



# The Ethiopian Herald

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## Russia lauds Ethiopia's economic growth, vows to elevate ties

BY HAILE DEMEKE

**ADDIS ABABA** – Commending Ethiopia's economic growth registered over the past few years, Russian Ambassador to Ethiopia Evgeny Terekhin expressed his country's commitment for stronger economic cooperation.

In an exclusive interview with *The Ethiopian Herald*, Ambassador of Russia to Ethiopia, Evgeny Terekhin, said that Ethiopia and Russia have excellent bilateral relations in different spheres and working to further elevate the existing ties in diverse areas.

The two nations have enjoyed long-standing diplomatic relations for over 126 years which is a testimony of strong and solid bilateral relations over the past years. The countries have strong interests to further bolster the existing economic ties, the Ambassador expressed.

As Ethiopia continues implementing its economic reforms over the past years coupled with its vast population, the nation is set to be engines of Africa's economic growth, he



*Evgeny Terekhin*

noted. "Our political and economic cooperation should be strongly assisted by various means of cooperation which is instrumental to drive the bilateral ties."

Ethiopia's favorable business environment has drawn significant foreign direct investment

*See Russia lauds ... page 3*



## Nation's conference tourism gains momentum: MoFA

BY YESUF ENDRIS

**ADDIS ABABA** - The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) has announced a significant surge in Ethiopia's conference tourism over the past quarter, with Addis Ababa hosting over 30 international conferences, including high-profile UN summits.

In a press briefing held yesterday, MoFA Spokesperson Ambassador Nebiyat Getachew stated that the diplomatic activities conducted over the last three months were praiseworthy, valueadding to Ethiopia's economic and political interests.

*See Nation's conference ... page 3*

## Ethiopia to host 20<sup>th</sup> ILO continental conference

BY TSEGAYE TILAHUN

**ADDIS ABABA**- Ethiopia is set to host the 20th International Labor Organization (ILO) Continental Conference from May 19-23, 2025, in Addis Ababa, under the theme "Resilient Communities and Healthy Environment: The EIIP Approach."

The Ministry of Urban and Infrastructure (MoUI), in collaboration with the ILO and other partners, is spearheading preparations for the landmark event, which aims to promote knowledge sharing, pro-employment practices, and climate-smart approaches.

During a media briefing, MoUI Minister Chaltu Sani emphasized the significance of

*See Ethiopia to... page 3*



## Ethiopia's tourism dev't taking shape accentuated by new destinations

BY BETELHEM BEDLU

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed has recently inaugurated Beynouna Village, a state-of-the-art tourist destination located on the scenic shores of Lake Beseka in Oromia

state. The village features luxurious bedrooms, a lounge, a cinema hall, a spa, and orchards, all part of the Bounty of Basket initiative.

The newly launched village is part of a number of tourism destinations that have

been built and have become operational under Prime Minister's 'Dine for Nation' and other similar initiatives. Tourism Professionals have reflected their views on how such tourism destinations would

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



Amb. Fitsum Arega

## EDS demands policy revision to boost Diaspora engagement

BY MESERET BEHAILU

ADDIS ABABA – Amending the existing Diaspora policy is critical to maximize the community’s contribution to national development endeavors, the Ethiopian Diaspora Service (EDS) disclosed.

EDS organized a research validation workshop yesterday themed: “The Evaluation and Analysis of the 2013 Ethiopian Diaspora Policy and Practices,” in collaboration with Jima and Wollo Universities, and GIZ.

Opening the workshop, EDS Director General, Ambassador Fitsum Arega said that a constructive policy would play a vital role in maximizing the role of the Diaspora community in realizing prosperous Ethiopia in the forthcoming years.

According to him, the workshop will bring significant impact through identifying challenges and suggesting solutions that raise the community involvement in national development.

“So far, the community has been contributing remittance, knowledge and other supports to the national development. However, the contribution of the community is still low compared to the huge potential,” he added.

Fitsum further stated that maintaining collaboration is crucial to gain adequate benefit from the community and ensure their interest as well.

Wollo University President, Awol Seid (PhD) said that a constructive policy framework helps to promote diaspora engagement in national matters.

In addition to other activities, a valid and feasible diaspora policy is required to satisfy the interests of community, according to Awol.

On the occasion, GIZ Ethiopia Country Representative, Pierre Jaubert reiterated Germany’s continuous support to encourage the community’s involvement in the country’s development.

Several achievements have been registered in combating climate change, boosting production and productivity, he said, adding Germany’s keenness to support such efforts to realize Ethiopia’s ambition towards sustainable development.

Germany, a strategic partner of Ethiopia in the East African region, is committed to sharing knowledge, experiences, skills, and technology to enhance Ethiopia’s growth. This will strengthen the bilateral relationship and encourage community involvement, he added.

At the workshop, discussion papers were presented showcasing the need to revise the diaspora policy to improve the participation of the community. Ethiopia has secured a 1.5 billion USD remittance in the past three months.

# Macroeconomic reforms scale up remittance inflow: Economists

BY TSEGAYE TILAHUN

ADDIS ABABA—Ethiopia’s recent macroeconomic reform measures have increased remittance inflow to the country while narrowing the gap between official and parallel markets, Economic Experts said.

The Experts told local media that the implementation of the macroeconomic reform measures have substantially increased remittance that would help, in return, to stabilize the national economy.

Economist Bogale Boshe (PhD) stated that the implementation of macroeconomic reform has been scaling up the revenue the country secures from remittance as it has been narrowing the gap between the formal and informal exchanges.

Currently, there is no reason to exchange forex in black market since the transaction of remittance through banks creates credibility, he said, adding that this development encouraged Diasporas to send money home using formal means.

According to him, investors’ property should be legally protected to sustain the increased inflow of remittances. Hence, the loans for local investors should be maximized side by side to the growing remittance to meet demand and supply.

Economic Expert Atinafu Gebremesekel (PhD) also believed that the policy shift has accelerated the flow of remittance to the country. However, the effort requires building trust among investors regarding property ownership, investment protections and others.



Recently, Planning and Development State Minister Tirumar Abate said that country’s comprehensive macroeconomic reform has been achieving a remarkable success in major economic sectors such as export, FDI, remittance, inflation control and so on.

The economic reform has not only boosted foreign currency earnings, but also narrowed the gap between the black market and official exchange rates,

creating a more favorable environment for exports and attracting foreign direct investment, she added.

She emphasized the government’s proactive role in controlling inflation, particularly for essential commodities such as fuel, fertilizers, and medicines. These efforts have contributed to a more stable economic landscape while further supporting the growth of the export sector.

## Ethiopia to unite 1,250 couples from across Africa

BY MISGANAW ASNAKE

ADDIS ABABA--Ethiopia is gearing up to host a spectacular mass wedding ceremony in Addis Ababa, uniting 1,000 Ethiopian couples with 250 African counterparts.

The grand event, organized by Yeshi Gabcha (Amharic for “Wedding of Thousands”), will take place on January 26, 2025, at Millennium Hall.

In a press briefing yesterday, Yeshi Gabcha’s Founder and CEO of Yament PLC, Asnake Amanuel, announced the commencement of preparations for this unique celebration. The initiative not only brings together couples from Ethiopia and other African nations but also welcomes visitors from across the globe to witness the cultural diversity and traditions of Ethiopia.

“This event celebrates unity and diversity while promoting Ethiopian and African tourism in a positive and dynamic way,”



Yeshi Gabcha

said Asnake. He added that the initiative seeks to strengthen social cohesion, revive traditional Ethiopian attire and jewelry, and showcase the rich heritage of Ethiopia’s various tribes.

This will be the third Yeshi Gabcha event, following similar celebrations in 2012 and 2024. The upcoming ceremony will feature traditional Ethiopian wedding

customs, cultural clothing, and a feast including 2,017 kilograms of Ethiopian bread prepared specially for the occasion..

With an estimated budget of 69 million Birr, the event is expected to attract senior government officials, families of the couples, and international audiences. The mass wedding provides economic and social benefits, helping couples minimize wedding costs while fostering discussions on societal values and creating a peaceful environment for family life.

Asnake highlighted the broader impact of the event, stating, “This project encourages saving culture, reduces extravagance in marriages, and promotes sustainable family economies. It also builds a positive image of Ethiopia for the international community.”

The Yeshi Gabcha initiative continues to serve as a platform to celebrate Ethiopia’s cultural richness while uniting diverse communities under one grand celebration.

# News

## Ethiopia to host 20<sup>th</sup> ILO continental...

the conference in showcasing Ethiopia's development achievements and creating jobs by attracting investors. "This event offers a platform to share knowledge, technologies, and experiences while also promoting Ethiopia's image globally. It will contribute significantly to inclusive growth and socio-economic development," she said.

Fifteen organizing institutions are working to ensure the success of the conference, which is expected to attract 1,056 participants from 49 countries across Africa, Asia, and Europe, including 32 ministers or their representatives.

ILO Country Director for the Horn of Africa Khumbula Ndaba highlighted the conference's role in fostering mutual learning, networking, and South-South cooperation. "The event is a critical platform for promoting inclusive socio-



*Chaltu Sani*

economic development, advancing social justice, and building a sustainable



*Khumbula Ndaba*

and prosperous future for communities worldwide," he stated.

Ndaba also noted that the conference offers Ethiopia a chance to showcase its socio-economic success stories, particularly in infrastructure development, and urged stakeholders to take full advantage of the opportunities by submitting research papers, hosting side events, and exhibiting their products.

The ILO reaffirmed its commitment to supporting the preparation and execution of this major event, which is expected to leave a lasting impact on the country and the continent by inspiring innovative and inclusive approaches to development.

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## Nation's conference tourism ...

Heads of states and governments from Kenya, Sierra Leone, Guinea, and the UAE visited Ethiopia alongside with the UN World without Hunger summit. Moreover, major conferences such as the Confederation of African Football summit, the African Religious Institutions meeting, the Hydromet Conference, and the Africa Trade Ministers' summit were held in Addis, Nebiyat highlighted.

"The successful completion of these summits will have a significant impact on future events," he said.

Amb. Nebiyat also mentioned Ethiopia's productive engagement at the recently held Russia-Africa summit, where bilateral and multilateral discussions took place. Ethiopia's Foreign Minister talked with the Russian foreign minister and other counterparts on various bilateral, regional, and international issues.

In addition to political diplomacy, economic diplomatic efforts are notable, such as the current visit of a business delegation from Jiangsu Province, China, to Ethiopia," Amb. Nebiyat mentioned.

In a related news, the spokesperson stated that a large number of Ethiopian migrants have been repatriated over the last quarter.

Ethiopians facing harsh conditions in Lebanon and other Arab countries have been returned home. "The government prioritizes citizen-centered diplomacy. More than 94,000 Ethiopians have been repatriated from Saudi Arabia between April and mid-October. Additionally, 31 Ethiopians in dire conditions in Myanmar were returned home," Amb. Nebiyat stated.

He also added that the repatriation efforts are continued, with 300 migrants being returned home each week.

## Russia lauds Ethiopia's economic...

from around the world and Russian firms are also injecting their capital and participating in various investment areas, Terekhin said, adding that investors from his country are exploring potentials to engage in different sectors.

He added that Ethiopia has achieved steady economic growth over the past years, and the government is implementing wider range of reforms that show promising results.

Ethiopia's strategic position in Africa, coupled with fast economic growth and its inclusion in the BRICS block will further strengthen the existing ties. Similarly, the leaders of the two countries have met twice this year alone and discussed on strengthening the bilateral relations, which demonstrates both nations' commitment to elevating their partnership, according to the ambassador.

At the 16th BRICS Summit, held from October 22 to 24, 2024, in Kazan, Russia,

the leaders of the two countries agreed and expressed their commitment to further elevate ties using BRICS as a crucial platform for emerging economies to assert their influence in a rapidly changing world, Terekhin stated.

Accordingly, the entry of Ethiopia into the BRICS is another milestone for Ethiopia as it helps the east African nation to further bolster the long-standing diplomatic relations with Russia to the highest level of cooperation, he said.

It is worth noting that Russian President Vladimir Putin has hailed Ethiopia's inclusion into the BRICS family, citing long-standing diplomatic ties dating back more than a century, and called Ethiopia's integration into the group an important step. Members of the BRICS group have shown determination to achieve their vision of a multipolar world, amplifying the voices of the marginalized Global South.

## Ethiopia's tourism dev't taking shape accentuated...

contribute to the growth of the hospitality industry.

Senior Tourism Professional, Ayalew Sisay (PhD), indicated that the government is putting efforts to building and restoring tourism developments to sustain nation's resources, values and potentials. Initiatives such as Dine for Nation, Dine for Sheger, and Dine for Generation have so far brought basic change in the tourism sector resulting successful projects like Chebera Churchura, Halala Kela, Wenchi and Gorgora projects, he said.

Moreover, he underlined that such tourism potentials would have valuable economic contribution through enhancing foreign currency earnings, creating ample job opportunities while facilitating developments in renewable energy, food processing and other areas.

Similarly, the investment in tourism



infrastructure has played immense role in cementing societal ties, as well as promoting national, environmental and holistic growth, he added. It has also allowed existing tourism potential that has not been accessible due to poor infrastructure, to be tracked easily for tourists.

The newly inaugurated tourism destination, which said to be located in a very difficult

climate and landscape, would have paramount of importance in increasing the tourism flow in the East Africa. Ayalew quoted the Prime Minister saying 'Beynouna Village stands as a testament to the belief that "Anything is possible." Tourism Training Institute, Deputy Director- General Yetaseb Seyoum on his part highlighted that hotels and restaurants are going to have irregular customer service which could impact nation's tourist

inflow.

"For the nation to benefit from the tourism sector, firm action must be taken to improving hotel industries services at all levels." To this end, the institute is undertaking several activities to enhance the economic contribution of the sector.

Not only the dressing code, the language and professionalism of waitresses need to be standardized and formal but hotels need to put in place adequate infrastructure and deliver quality services in a way that builds nation's image and elongate tourists stay, he stressed.

The aforesaid projects have significant role in curbing shortage of tourism destinations while allowing the country to become competitive internationally and increase tourist inflow. Moreover, it would have major economic contribution in the country, Yetaseb said.

# Opinion

## Pan African cultural festival to empower continent's women, youth

BY SOLOMON DIBABA

Africa's grand Pan-African celebration had been underway with a spectacular paraphernalia and jubilation in Addis Ababa. The event was held from November 6-10 delivering four unforgettable days of music, dance, fashion, cultural forums, city tours and more fulfilling its promise.

UNECA and the African Union have joined hands to host Africa Celebrates 2024, a massive pan-African festival that had taken place from November 6-10 in Addis Ababa. Set at UNECA's prestigious headquarters, including the historic Africa Hall where the African Union was born, this event promised to be a celebration of the continent's vibrant culture, innovation, and unity.

According to the organizers, the festival had featured a wide range of events, from the Africa Talks Business and Investment Forum and Tech and Innovation Summit to the Women and Youth Forum. Attendees could explore the latest in African fashion at the Africa Fashion Business Forum, could learn about health and beauty trends at the Wellness and Beauty Africa Expo, and joined creative discussions at the Afro Film Alliance. Adding to the excitement, the Deborah Foundation had run a special initiative to raise awareness about Down syndrome.

Alongside business and innovation, Africa Celebrates 2024 embraced the continent's artistic and cultural heritage. Festival-goers enjoyed the Africa Peace Walk and Carnival, experience the Cultural Night filled with dance, music, and cuisine, and ended the evening in style at the Gala Fashion and Awards Night.

The event aimed to empower women and youth, promoting economic growth through trade, tourism, and investment. It culminated in a grand closing ceremony at the African Union's Nelson Mandela Hall, bringing together participants from across Africa and beyond.

With its biggest edition yet, Lexy Mojo-Eyes, President/CEO of Legendary Gold Limited and the driving force of the event said Africa Celebrates 2024 was set to inspire, entertain, and connect the continent like never before.

Organizers of Africa Celebrates, a Pan-African cultural and economic festival, said that this year's edition aimed to promote African unity and diversity, showcasing the continent's rich cultural heritage while advancing economic integration through trade and investment initiatives.

Lexy Mojo-Eyes, President/CEO, Legendary Gold Limited, stated that since its debut in 2021, Africa Celebrates has grown significantly, and that this year's edition was expected to be the largest with participants from across the continent and beyond.

He disclosed further that the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) had teamed up with the African Union (AU) to co-host Africa Celebrates 2024, one of the continent's largest cultural,

economic, and social festivals.

Pan African grand cultural, tourism, and trade festivals hold significant importance for the continent's socio-economic and cultural development. What did the festival bring in for Africa?

These festivals provide a platform to celebrate and preserve Africa's diverse cultural heritage, including traditional music, dance, art, and cuisine. They facilitate intercultural dialogue and understanding both within Africa and internationally, fostering unity and appreciation for the continent's rich traditions.

Pan African Festivals of the current standard attract domestic and international tourists, anthropologists, sociologists, tourists generating revenue for local economies through accommodation, food services, and souvenirs. They provide a venue for local artisans and entrepreneurs to market and sell their products, promoting small businesses and local craftsmanship. The organization and hosting of festivals create temporary and permanent jobs in the tourism and service sectors.

Trade festivals offer opportunities for business networking, fostering connections between local and international businesses, which can lead to trade partnerships and investments. Countries and companies use these festivals to showcase investment opportunities, products, and innovations, enhancing their market presence. These events promote national pride for each participating country and social cohesion by bringing together people from different background in Africa to celebrate shared cultural values and history.

Festivals prepared in Africa encourage community participation and engagement, strengthening societal bonds and collective identity. Annual pan African cultural festivals can serve as platforms for peace building and conflict resolution by promoting mutual respect and understanding among diverse ethnic and cultural groups. Pan African cultural and trade festivals enhance diplomatic relations by building cultural bridges between countries.

Festivals educate attendees about the cultural and historical contexts of different African societies, fostering greater awareness and appreciation. Pan African cultural festivals engage young people in cultural activities, ensuring the transmission of traditional knowledge and values to future generations.

The already conducted pan African cultural event 2024 certainly helped to reintroduce vast African cultural heritages to the rest of the world amidst unprecedented global economic and political crisis in Europe, the Middle East and the Horn of Africa.

This grand event had been and the upcoming other African festivals will be instrumental in curbing cultural xenophobia against African cultures which has been under serious neo-colonial cultural oppression.

Cultural xenophobia on African cultural heritages refers to the fear, dislike, or prejudice against people from African

cultures. This phenomenon often stems from ignorance, misconceptions, or a sense of cultural superiority. It manifests in various ways, including discrimination, stereotyping, and exclusion of individuals based on their cultural backgrounds.

People unfamiliar with African culture may fear or reject unfamiliar customs, traditions, and ways of life, perceiving them as a threat to their own cultural identity. Cultural xenophobia often involves forming negative stereotypes about other cultures, leading to biased attitudes and discriminatory behavior.

Individuals or groups from different cultural backgrounds may face exclusion from social, political, or economic opportunities due to cultural xenophobia. In diverse societies, cultural xenophobia can lead to social fragmentation, tension, and conflict, undermining efforts toward social cohesion and harmony.

Promoting cultural awareness and understanding through education helps dispel myths and foster respect for diversity. Encouraging intercultural dialogue and interaction can help bridge gaps, reduce fear, and build mutual respect. Governments and organizations can implement policies that promote inclusion and protect against discrimination based on cultural background. Community-based initiatives, such as cultural festivals and exchange programs, can celebrate diversity and foster unity.

Cultural xenophobia hinders the development of inclusive societies and the benefits of cultural diversity. Addressing it requires collective efforts from individuals, communities and institutions.

The pan African cultural festival undergone and the events associated with it could help to promote the growth of African creative arts in various areas including poetry, paintings and related art works, cultural dances, cuisines and other items of pan African cultural resources. The event created an important forum in which African youth learnt about the vast cultural heritages of the African continent, related to each other and came up with regional strategies on how to preserve the cultural assets for the next generation of Africans.

Moreover, the pan African cultural festival provided the necessary cultural background for the creation of new economic order in Africa by promoting Agenda 2063, AfCEFTA and other forms of African economic integration.

What could Ethiopia gain from the current festival and how should the country exploit the events to promote Ethiopia's national interest? The author would like to deal with this and related issues over the following lines.

As the diplomatic and political center of Africa, Ethiopia can use the occasion to market on Ethiopia's cultural heritages through her hospitality industry, cultural tourism and educational tours to the historic and cultural sites of the nation.

The country can introduce the new projects that were developed in eco-resort centers

across the country. Ethiopia will have the opportunity to introduce the modern eco-tourism parks and resort areas along with the achievements of the National Green Legacy Initiative. The Adwa Memorial Museum, science Museum, Gulele Botanical Garden, Entoto Park, the National Museum and other centers of tourist attraction in Addis Ababa could be interesting spots to visit by the participants of the festival.

Ethiopia can share the nation's experience in corridor development and ventures in developing clean and green cities in Africa.

Ethiopia has been providing scholarships for African students and have come a long way in promoting gender parity and creating an empowering atmosphere for women in the country. The youth who were participating on the festival had the opportunity to visit some of the universities and institutes of higher learning in the country to be able to evaluate the level on which Ethiopia has reached and her aspirations to develop an educational system tailored to the needs of the country.

On the other hand, the participants of the festival would be able to see the diverse nature of the Ethiopian cultural heritages which prove the nation to be Africa in the miniature.

By all standards, Ethiopia has now become a leading country in promoting not only cultural pan Africanism but also economic pan Africanism in which Ethiopia is playing a pioneering role by sharing hydropower resources with a number of neighboring countries. The Ethiopian Airlines Group which is connecting Africa coast to coast and one of the sponsors of the festival is already playing a major role in introducing the African culture to the rest of Africa and the world.

It was expected that both local and international media outlets would do their best in broadcasting the events in the festival to the entire world and did accordingly, thus marketing diverse African cultural heritages hither to not deeply known across the world.

Ethiopia needed to take the initiative in suggesting pertinent and applicable strategies on which Africa can contribute to the enhancement of global culture through such festivals, trade fairs and cultural exchange tours.

The nation needs to closely work with UNECA and AU in establishing permanent continental creative arts' centers and promoting cross cultural education tours among the youth in Africa.

The author believes that pan African universities that are operating across the continent need to contribute their part in further developing African cultural exchange programs and research initiatives that can increase the visibility of the African continent.

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

# Editorial

## Ethiopia's time-tested diplomatic influence in Africa and beyond

Ethiopia's diplomatic clout and steadfast leadership in continental and global frontiers have gained momentum lately with the country joining the BRICS alliance and other prestigious associations. The country also spearheaded efforts in ratifying the Nile Cooperative Framework Agreement and remains a frontrunner in other regional, continental, and global affairs.

Despite the trials and tribulations throughout its history, Ethiopia has been bearing the torch in continental matters and remains at the forefront of promoting peace both globally and within Africa. Ethiopian servicemen and peacekeeping force, under the auspices of the United Nations and the African Union, have successfully and impeccably executed their mission in Korea, Congo, Somalia, Rwanda, Sudan, Liberia, and other countries, fulfilling their mission with distinction. This sacred virtue is in Ethiopia's DNA and is deeply rooted in its history.

The country's unwavering resolve to Africa's cause and beyond has not and will not falter with time and has remained steadfast through changing governments. The country's role in the formation of African unity is a stark reminder of its strong unflinching stand and is part and parcel of its dedication to noble cause.

Being a significant player in African diplomacy and cooperation, leveraging its historical legacy, strategic positioning, and commitment to fostering peace and development across the continent, Ethiopia's role in African diplomacy extends beyond bilateral cooperation to leading multilateral initiatives aimed at addressing continental challenges.

As the host country for the African Union headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia has been at the forefront of facilitating high-level dialogues on critical issues such as conflict resolution, climate change, and trade and economics.

Ethiopia has actively pursued bilateral agreements with numerous African nations to advance mutual interests in trade, security, and development. These partnerships have taken various forms:

Over the years, the country strengthened economic ties with neighboring countries, including Kenya, Djibouti, and Sudan, by investing in shared infrastructure projects such as railways and power grids. The Ethiopia - Djibouti Railway and cross-border electricity exports are prime examples of initiatives that promote regional economic integration.

Engaged in security partnerships to combat terrorism, human trafficking, and cross-border conflicts, the country has entered military pacts and intelligence-sharing agreements with countries such as Kenya.

This week, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Gedion Timothewos, held productive bilateral talks with several key counterparts on the sidelines of the First Ministerial Conference of the Russia-Africa Partnership Forum in Sochi, Russia. Gedion conferred with

Accordingly, Gedion met with Peya Mushelenga, Namibia's Minister of International Relations and Cooperation; Morrisanda Kouyaté, Minister for Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation, African Integration, and Guineans Abroad of Guinea; Tete Antonio, Minister of External Relations of Angola; and Thérèse Kayikwamba Wagner, Foreign Minister of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Gedion also held bilateral discussions with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Uganda, Gen. Odongo Jeje Abubakhar, and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Rwanda, Olivier J.P. Nduhungirehe.

The discussions centered on strengthening cooperation across bilateral and continental issues, with a shared focus on advancing mutual interests and fostering closer ties between Ethiopia and these African nations.

In conclusion, Ethiopia's steadfast commitment to dialogue, peacekeeping, and development underscores its pivotal role in shaping the future of Africa. As the nation prioritizes inclusive economic growth, sustainable practices, and collaborative security frameworks, it will not only enhance bilateral relationships but also contribute significantly to fostering a resilient and united continent. Ethiopia's proactive approach will be essential in navigating the challenges ahead and ensuring a prosperous future for all African nations.



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# Opinion

## Can Somalia afford to swim upstream in turbulent waters?

BY SOLOMON DIBABA

The situation in Somalia is getting worse by days threatening the already fragile political landscape in the Horn of Africa and opening up a Pandora box with multiple local, regional and global ramifications of security issues.

Being at loggerheads with the Ethiopian Government on the nation's legitimate quest for access to the sea and ports, Somalia is sinking into a full scale crisis being unable to ascertain the safety and security of her citizens and the larger Horn of Africa and the Red Sea route. While attempting to engage in blame shifting on Ethiopia with utterly shameless propaganda by her officials who continued to discredit and Ethiopia's contribution to the resurgence of the Somali State, they are attempting to militarize the entire country only to facilitate the transfer of Egyptian old military hardware to end up in the hands of Al-Shabab and co.

Self-defeating diplomatic moves of the Somali President in rallying Ethiopia's neighboring countries against the country is already backfiring as the triple alliance organized by Egypt failed to take off. The regional governments of Somalia and the opposition parties have continued to mesmerize the already bleak situation putting the country at the brink of political collapse. Besides, the entire Somali population is losing confidence in the government marred with divisive politics and dictatorial leadership.

A report issued by the UNDP IN August 2024 states that Somalia has faced decades of armed conflict, social and political instability, and the negative impacts of climate change. There is a consensus between the federal government and development partners that if it wants to catch up with the rest of the world, there cannot be business as usual. There is a need to break away from protracted crises and fragility and a reliance on humanitarian assistance that provides relief but does not address the root causes of problems. We need to invest in resilient communities, systems, and institutions that thrive without partners' inputs or resources. An approach that promotes Somali-owned, Somali-led, integrated interventions is essential.

The conflict is one factor that shapes Somalia's specific development needs. The government has launched a military offensive liberating a number of areas from Al-Shabaab control. This has created

the need to ramp up stabilization efforts and to strengthen government presence in newly liberated areas to consolidate the social contract, deliver services and support people's livelihoods.

At the same time the effects of climate change have been very disruptive for millions. The country has been affected by severe droughts, most recently in 2022. In December 2023, the country faced the worst flooding of the past 100 years. Some communities have not been able to recover from one crisis to another. Climate change is also exacerbating conflicts, violence and displacement. Somalia has about 3.8 million internally displaced people that are mostly congregating around major cities and towns, making it one of the fastest urbanizing countries in the world.

Addressing these issues is even more complex because the state building process in Somalia is still ongoing. There is not yet an accepted model that reflects a national agreement on power and resource sharing between the federal government and states, which have their own political dynamics, challenges and constraints.

Ethiopia and Somalia cannot afford to go to war but both countries can benefit from the dividends of peaceful cooperation and development that is cemented by thousands of years of cultural bond and transboundary relations. Somalia has abundant resource and port facilities that can be used for meeting the economic needs of the population.

Ethiopia is generously sharing its water resources from two rivers Dawa and Shebele but the Somalia media is falsely accusing Ethiopia for flooding the country, an accusation that no person with reasonable set of thinking can swallow.

The leadership of the country is working on organizing a regional war on Ethiopia without realizing that the first victims would be the people of Somalia. Somalia is busy burning her own house and national sovereignty by inviting foreign powers with the hope that they can stop Ethiopia from her quest for ports and yet the government is accusing Ethiopia for violating her sovereignty.

Somalia has turned into a banana republic that is being combed by terrorists and sea pirates. The author wishes to expound on the current state of Somalia's economy as a proof that it cannot afford to go to war with any country.

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

# Business & Economy

## Honey production in Ethiopia: An integral part of 'Yelemat Tirufat'

BY MENGESHA AMARE

'Yelemat Tirufat' (the Bounty of Basket) initiative, spearheaded by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, is not only meeting but exceeding its targets, delivering results ahead of schedule, according to FBC.

This success is significantly alleviating community challenges by enhancing agricultural productivity and stabilizing market conditions, according to the Ministry of Agriculture.

'Bounty of the Basket' is a national government program being implemented to improve dairy, poultry, egg, honey, fish and meat production aimed at boosting productivity and production as well as intensifying efforts to achieve food self-sufficiency and ensure nutritional opulence at the family and national levels.

Ethiopia's annual honey production is estimated to be around 45,000 metric tons. However, the country's potential is estimated to be as high as 500,000 tons and 50,000 tons of beeswax per year. Most of Ethiopia's honey is produced using traditional beehives, which are typically less productive than modern hives.

The Ethiopian Government has identified the sector as offering growth potential, including targeting the export sector as a foreign exchange earning source, one generating additional off-farm income for small-scale farmers and leading to poverty alleviation in rural areas. The sector is also seen as offering potential for job creation in rural and urban areas and has encouraged, apart from beekeeping itself, the production of beekeeping equipment and beehives amongst jobless urban and landless youth.

The practice is one of the major integral components of the agricultural economy of the country as it has directly and indirectly contributed to its economy. The traditional beekeeping is the major and oldest type of beekeeping practiced in Ethiopia, too.

Keeping this fact in mind, The Ethiopian Herald had a stay with Muhammed Ahmed, an agriculturalist graduated from Hawassa University, to seek a piece of information about the comprehensive feature of apiculture.

He said, "Beekeeping is a long-standing practice in the rural communities of Ethiopia and appears as ancient history of the country. Its direct contributions are collection of the honey and hive products such as bees wax, and bee colonies whereas its indirect contributions are increase in crop production and conservation of the natural environment through pollination.

Traditional beekeeping is practiced by traditionally constructed hives which are mostly cylindrical in shape and single chamber fixed comb. This type of hive can be made from wood, mud/clay. It has no internal structures; frames were provided for the bees; the bees created their own honeycomb within the hives.

There are enormous opportunities to boost



Beehives in rural areas

the production of honey in the villages. Thus, introducing modern beehives, limiting the use of pesticides in honey production and awareness creation and assistance to empower women in the beekeeping activity are needed interventions, he added.

Of all the countries in the world, no country has such a long tradition of beekeeping than Ethiopia. Despite its long history, beekeeping in Ethiopia is still an undeveloped sector of agriculture. Besides, knowledge and skill of honey and beeswax production of Ethiopian farmers is still very traditional. Most of local beehives are hanged over high trees.

It is recurrently stated that Amhara, Oromia, Southern regions of Ethiopia and Tigray have been known for their honey and beeswax production, he added.

However, the country is suffering from the ecological degradation of its natural resources and this means the basis for any honey production is threatened and deteriorated in many places. In many regions of the country, beekeeping is considered as one of the income generating activities for resource-poor farmers including women, youth and the unemployed sectors of the community.

Yes, he said, though development is observed regarding the sub sector, Ethiopia still faces a number of challenges in beekeeping like poor harvesting practices, honey bee diseases, bee pests and predators, lack of a well-trained workforce, high cost and limited availability of modern beekeeping equipment, inappropriate use of pesticides, among others.

All concerned have to overcome these problems and an environmentally friendly and non-farm business activity undertaken by farmers and landless people has to be well reinvigorated. In Ethiopia, bee keeping offers environmentally beneficial activity that can help the developing countries in alleviation of poverty and maintaining natural biodiversity. It has also been contributing to rural households' income and adding to national economy. It plays a great role directly by providing valuable output such as honey, beeswax, queen and bee colonies.

He said, "It is repeatedly stated that Ethiopia stands ninth in the world and first in the Africa in honey production though the production

is minimal these days. Beekeeping activity has important contribution economically and ecologically. This sub sector has remarkable potential to contribute to employment generation, local and global market, livelihood improvement, and biodiversity conservation and helps ensuring economic advantages of women, youths and Ethiopia's geographical position poor households. Development of the Beekeeping practices could significantly enhance crop production, food security, maintenance of plant diversity and ecosystem stability."

As to Muhammad, honey production is one of the direct contributions of beekeeping practices. In terms of economic contribution and exports commodities, honey is one of the marketed livestock products of Ethiopia. As a result, there is an increased demand for honey production.

In general, the potential areas for honey production in the country include Southwestern, Western and Northwestern parts of the country. These are grouped into high, medium and low potential areas.

Ethiopian honey differs in terms of color, taste, quality and quantity, and it is produced in almost all parts of Ethiopia, with distinctive types of honey coming from different regions mainly due to the type of bee forage available in the regions.

The honey belt zones of Western and Southern parts of Ethiopia produce the largest quantity of honey. There are abundant apicultural resources, particularly in the South Western and South Eastern zones of the country including zones like Jima, Illu Ababor, Bale, West Wellega, Keffa, Bench Maji, Sidama region and Gedeo zones.

In Ethiopia, high portion of honey is sold for income generation. The domestic honey market starts at the smallholder bee keeper's level, who majorly sells crude honey to collectors in the nearest town/village markets.

"Beekeeping products play significant role in the development of national economy. Ethiopia exports honey to the countries such as Sudan, Norway, Saudi Arabia, UK, Yemen, Japan and USA. Beekeeping plays significant role in supplementing the annual income. Honey production and value addition to its products are vital factors in sustainability of livelihood of poor people,"

he said.

Beekeeping practices create job opportunities for landless men and women for their livelihood as it needs low capital to start. Beekeeping is a non-destructive activity that could be employed in the conservation of biodiversity. Bees provide numerous benefits in maintaining sustainable natural environment. These are needed for the pollination of many cultivated crops and maintaining biodiversity. More plantations for supplying pollen and nectar need to be encouraged.

Following the existence of diverse flowering plants, Ethiopia has a potential in beekeeping because of growing of different vegetation and crops which are a good source of nectar and pollen for honey bees in the country. Large and diverse botanical resources combined with suitable climatic conditions make it conducive for the beekeeping business.

As to him, demands of bee products are enormously increasing from time to time at an alarming rate. The healthy condition of bees and production of organic honey are the basically high in demand. Low level of pesticide applications creates opportunity for organic beekeeping development. Honeybee colonies abandoned and migrated from their hives at any season of the year for different reasons.

The destruction of broods while harvesting the honey has made regeneration of bee population slow down. Eventually, it ends up with the declining of the colony. This is common in traditional hive where every comb is used for both laying egg by the queen and honey/pollen storage by the workers.

Generally, beekeeping is an old agricultural practice in Ethiopia. About one million households are involved in honeybee's business. It is promising off-farm enterprise, which contributes to country's economy. Besides, there is a need of intervention in introducing modern beehives that can make households produce more for market than home consumption.

Awareness creation and assistance is needed to empower women in the beekeeping activity. Introducing the modern beehives in the nation is needed to supplement the household's income sources from beekeeping.

In sum, so as to well address the major problems seriously affecting bee production like poor honey harvesting, diseases, pests, predators, poisonous plants, agrochemicals and deforestation, the concerned government authority and beekeepers should be made aware regarding proper harvesting method which avoid destruction of the colony and absconding.

Besides, beekeepers need to be encouraged to plant more trees and make them aware about devastating effects of deforestation. Beekeepers should also be made aware about the harmful effects of honeybee predators, bee diseases, use of agrochemicals, and should be in a position to device possible solutions to the problems to help the nation gain the benefit it deserves out of the sub sector.

# Art & Culture

## The lost giant

BY HENOK TIBEBU

A healthy, fresh wind was blowing from west to northeast of the city. The sun was still bright, but the wind seemed to cool off its heat. Airplanes that took off from the Airport were making disturbing noises within a fraction of a second; everything seemed normal.

People were talking and walking on pedestrian walks as usual. Why are these streets always full of people all day long? Isn't there a job to do? Or are you all handling your business by telepathy? said Mollan the crazy street vendor, with his graceful loud noise. Mollan was a tall, gigantic street-life figure who lived on the roads for almost his entire life. He was fifty-five by then but looked like thirty years old. He's got long hair and a beard dreadlocked by age, sweat, and dirt.

He was walking barefoot, wearing a grisly jacket and shredded jeans from the knees. His beady eyes, turning red slowly, reflected the gradual decay of his poor life and his lost faith in mankind.

Some say this giant fellow lived a comely life in some distant time of his grasshopper years. They say he was a chief mechanic and owned his garage in his first twenties. They also say he used to own two expensive cars when most of the people in the city-owned some raggedy old Volkswagens and Peugeots.

What's happened to him to deserve this street life? Those who claimed to be his old friends say, that when he was a bit financially secure and strong, his wife left him with his children and all his money. She was well connected with powerful officials and legal people but he was a careerist and a simple society man, according to those who said they used to know him but never cared about how he was living his times of loss.

Some others tell a different version of the story that made his life look like the life of Nikolay Gogole's character Akaky Akakievich. They say he jumped off a bridge and died with a broken Neck when his wife deserted him with his children. Even though many people saw him, listened to him, and communicated with him his ghost was invisible to his friends and former colleagues or to all the people he knew back in the days. He was dead to them he was erased from their minds not only when he jumped from the bridge but even when he lost everything material.

Meanwhile, the giant may have lost his wife, children, money, or material property and friends, his graceful voice was still loud, perfectly heard but never listened to by the residents! Why? These days ignorance has become the best place to hide from deeper and practical thoughts, and negligence has become the easiest. Sanctuary for people to escape



from trouble and misery, which may come from being loyal to truth and brave life. Mollan knew most of the people's passion resided where the fashion was!

Mollan was talking but people are tapping on telegram gamble even while crossing the streets on foot. One of the pedestrians who was crossing the street suddenly stopped in the middle of the road and went on tapping. The driver who stopped his vehicle for the pedestrians sneaked by the window and said "Hey my man, would you like me to turn off the motor until you finish your game?" The pedestrian looked at him and waving his hand apologetically and crossed the road quickly.

It was only Mollan who noticed the situation. Many of the residents were rushing and busy tap-taping! "You will not get far with your gamble game, because one day you will get hit by a car if you continue like these!" he said. That particular pedestrian gazed at him contemptuously and turned back to his tapping!

"Responsibility is neglected for the sake of small games to earn fast money. The streets were supposed to be empty, during day times because people should have been somewhere in their offices or workshops. But this city is different! Streets are full of people all day long! Why? ...Well... you can ask your deep-rooted poverty if it has time to talk to you! "ha ha ha" The nighttime appeared

but Mollan was still walking and talking! People still lined up for transportation to be at home early! a few hours later the streets became empty.

Only few cars were rushing by the streets and only Mollan walking and talking. This time he would say why are the streets empty now? Are you all scared of the dark? Or there is no work at night except the telegram tap-tap?

As he kept on walking, he would suddenly hear the sounds of graders, hard drilling types of machinery and active labor workers taking all over the streets. When Mollan saw this new movement, he would smile and say "There is no tragedy as no hope for mankind. There is always hope this is a giant city, which has been sleeping for too long!

Now it is awake", he smiled again he was tired. He wanted to sleep on the sidewalk of the street. But this was not the time, to sleep. It was time for him to join the workforce. He approached one of the engineers who was busy on the night developmental task. "Good evening brother! Is there any position for an old mechanic? I may have no paperwork in my hands, but I can do a good job in fixing engines and other things!"

"We can use any manpower in this project. Pull up your sleeves and warm up your brain for menial jobs and we will see what develops," said the engineer who led him to his first job after many years of a dormant life on the streets!

## This too shall pass

BY Grace Noll Crowell

This, too, will pass.  
O heart, say it over and over,  
Out of your deepest sorrow,  
out of your deepest grief,  
No hurt can last forever--  
Perhaps tomorrow will bring relief.

This, too, will pass.  
It will spend itself--  
Its fury will die as the wind dies  
down  
with the setting sun;  
Assuaged and calm, you will rest  
again,  
Forgetting a thing that is done.

Repeat it again and again,  
O heart, for your comfort;  
This, too, will pass  
as surely as passed before  
The old forgotten pain, and the  
other sorrows  
That once you bore.

As certain as stars at night,  
or dawn after darkness,  
Inherent as the lift of the blowing  
grass,  
Whatever your despair or your  
frustration--  
This, too, will pass.

# REGAINING HOPE

## Uplifting Poems About Hope

*Having hope propels us to achieve our dreams and drives us forward toward our pursuits. It also keeps us afloat when everything seems to go wrong, when we feel that we're drowning. Hope is the light at the end of the tunnel, the northern star by which we navigate our lives through trials and difficulties towards our dreams of a better day. When we lose hope, we are like a rudderless ship being tossed about without direction. Having and finding hope, then, is essential for keeping our dreams upright and continuing to sail in the direction of their attainment.*

# Science & Technology

## “This generation should lay the foundation for a technological revolution in Ethiopia”

- Samuel Kefelegn, Scientific Revolution Earth CEO

BY DARGIE KAHSAY

Samuel Kefelegn is a founding member and CEO of Scientific Revolution Earth (SRE), a company established by members of the Ethiopian Diaspora Community residing in different parts of the world. SRE was founded in Washington DC 10 years ago to address development challenges through the transformative power of science and technology. Although established abroad, SRE's primary focus since its inception has been to invest in Ethiopia to bring visionary ideas to transform life by introducing technological innovations in various sectors. The Computer Science graduate, Samuel is a researcher in profession.

Approached by The Ethiopian Herald, Samuel said, “The idea to establish SRE was initiated by intellectual members of the Ethiopian diaspora living in different parts of the world, primarily to invest in Ethiopia’s technology sector.” SRE’s focus is on solving development challenges through innovative and impactful technologies. Accordingly, when SRE began its activities in Ethiopia by opening an office in Addis Ababa, it introduced 32 innovative and technological projects designed to address existing societal challenges in the country.

Among these projects is the Offline Digital Library, an innovative initiative launched by SRE in 2015 in Ethiopia. The Offline Digital Library Machine, manufactured in Ethiopia, brings digital educational resources to communities with limited internet access in remote rural areas. This platform enables students to access e-books, educational resources, multimedia learning materials, and other necessary supportive resources for students residing in rural areas with limited internet and power access. The digital library helps students easily access textbooks and other supportive materials to develop their knowledge and skills despite the lack of internet access.

Samuel said that since 2015, under his leadership, SRE has brought this machine to over 250 high schools, 16 universities, and 10 colleges in underserved communities. According to the CEO, through this self-help machine, SRE promotes e-learning, digital literacy, access to educational materials, and improved educational quality for young people across Ethiopia. Recognizing SRE’s contribution to Ethiopia’s education sector through this innovative machine, SRE has received the 2016 World Summit Award in the education sector.

In the education sector, Samuel said, SRE comes with a new and innovative solution to reach the marginalized community. The system has a visible impact by helping rural students to access books easily despite a lack of access to the internet and power. The Digital Library Machine is installed in schools and higher education institutions with multiple e-books and the institutions can easily upload necessary books and educational materials for their students. In this way, the digital library helped students to access education, especially in areas with textbooks and supportive book



SRE CEO, Samuel Kefelegn (center) with the SRE team

scarcity.

Not only is the Digital Library Machine, but SRE comes with a lot of technological projects to solve existing challenges. These mega projects are both implemented while others still waiting for implementation. According to Samuel, the company’s focus is innovative ideas and manufacturing all its innovative technologies at home. “However, as most of the projects are mega projects which need cross-sectorial collaborations mainly with government institutions, most of the SRE projects are waiting for implementation,” Samuel noted mentioning SRE’s Early Warning System Device and Artificial Traffic Light system as example projects on the table.

The disaster Early Warning System Device, according to Samuel, is a device developed by SRE experts to help communities respond to emergencies before causing damage. The Early Warning System through its integrated sensor networks assesses risks and its implemented reliable alert platform sends real-time alerts for natural disasters, industrial accidents, and other critical disasters.

“For example, by planting the early warning system device in flood-prone areas, the device can deliver timely information about the volume of the waters of the river. By monitoring the situation, it sends real-time information to the center and helps communities and institutions to take necessary preparations to rescue people from the danger zone and to take actions to manage the floods,” Samuel said. In addition, it can be used to alert communities during earthquakes, landslides, fires, and similar disasters.

Using the AI system developed within it, the device is designed to monitor the environmental situation and send the information to the center prepared for this purpose. The device is active for 24 hours monitoring the risks and delivering timely information. These devices are alerting system devices during disasters to alert the people and decision makers (institutions) to take action and rescue people from the disaster areas. By monitoring the environment and sensing the



changes, the device transmits information to the center about the developments.

The early warning device machine is manufactured at home and there are talks to implement it on the ground. “We have already manufactured a prototype at home and own patent right for it. But the device is waiting to be installed as it needs government intervention to implement it,” Samuel stated adding his company’s readiness to install the machine if asked by concerned institutions. Due to the cost and related cases, it needs government institutions’ cooperation to implement the device.

Samuel said that SRE was established to initiate new ideas, translate the ideas into products, and manufacture the products at home using its capacity and by joint-venture. “The intention behind establishing SRE was to promote technological developments in Ethiopia,” Samuel stated adding that as the company was established by academically equipped Ethiopian Diaspora members, in addition to manufacturing problem-solving technological products, SRE eyes on initiating the Diaspora community to invest in the technology sector in Ethiopia and to show

the possibility of manufacturing innovative technologies at home.

Recently, celebrating its 10th founding year, SRE is promoting its 10 technological mega projects like the early warning system and artificial traffic light projects. According to Samuel, technology is a driving factor to bring sustainable development and to transform societies. “Hence, to realize the dream of seeing developed and prosperous Ethiopia, it is crucial to invest in technological innovations at home.” For him, without promoting local technological innovations, it is difficult to attain development in the competitive world where technological developments are growingly sophisticated and every sector is becoming dependent on technology.

Especially, with the coming of emerging technologies like AI, every sector is affected by these technologies. Hence as to him, this generation should ignite technological revolution and lay down the foundation to realize technological transformation in Ethiopia.

Samuel suggested that this generation has both the ability and the duty to bring about significant change in innovation and technological advancements in Ethiopia. The generation should spark transformation to leverage technology to fastback economic, social, and infrastructural developments in the country. He calls the generation, both at home and abroad to invest in technological innovations to lay down the foundation to catalyze technological revolution at home. To reshape Ethiopia through technological initiatives and breakthroughs, Samuel encouraged the youth to focus on technological innovations and to become at the forefront in leading these initiatives.

Scientific Revolution Earth (SRE) creates more than 100 job opportunities in Ethiopia, and it has branches abroad. Currently, in addition to the 32 technological projects, the company has some 140 project ideas on the table for its future investments. SRE’s vision is to become a leading research and technology company in space science, technology, robotics, and other technological innovations.



# Society

## Easing the burden for people with diabetes

BY MENGISTEAB TESHOME

Ethiopia is taking significant steps to address the rising prevalence rate of diabetes, a condition that poses a growing public health challenge in the country. Following the increasing prevalence of risk factors, such as changing lifestyles, urbanization, and overweight among others, the Ethiopian government and health authorities are implementing a comprehensive strategy to alleviate the burden of diabetes on its population.

According to the Ministry of Health reports, Ethiopia is working with international health organizations, such as the World Health Organization (WHO), to align its diabetes strategy with global best practices. Such collaborations will provide technical support, funding, and resources to strengthen the national response.

Ethiopia's comprehensive plan which was designed to ease the burden of diabetes, reflects a proactive approach to a pressing public health issue. By focusing on awareness, prevention, and improved healthcare access, the country aims to reduce the incidence of diabetes and improve the quality of life for those affected. As these initiatives unfold, Ethiopia sets an important precedent for addressing Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) including World Diabetes Day across the country.

Currently, as part of this effort and in connection with this year's 'World Diabetes Day' celebrated every year in November 14, the Ministry of Health in partnership with the Ethiopian Diabetics Association and its affiliates, is undertaking various activities.

At the event marked under the theme "Diabetes and Complete Well-being: All people with diabetes have a chance to live in complete health if they have access to proper diabetes treatment and care," various activities will be carried out, including conducting free blood sugar detection service.

Disease Prevention and Control Chief Executive Officer of the Ministry of Health Hiwot Solomon (MD) said that the 'World Diabetes Day' in Ethiopia is marked to raise the awareness of the community about the causes and risk factors of diabetes. It is celebrated to draw attention to getting access to diabetes treatment, care, and medicines for individuals who have already been diagnosed with the case, as well as to emphasize the importance of increasing the provision of sugar level measuring equipment.

According to the CEO, these days, diabetes, which is a non-communicable disease, is spreading in our country at a higher rate. People estimated to be more than 1.9 million are living with the disease. What makes the problem worse is that 50 percent of the patients are not receiving the required treatments for the reason that they did not take any form of detection and check their blood sugar levels.



While employees of the Ministry of Health conducting blood sugar testing

What is more, type 1 diabetes is increasing from time to time and manifesting itself in children and young people.

In this regard, marking the day will help to sensitize citizens to pay attention and test their blood sugar levels, conduct the necessary treatment if diagnosed with the case, and take care and medicine.

The Ethiopian Diabetes Association President Getahun Tarekegne (MD) for his part explained the risk factors that expose one to diabetes. According to him, people with overweight are especially prone to diabetes. It should be well noted that up to 80 percent of type 2 diabetes can be prevented by adhering to healthy diets and physical activity, as well as quitting smoking and following a healthy lifestyle, the President remarked.

It has been stated that the Ministry of Health, joining hands with the Ethiopian Diabetes Association and its partners, is working to raise awareness regarding the cause of diabetes and its risk factors, to expand and strengthen the pre-diagnosis, diagnosis, as well as treatment and care services through policy-supported prevention work.

In connection with the day, the "World Diabetes Day", free diabetes screening service was provided for employees of the Ministry of Health.

The World Diabetes Day (WDD) is the world's largest diabetes awareness campaign reaching a global audience of over 1 billion people in over 160 countries. It is marked every year on 14 November, the birthday of Sir Frederick Banting, who co-discovered insulin along with Charles Best in 1922.

This year's World Diabetes Day was celebrated under the theme 'Breaking Barriers, Bridging Gaps,' it was learned.

According to the National Strategy Plan for



the prevention and control of major non-communicable diseases, non-communicable diseases are diseases such as cardiovascular diseases, cancer, chronic respiratory diseases, and diabetes, are believed to be the leading causes of morbidity and mortality globally.

Despite their high burden and their complex economic and social impact, NCDs have been neglected for too long both from the global and national health agenda. The SDGs have for the first time increased global attention to NCDs. To this end, SDG 3 outlines the importance of ensuring healthy lives and promoting well-being for everyone at all ages and includes a specific sub-target on NCDs (target 3.4).

Understanding the burden of the diseases and the global direction, Ethiopia has also recognized the potential health and economic impact posed by NCDs. To this end, the country has been implementing

various activities introducing its first NCD Strategic Plan 2014-2016.

The Ministry of Health-Ethiopia developed this second national strategic plan for the prevention and control of NCDs with the overall goal envisioned to reduce the burden of NCDs by promoting healthy lifestyles, reducing the prevalence of common risk factors, and providing integrated evidenced-based treatment and care to those diagnosed with NCDs, most cost-effectively. This action plan is thus the road map for the prevention and control of NCDs in Ethiopia. It comprises fundamental public health and clinical "best-buy" interventions and describes resource needs. It also urges for a collective multi-sectorial response, strategic policy changes, resource mobilization, and collaboration among all stakeholders. Strong national and sub-national political commitment and government leadership are fundamental for the success of this action plan.

# International News

## Somalia: Vote Counting Underway in Somaliland After Peaceful Election

Washington — Polls have closed across Somaliland after presidential elections, and it appears Wednesday's voting across the breakaway region has gone smoothly.

The Somaliland National Electoral Commission (NEC) said polls closed across the region at 6 p.m. local time. More than 1 million people were registered to vote across some 2,000 polling stations in Somalia's breakaway region.

In the evening, vote counting was underway, according to the electoral agency.

"It will start from polling centers level, then passes to district, and the regional before we announce the result," said NEC Chairman Muse Hassan Yusuf. "We have successfully solved minor technical issues reported in some polling stations," he said.

He said the NEC would announce the result of the election by November 21.

General Mohamed Adan Saqadhi, head of Somaliland Police Force, said throughout Somaliland the election was peaceful.

"Thanks to Allah, the election took place democratically and peacefully. No incident was reported," said Saqadhi.

### Candidates promise to grow economy

Three candidates, including incumbent President Muse Bihi Abdi, were on the ballot in Wednesday's poll. In interviews with VOA Somali, each of the three candidates promised to strengthen democracy, boost economic growth, and gain the international recognition Somaliland has sought for 33 years.

Abdi, of the ruling Peace, Unity and Development Party, also known simply as Kulmiye, was seeking a second term. He ran against Abdirahman Mohamed Abdullahi, known as "Irro," of the Waddani party and Faisal Ali Warabe of the Justice and Development Party, or UCID.

This is the fourth presidential election since the region on the northwestern tip of



Somalia broke away from the rest of the country, following the collapse of the Siad Barre regime in 1991.

The territory declared independence that year but has never achieved international recognition.

Despite that, Somaliland has a functioning government and institutions, a political system that has allowed democratic transfers of power between rival parties, its own currency, passport and armed forces.

### Voters cast ballots amid tension

Wednesday's vote comes at a time when tensions remain high between Somalia and Ethiopia over a controversial memorandum of understanding that Ethiopia signed with Somaliland.

The deal would grant Ethiopia a 50-year lease of access to 20 kilometers of the

Gulf of Aden coastline in exchange for the potential recognition of Somaliland's independence, which Somalia views as a violation of its sovereignty and territorial integrity.

The deal, signed on January 1 in Addis Ababa by Abdi and Ethiopia Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, sparked anger in Mogadishu, which considers Somaliland part of its national territory.

In April, Somalia expelled Ethiopian Ambassador Muktar Mohamed Ware, alleging "internal interference" by Ethiopia. Somalia also ordered the closure of Ethiopia's consulates in Somaliland and Puntland, although both consulates remained open.

Last month, Somalia expelled Mogadishu-based Ethiopian diplomat Ali Mohamed Adan, who was a counselor at Ethiopia's

embassy in Mogadishu.

In July and August, two rounds of talks between Ethiopia and Somalia, mediated by Turkey, failed to solve the dispute, with Somalia demanding Ethiopia withdraw from the deal and Ethiopia insisting that it does not infringe on Somalia's sovereignty.

On Saturday, Somali Defense Minister Abdulkadir Mohamed Nur repeated the Somali government position against Ethiopian troop involvement in a new African Union peacekeeping mission in Somalia due to start in January.

"I can say that Ethiopia is the only government we know of so far that will not participate in the new AU mission because it has violated our sovereignty and national unity," Nur said Saturday in a government-run television interview.

Source: VOA.



## World Diabetes Day - Calls Grow For Cheaper, Accessible Care

The international medical charity Doctors Without Borders has called on leading pharmaceutical corporations and "all insulin manufacturers" to urgently increase access to diabetes treatment in low- and middle-income countries by making insulin pen injection devices available at US\$1.

In a statement, the group said 80% of people with diabetes live in low- and middle-income countries, "where access to insulin pens is extremely limited due primarily to high prices".

It noted that people with diabetes in South Africa, for example, which pioneered a shift towards the use of insulin in pens in the

public sector by replacing insulin in vials with pens, "had to ration insulin pens earlier this year when Novo Nordisk stopped selling human insulin pens to the South African government".

The Diabetes Association of Nigeria has warned that six million people living with diabetes in the country are facing an "existential threat", due to the "skyrocketing" cost of healthcare. The association urged the Nigerian government, "as a matter of urgency", to subsidize diabetes medications to make them more affordable to the growing population of people with the disease.

Source: allAfrica.com



# This is Ethiopia

## New Policy toward harnessing Ethiopia's tourism potentials

BY TEWODROS KASSA

Currently, Ethiopia is undertaking enormous investments in the tourism sector. The country has seen a significant rise in tourist arrivals following the opening of new tourist destinations around numerous lakes and highlands. As a result, the country's tourism sector earnings are showing remarkable progress and have seen a surge in tourists' inflow year after year.

No doubt, Ethiopia is a country blessed with natural beauty, from the breathtaking Simien Mountains to the ancient Rock-Hewn churches of Lalibela, and the lowest point on earth, the Dallol Depression as well as other natural and historical wonders. The country is also home to a rich cultural heritage, with over 80 different Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples, each with its own distinctive traditions and customs. Owing to this, the tourism sector has a crucial capacity to play in the Ethiopian economy, contributing to job creation, foreign exchange earnings, and overall economic development.

Notably, the country is home to more than ten UNESCO World Heritage Sites, including the Rock-Hewn churches of Lalibela, the ancient city of Axum, and the walled city of Harar. This makes it a must-visit destination in the world. These sites attract thousands of visitors each year and are crucial to Ethiopia's tourism sector.

Following this, the government has recognized the potential of the tourism sector and has recently introduced a new tourism policy aimed at harnessing the country's tourism sector potentials, protecting these ancient sites from damage and promoting them as key tourist destinations. The new tourism policy is also expected to bring about a tangible impact to the country's tourism industry.

Accordingly, the Ministry of Tourism had organized a consultation day with state and city administration tourism experts to gather input on the draft amendment of the tourism policy thereby to enhance Ethiopia's position in the global tourism market.

Tourism State Minister Sileshi Girma stated that the country is actively developing its tourism destinations. The current global socio-economic trends together with technological advancements are rapidly transforming tourism activities, making it essential to revise the policy. The goal is to modernize the sector and improve the quality of tourism services.

"The current policy, which has been in effect since 2001, is out-of-date and lacks



inclusiveness. No longer has it met the needs of the evolving tourism landscape," Sileshi explained. "Due to both external and internal factors, and as part of the government's changing view of tourism as a priority sector, it has become necessary to create a new policy that supports a more inclusive and forward-looking approach."

He also highlighted that the development of a new policy was in response to both global and national shifts, including the recent inauguration of Ethiopia's tourism satellite account and the launch of the IGAD sustainable tourism master plan in Addis Ababa. Other factors driving the change include the changing economic structures within the country, the rise of private hotel investments, and the development of new tourism destinations across Ethiopia.

The State Minister stressed that tourism is one of the fastest-growing sectors globally, driven by advancements in technology. As a result, Ethiopia needs to position itself effectively to capture a larger share of the global tourism market.

The new policy is based on principles of inclusivity, competitiveness, sustainability, and community involvement, with a strong focus on the current global tourism landscape.

Key pillars of the updated policy include marketing and promotion, capacity building for the sector, tourism product development, destination management, and stronger collaboration with IGAD's Blue Economy initiatives.

Meanwhile, measures are being undertaken by the government to improve the expansion of hotels and service sectors in various parts of the country.

Seleshi told local media that the government is providing land, technical support for both local and international investors that are engaged in the hotel and tourism sector.

It has also made available various incentives such as a five year income tax exemption for investors engaged in the aforementioned sector, he added.

Following the action, the nation has seen various constructions of hotel and resorts in various parts of the country; mainly in main cities.

He further noted that local investors that are said to be competitive at the international level have built a hotel business chain which is promising to enhance the sector's potential.

Nonetheless, poor infrastructure in tourist destinations remained a challenge he said

adding that private sectors are being shy to engage in areas with low infrastructure development. The private sector is expected to invest in rural areas that are enriched in tourism potentials, he stressed.

As to the State Minister, the Ministry of Tourism has introduced new hotel star rating legal framework and service quality assurance to allow newly built hotel and service sector to be graded while enabling the existing hotels update their rates.

President of Ethiopian Hotel and Tourism Association Getahun Alemu on his part highlighted that several tourism destinations are under construction in different parts of the country.

He also mentioned the emerging smart hotels in the city; which are believed to be one of tourist attraction in the nation.

Accordingly, another important aspect of the newly introduced tourism policy is the development of infrastructure to support the tourism sector. This includes improving road networks, upgrading airports, and building new hotels and accommodations. By investing in infrastructure, the government hopes to attract more tourists to Ethiopia and provide them with a comfortable and enjoyable experience during their stay.

In sum, the new tourism policy towards harnessing Ethiopia's tourism sector potentials is a step in the right direction towards promoting sustainable tourism through preserving historical sites, and empowering local communities. By investing in infrastructure, supporting community-based tourism initiatives, and promoting sustainable practices, Ethiopia is positioning itself as a must-visit destination for travelers seeking authentic cultural experiences and stunning natural landscapes. With the government's commitment to the development of the tourism sector, Ethiopia