Shippers Council of Eastern Africa (SCEA), a private sector membership organisation representing the interests of importers and exporters, confirmed the logistics crisis at the airport affecting fresh produce destined for export to the European market and urged the government to act swiftly to alleviate the crisis by allowing temporary permits for freighters to fill the gap, currently estimated at 800 tonnes, and to consider wet leasing of cargo airlines.

Wet leasing is paying to use an aircraft with crew, fuel and insurance for a short period. “The situation at the JKIA is worse this week. We are over 800 tonnes less than the same week last year,” said Agayo Ogambi, SCEA CEO. “This results in delayed delivery, loss of markets, and affects the shelf life of the products, resulting in huge losses. We are asking the government to consider temporary approval of freighters to fill the gap.”

The EastAfrican has reliably learnt that key

international cargo airlines such as Qatar, Turkish and Magma Aviation, have removed some of their freighters, with Cargolux Airlines International SA, a flag carrier cargo airline of Luxembourg, expected to join the fray on October 4.

Sources said Qatar Airways removed two freighters carrying flowers from Nairobi to Liege, Belgium, resulting in a 200-tonne drop in capacity, while Turkish Airlines removed one freighter per week from Nairobi to Maastricht, Netherlands, affecting flowers and leading to a further 100 tonnes decline.

The reduced capacity has translated into increased airfreight costs from \$2.3 per kilogramme to between \$3.57 and \$3.6 per kilogramme.

### Higher demand

“Yes, it is true Qatar and Turkish Airlines have withdrawn freight services on some routes. I think it has to do with pricing. You know, we are entering the peak season, and some alternative routes could be paying better than us (Kenya),” a clearing agent at the airport who requested not to be named said.

The management of Qatar and Turkish cargo airlines did not respond to emailed questions at the time of going to the press.

“Thank you for contacting Qatar Airways Cargo. We have received your enquiry and one of our representatives will contact you shortly,” said Qatar Airways Cargo.

Calls and text messages to the cellphone of Kenya’s Principal Secretary for Agriculture Paul Rono went unanswered. According to the SCEA, foreign cargo airlines have been enticed by relatively “better” pay for their services in other global jurisdictions because of the increasing activities ahead of the festive season.

For instance, from Asia to the US, these

cargo airlines are getting up to \$8 per kilogramme, compared with Kenya, where they are getting \$2.5-\$2.8 per kilogramme. “There is higher demand and higher pay for their services in other global markets.

“The other reason is that they don’t have a binding agreement to serve Kenya. Most of them are bilateral agreements, which do not bind them to operate here, and so they can leave at their own will. This is a contractual challenge,” Mr Ogambi said.

### Global share of exports

The logistics crisis facing the fresh produce earmarked for airlifting to the European market through the JKIA has increased the cargo rollovers by 200-300 tonnes, according to the SCEA.

Kenya’s economy is firmly rooted in agriculture, with horticulture becoming one of the country’s main sources of foreign income by exporting flowers to more than 60 countries.

Kenya’s global share of exports of fruits and vegetables stood at 12 per cent and six per cent in 2023 respectively.

Kenya’s share of global fruit and vegetable production was 0.5 per cent and 0.3 per cent respectively in the same period according to data from AFA.

The major fruits produced in 2023 were bananas (34 per cent), avocado (23 per cent), mangoes (16 per cent), oranges (5.8 per cent), and watermelon (five per cent). Others were pawpaw, pineapple and lime.

The top fruit exports in 2023 were avocado, pineapples, mangoes, apples, oranges and raspberries.

Vegetables produced in the period were tomatoes, cabbages, kales, garden peas, bulb, onions, spinach and French beans.

Source: [The East African](#)



# Planet Earth

## Furthering Ethiopia's climate diplomacy

BY GIRMCAHEW GASHAW

Ethiopia's Green Legacy initiative is a catalyst for change in countries worldwide that have been suffering due to climate change-related crises. The past 28 world country summits have failed to translate into action. In other words, these summits have not resulted in tangible actions that could have an impact on the increasing climate changes.

The Green Legacy Initiative in Ethiopia, launched by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed in 2019, aims to combat climate change, restore biodiversity, and ensure sustainable development. The initiative involves the mass planting of billions of trees across the country. Hereunder the author attempts to provide a breakdown of the value chain in the introduction of the Green Legacy Initiative:

Collecting a variety of seeds from indigenous and drought-resistant trees to ensure ecological compatibility and sustainability is the first step in the process of value chain linkage of the NGLI

Establishing nurseries for germinating and nurturing seedlings before they are ready for planting is the next step. This involves both governmental and community-led nurseries.

Growing seedlings in nurseries under controlled conditions to ensure healthy plants is followed by preparing the land for planting, which includes soil testing and ensuring the soil is conducive for the selected tree species. Efficiently transporting seedlings from nurseries to planting sites across different regions in Ethiopia is another important element of the value chain.

Coordinating the distribution process to ensure timely delivery and minimize seedling loss during transportation. Engaging local communities, schools, public ministries and institutions and organizations to participate in the planting activities.

This fosters a sense of ownership and responsibility. Implementing best practices for planting to ensure high survival rates of the seedlings, including spacing, depth, and protection from grazing animals. Regular watering, weeding, and protection of young trees to ensure their growth and survival is part of the operational value chain.

Without exaggeration, anyone can see that Ethiopia's Green Legacy initiative has made significant changes not only in the country's landscape but also in the livelihoods of the community. However, for sustainable change to occur, neighboring countries, Africa as a whole and the rest of the world must support Ethiopia's efforts.

While some efforts to promote the Green Legacy initiative in African countries have been seen, these initiatives need to be backed by continuous efforts from all countries. Many Ethiopian young diplomats have been sent to neighboring and other African countries to promote the initiative



*Ethiopian Green Legacy pavilion at the COP28 Green Zone*

both theoretically and practically.

For example, during the United Nations Climate Change Conference, known as COP 28, which took place in Dubai, United Arab Emirates from November 30 to December 12, 2023, Ethiopia showcased its pavilions focusing on the Green Legacy efforts and other related concerns.

As part of National efforts also, last Ethiopian summer season alone, people across Ethiopia are enthusiastically converging at planting sites in their local communities as the country embarks on its monumental initiative to plant 600 million trees each day. This effort is part of the annual Green Legacy Initiative, which adopts the powerful slogan, "A Country that Plants; A Generation that Sustains!"

That rainy season, Ethiopia aims to plant a staggering 7.5 billion seedlings across 2 million hectares of land. As reported by the Ministry of Agriculture, approximately 6.8 billion seedlings have already been planted.

The Agriculture Ministry emphasized that the seedlings are carefully selected to match the ecological conditions of their respective areas, with the dual goals of enhancing soil and water conservation while promoting biodiversity. Over 120,000 nurseries across the nation have prepared the seedlings, with 56 percent comprising edible fruit varieties and the remainder focused on forest development and environmental protection.

"Our goal for this year is to reach 40 billion seedlings from our overall target of 50 billion, which means we need to collectively plant 7.5 billion seedlings this planting cycle. For anyone who wants to leave a legacy for future generations, we must invest in the future today," Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) underscored.

"Protecting and caring for biodiversity is not a luxury but a survival." Like many nations, Ethiopia faces the challenges of climate

### Ethiopia's participation in global climate negotiations like COP28 and its implementation of domestic initiatives like the Green Legacy demonstrate its commitment to addressing climate change and promoting environmental sustainability

change, including floods, soil erosion, deforestation, and biodiversity loss. The country's commitment to this initiative has garnered international acclaim, positioning the country as one of environmental stewardships both in Africa and globally," the Premier emphasized.

Since the inception of the Green Legacy Initiative in 2019, Ethiopia has successfully planted 32.5 billion saplings and is on track to meet its goal for the current planting season, which includes today's ambitious target of 600 million seedlings. Last year, Ethiopia set a record by planting over 566 million seedlings in a single day, surpassing its initial target of 500 million.

As a result, a strong green culture has been established, leading to a significant decrease in deforestation rates and the creation of

new forests. These new forests will play a crucial role in carbon sequestration as Ethiopia continues its efforts to combat climate change.

Ethiopia's participation in global climate negotiations like COP28 and its implementation of domestic initiatives like the Green Legacy demonstrate its commitment to addressing climate change and promoting environmental sustainability. These efforts not only benefit Ethiopia but also contribute to global climate change mitigation and long-term development goals.

The efforts of Ethiopian diplomats in promoting the Green Legacy initiative should serve as a model for other countries worldwide. It is the most effective solution to combat the increasing climate crisis. Ethiopia's involvement in global dialogues, such as the Global Dialogue Forum on strengthening the Afro-Asia Dialogue on Climate Crisis in New Delhi, India, highlights the importance of the Green Legacy Initiative in combating deforestation and climate change impacts.

The Green Legacy Initiative, spearheaded by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, has led to the planting of 40 billion seedlings within five years, resulting in a significant increase in forest cover. Ethiopia's commitment to environmental protection efforts sets an example for the rest of the world to follow.

In the nutshell, practical actions are essential to combat climate change effectively. Countries worldwide must provide continuous support to initiatives like Ethiopia's Green Legacy and fulfill their responsibilities in the fight against climate change. Ethiopian diplomats are expected to share their experiences, making Ethiopia a center of excellence for green revolution and contributing to the global goal of creating a greener world.