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Youths craving for prosperous Africa

BY YESUF ENDRIS

After years of ups and downs in life, young Zimbabwean farmer Bernard Kaskate (PhD) is now the CEO of the trending Gohori Resort in Mutoko and a recipient of the Young African Ambassadors award. Kaskate believes that Africa's youth should leverage the continent's vast agricultural resources to address food insecurity and achieve self-sufficiency. According to him, Africa cannot be truly independent while its youth are confined to office jobs. "The youth must take off their suits and put on work clothes," he said. "The Africa that the youth wants is within reach."

An African Union report published this year reveals that despite Africa owning 60% of the world's

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Ethiopian green pavilion in Baku opens to public

• ECA renews commitment to support African negotiators at COP 29

BY STAFF REPORTER

ADDIS ABABA - President Taye Atske Selassie officially opened yesterday the Ethiopian Pavilion at the 29th Conference of the Parties (COP29) in Baku, Azerbaijan.

The COP29 to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) commenced in Baku on Monday 11 November, 2024, bringing together world leaders, policymakers, and activists with a renewed commitment to address intensifying climate crises.

The pavilion highlighted the country's innovative approaches to renewable energy, sustainable agriculture, and forest conservation.

Ethiopia proudly joins with its "Green Legacy"

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Agricultural reforms: Sowing self-sufficiency, cultivating regional leadership

BY BETELHEM BEDLU

Despite Ethiopia's abundant agricultural resources, including untapped land, water, and a productive young labor force, the sector has faced persistent challenges. These include traditional farming practices with limited mechanization, low yields, minimal input utilization, and reliance on imports for some major commodities.

To address these challenges, Ethiopia has initiated comprehensive policy and programmatic reforms as part of its Homegrown Reform I and II, with agriculture being a key focus. At the recent "World Without Hunger" summit, Agriculture Minister GirmaAmente (PhD) emphasized that the new agriculture policy introduces significant shifts, particularly in rural land use, natural resource management, and technology application. A dedicated

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Russia to elevate bilateral ties with Ethiopia

BY HAILE DEMEKE

ADDIS ABABA - Russia expressed keenness to elevate its longstanding bilateral relationship with Ethiopia to a comprehensive level of cooperation in trade and investment aimed at ensuring mutual benefit.

The "Russia - Ethiopia: No Time to Waste" international economic forum commenced yesterday in Addis Ababa, focusing on boosting cooperation in transportation, construction, IT, cyber security, agroindustry, tourism and others.

Presenting a paper about the two nations' bilateral trade and economic cooperation in the forum, Russian Trade Commissioner to Ethiopia Yaroslav Tarasyuk (PhD) said that his country is keen to cement cooperation with Ethiopia in aviation, automotive, health and agriculture sectors.

Being the second populous country in Africacoupled with its strategic position,



Ethiopia poised to be among the top countries in attracting investment. Ethiopia is placed third in attracting investment following South Africa and Egypt and able to attract FDI3.5billion USD last year alone, he stated.

He highlighted the commitment of both countries in deepening the longstanding bilateral relationship in diverse areas.

Russia is keen to invest and collaborate with Ethiopia in diverse areas so as to ensure mutual benefit among the two nations, he said, while commending Ethiopia's remarkable economic growth registered over the past few years.

Tarasyuk further stated that Ethiopia is

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News

Aysha Wind Farm nears to 82% completion

• Set to transform Ethiopia's energy sector

BY MISGANAW ASNAKE

ADDIS ABABA - The Ethiopia Electric Power (EEP) has announced that the Aysha Wind Farm Project, boasting a capacity of 120 MW, is 82% complete, marking it as nearing finalization.

EEP Communication Director, Moges Mekonnen, told the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) that the construction is progressing on schedule. He noted that eight turbines, collectively generating 80 megawatts, are now fully operational and the process of connecting them to the national grid has commenced.

"Efforts are ongoing to connect the remaining 40 megawatts to the grid, although financial challenges over the past two years delayed the turbine installations," Moges explained. However, EEP has taken proactive measures to advance the project using its own funds, bypassing the need for external financing.

Upon completion, the Aysha Wind Power Project is expected to significantly improve power distribution to areas in need. Moges highlighted that Aysha is among four wind power projects, alongside two located in Adama and another in Ashegoda. Among these, Aysha is regarded as particularly efficient due to its favorable location for wind energy generation, enhancing its feasibility and output potential.

The project has also opened opportunities for local investors. Recently, the government signed an agreement with Amea Power to facilitate private investments supporting the project, with an ambitious plan to generate up to 300 megawatts of power.

This initiative aligns with Ethiopia's goal of leveraging wind energy to strengthen its electricity supply. Additionally, EEP is gearing up to launch several wind power projects across different states in the near future, Moges revealed.

Ethiopia is diversifying from hydroelectricity into wind, solar, and geothermal energy to meet rising energy needs, build resilience, and foster economic growth. Projects like Aluto-Langano geothermal and Ashegoda Wind Farm support its 2025 electrification goal within the Climate Resilient Green Economy strategy.



Photo: Gebabo Gebre

EthSwitch amasses over 1.06 bln Birr profit

BY ESSEYE MENGISTE

ADDIS ABABA - EthSwitch S.C has announced a net profit before tax of over 1.06 billion Birr for the financial year of 2024, marking a 97% increase compared to the previous year.

This achievement was disclosed during the company's 11th annual general meeting yesterday, where the annual report was presented.

Speaking at the event, Chairperson of EthSwitch, Solomon Desta, stated that despite a challenging economic environment, the company maintained a strong focus on expense management, resulting in this remarkable profit.

EthSwitch's capital has also seen substantial growth. As of June 30, 2024, the company's subscribed capital reached 2.99 billion Birr, with 1.79 billion Birr fully paid. This

reflects a year of significant growth and accomplishments as EthSwitch advanced its mission to expand interoperability and strengthen Ethiopia's digital payment infrastructure.

According to Solomon, the Board of Directors has diligently reviewed and adopted essential policies that have enhanced the company's overall performance. EthSwitch generated an impressive revenue of 1.13 billion Birr solely from operational earnings, an 86% increase compared to the previous financial year.

The financial year 2023/24 was marked by outstanding achievements in revenue generation, operations, project implementation, and policy improvements. Solomon attributed this success to the government's focus on the sector, which has facilitated significant progress in

Ethiopia's digital finance system.

As the National Switch, EthSwitch plays a pivotal role in implementing the National Digital Payment Strategy, which seeks to create a secure, modern, and inclusive digital payment ecosystem.

Established in 2011, EthSwitch is fully owned by all banks in Ethiopia, both private and public. The company's primary objectives are to develop and institute a domestic payment scheme, create interoperability between financial and payment service providers, and provide shared infrastructure platforms to financial institutions.

The 2024 financial year stands as a testament to EthSwitch's growing impact on Ethiopia's digital financial landscape, with its achievements reflecting the collective efforts of its stakeholders and government support.

Landslide survivors receive homes

BY TSEGAYE TILAHUN

SAWLA - Some 100 prioritized households have received new homes in recently landslide-affected state of Southern Ethiopia.

Gofa Zone Disaster Risk Management Department Head Markos Melese told *The Ethiopian Herald* that the zonal administration has been undertaking rehabilitation activities including the construction of 155 shelters in two highly affected kebeles.

Accordingly, Markos said his department has handed over 100 homestofamilies most affected by the landslide.

Currently, these 100 beneficiaries started living in these houses, he expressed, adding that the zone administration prioritizes to rehabilitate those highly affected families, especially female-headed households.

According to the Head, the construction of the remaining houses is well underway to reach out 627 households hit by the



landslide.

The Ethiopian Red Cross Association, the Saudi Arabian government, Habitat for Humanity Ethiopia and World Vision pledged to construct more houses in the future. So far, about 600 houses have been pledged to be constructed to victim families.

Several projects are designed to rehabilitate the affected people with permanent housing, the Headsaid and added that over 160 million Birr fundhas raised at zonal level.

Moreover, emergency supports are being provided by the government, partners, local communities and other stakeholders, he indicated.

News

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initiative, climate-resilient agriculture, and renewable energy goals.

Meanwhile, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) is once again, accompanying the African Group of Negotiators at the 29th Conference of the Parties on Climate Change - COP29 in Baku, Azerbaijan, from 11 to 22 November 2024.

ECA's James Murombedzi whose team provides backstopping support to the African Group of Negotiators (AGN) said: "Finance will be the focus of COP29. Developing countries urgently need support to accelerate the transition to clean energy and deal with the impacts of climate change."

In this regard, he added that COP29 aims to set a new finance goal that unlocks the trillions of USD needed and provide confidence it will be delivered.

The AGN plays a key role in the push for a strong and concerted voice on key priorities for Africa.

Yesterday, ECA held a session at the African Pavilion with the African Group of Climate Change Negotiators to create further awareness and identify challenges and opportunities for national governments, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and African regional institutions on the urgent need for regulatory tools to manage carbon markets effectively with emphasis on cleaner technologies to achieve emissions reduction targets.

On 15 November, ECA will be a contributing partner to a side event organized by the World Resource Institute (WRI) on the pathways to affordable finance for energy transition and energy security in Africa.

Among other sessions, the African Group of Negotiators will hold a briefing event on the status of COP29 negotiations on 16 November, with the objective of promoting interactions between various African constituencies and the AGN and to provide the negotiators with critical feedback.

In this regard, ECA will on 20th November hold an event with AUDA- NEPAD on Loss and Damage in Africa to explore the modalities for strengthening Africa's understanding of the role of Loss and Damage fund and to review the continent's readiness to quantify losses and seek compensation from the fund.

The COP28, COP29 AND COP30 presidencies-- the Troika - has called on the UN Secretary-General to mobilize the entire UN System to support Parties, especially developing countries, in designing, delivering, and implementing the National Determined Contributions - NDCs.

In response to this call, ECA has been coordinated fortnightly meetings of Pan-African institutions (AUC, ECA, AfDB, AUDA-NEPAD), which are mandated by the AU Summit to support Africa's participation at the global climate change negotiations.

At the core of this assistance is the technical backstopping and logistics support to the African Group of Climate Change Negotiators (AGN), ECA revealed in a press release.

This year's conference in Baku promises a renewed emphasis on actionable commitments and innovative funding mechanisms to drive global progress.



Sakina Usengimana



Olaonipekun Taiwo



Albert Vegah

Agricultural reforms: Sowing self-sufficiency, cultivating...

Agriculture Bank is being proposed to tackle the sector's financing challenges, as financial institutions currently provide limited support.

Girma highlighted that investment and private sector partnerships are central to the reforms, serving as a cornerstone of the nation's strategy. Sakina Usengimana, Managing Director of Afrifood and Chairperson of the Younger Agribusiness Forum, underlined the importance of affordable financing for farmers, particularly young people, to drive agricultural transformation across the continent.

Olaonipekun Taiwo, CEO of Farm Fixers in Nigeria, stressed that access to technology and subsidized agricultural inputs should be government priorities. He noted the importance of consistent policies to build investor confidence and encouraged fostering bilateral relations on agriculture-

related issues.

Equipping farmers with modern technology and good agronomic practices, as well as providing technical and educational support, was emphasized as crucial for enhancing productivity. Taiwo also called for the provision of high-yielding, climate-resilient seeds and improved post-harvest management to combat food insecurity.

Albert Vegah, Sustainability Department Customers Program Coordinator in Cameroon, highlighted the need for alignment among governments, farmers, and investors to boost agricultural investment in Africa. He pointed out that the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) plays a pivotal role in facilitating business by ensuring the free movement of people and goods.

Vegah further emphasized the importance

of infrastructure development, including storage facilities, farm-to-storage networks, and logistics. Over 70% of post-harvest losses occur between farms and storage facilities, making investments in these areas vital. Research and development are also crucial, particularly to improve the shelf life of perishable agricultural products and enhance competitiveness in international markets.

Ethiopia's commitment to fostering an enabling environment through technological support, flexible policies, and financial initiatives has advanced its agricultural sector. Once import-dependent, Ethiopia is now a major exporter, not only to Europe but also to other African countries. The nation's focus on achieving food self-sufficiency positions it as a regional leader and a model for others to follow, he remarked.

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arable land, it produces only 10% of global agricultural output. This supports Kaskate's claim that underutilization of agricultural resources is forcing Africans to import food. Almost 70% of Africa's population depends on agriculture, which the African Union has identified as the continent's most untapped sector. Despite this potential, many skilled youths are migrating or attempting to migrate abroad.

"Youth must take control of the resources and make use of them," Kaskate added, "I am saying we need to wake up. It is not easy, but the Africa we want must be built now. My government gave me land, so I had to work and borrow money until I built up. Now, I am where I am."

Another young African diplomat,

Ambassador Young Peru, who works with the African Union Agenda 2063 simulation project and serves as Africa Coordinator and Director of Parliament for the Africa, Caribbean, and Pacific joint session, echoed Kaskate's feelings. He told *The Ethiopian Herald* that African youth should look inward, as developmental opportunities remain unutilized.

"When we look inward, we can find resources we thought we did not have," he said. In terms of technological development, Africans are rising, especially in the growing field of artificial intelligence. To achieve comprehensive development, Africa needs strong policies and collaborative governments, he underlined.

Ambassador Young Peru added that many

of Africa's brightest minds live here but seek opportunities abroad.

"That is why we are asking our governments to create policies that encourage more investment in the continent. Our problems are not the West or China; our problem is the belief that we cannot change ourselves."

He also stressed the importance of encouraging African innovators abroad to return home.

"If governments support them, they will come back," he indicated. Adding, many young Africans are already engaging in technological innovations, which governments should acknowledge. Young students, including those aged 12 to 18, are doing impressive work, and the African Union is working to expand these efforts.

Russia to elevate bilateral ...

among the major producers of fertilizers and soda, and the cooperation with Russia will further revitalize the capacity of Ethiopia to produce more fertilizers to meet the growing demands.

The pharmaceutical sector is another area of cooperation between Ethiopia and Russia, in which, Russia is highly interested to cooperate with Ethiopia in pharmaceutical productions, he indicated.

The manufacturing sector is an area of cooperation as Ethiopia started electric car production and assembly, he said, adding that the aviation is also another sector that

attracts investors since the East African country is becoming aviation hub in the continent.

The forum is expected to explore ways to enhance trade and investment relations between Ethiopia and Russia and gives more possibilities to interact and explore Ethiopia's investment opportunities, according to the Commissioner.

Both countries were keen to explore untapped potentials in their economic ties and enhance collaboration in trade, energy, agriculture, security and others. Ethiopia and Russia have enjoyed strong

bilateral relations for years, with growing cooperation in infrastructure development, military collaboration, and energy projects. Russia has also expressed interest in supporting Ethiopia's energy sector and investing in the country's natural resources, Tarasyuk expressed.

The forum is aimed at further strengthening the bilateral cooperation in the fields of transportation and construction, IT-technologies and cyber security, agroindustry, and tourism among the two countries. The forum will run from 12-14 November 2024 deliberating on Russia-Ethiopia economic and trade cooperation.

Opinion

Soaring high with Ethiopian Airlines' impact on global connectivity

BY ADDISALEM MULAT

It appears clear that the Ethiopian Airlines holds the status of a shining example of commendable performance and well-deserved praise within the confines of the Africa's aviation industry. Other than that it has been granted with recognition not only for its continuous improvement, but also as a distinctive mark of the pride of the continent of Africa and beyond.

Since its inception 78 years ago, it has been a bearer of the tricolor on the global horizon. It is an airline that emerged with flying colors in the red-hot aviation industry, surmounting roadblocks of every kind.

For as long as one can remember, the Airlines has been greasing the wheels of connecting Africa to the world by mounting its destination to various parts of the world. In the present circumstances, it has sustained winning the hearts and minds of the wider international community in view of its unceasing fruitful voyage.

Apart from making life easier for the people of the continent, the Airlines has been paving the way for global connectedness and economic sustainability across Africa. In the present circumstances, the Airlines which is generally known for its extraordinary capability, reliability of the operation and other things of a similar kind has sustained leading the Africa's aviation sector by bringing a number of passengers' crafts into the light.

As a manifestation and an embodiment of African strong point and advancement, the Airlines develops guidelines and formulates standards for performance excellence and exemplifies resilience and unity in defiance of challenges.

In fact, the Airline's commitment and dedication to serving passengers with integrity and unrivaled services is not limited only to good times. It was also testified in times of crises.

Notably, during the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, while many global airlines disconnected their operations, Ethiopian Airlines continued to serve communities by transporting critical vaccines and personal protective equipment to over 80 countries, including several African nations.

It has maintained receiving a diverse set of awards from various organizations due to its successful journey for considerable number of years. In a similar way, the Ethiopian Airlines' time honored determination to encourage Ethiopian tourism together with its core air transport services has been attracting the attention of the wider international community.

It becomes apparent that The Ethiopian Airlines is a gigantic airliner that has been working with various African nations with a view to strengthening African aviation industry.

These days, Ethiopian Airlines operates a fleet of 147 aircraft serving 139 international and 22 domestic flight destinations. Its rapid expansion and consistent service excellence have earned it numerous prestigious awards

and appreciations.

Similarly, it has been working day in and day out to expand the number of planes and its destinations across the globe. Against this backdrop, the desired goal has been accomplished.

Further, it sets a plan to build Africa's largest airport that can accommodate up to 130 million passengers annually.

The Airlines has been recognized as one of the Top 10 Airlines in Africa for best staff service in 2024. Business Insider Africa announced the rankings in the recent past, highlighting Ethiopian Airlines, Africa's largest airline by fleet size and network, as 6th on the list for its exceptional customer service standards.

"Ethiopian Airlines is one of the few airlines operating the Boeing 787 Dreamliner, providing passengers with a comfortable and eco-friendly flying experience. Passengers appreciate the airline's modern fleet, efficient check-in processes, and attentive staff," the report stated.

As more people fly, airlines are enhancing their services to ensure customer satisfaction and loyalty. Several African airlines in this area, meeting diverse passenger needs with top-notch service, according to the report.

Despite the fact that some groups in several occasions move heaven and earth to drag the promising moves of the Ethiopian Airlines through the mud utilizing a broad spectrum of barefaced lie and shameless falsehood, accomplishing the intended target turned out to be an uphill battle.

In a similar way, as the wider international community knows this reality on the ground like the back of their hand, nobody was in the position to lend their ears. When they failed to accomplish the intended target, they set in motion distancing themselves from their evil deeds and bamboozling the international community.

In actual fact, the Ethiopian Airlines has been working unceasingly to take the region to the next level of accomplishment by providing spectacular results and excellent outcomes.

Owing to the triumphant voyage and the prosperous odyssey, the Airlines every so often has been turning out to be the talk of the entire world. More to the point, it is inundated with a wide array of accolades, certificates, and other things of a similar kind.

The Ethiopian Airlines has become the first African carrier to receive the Airbus A350-1000, marking a historic milestone in African aviation. The airline received the advanced aircraft with a capacity of 400 passengers, making it the first in Africa to operate this model, according to information obtained from local media.

Ethiopian Airlines Group, a member of the Star Alliance Group, announced that its first Airbus A350-1000 aircraft in Africa has made the inaugural flight to Lagos, Nigeria.

"Lagos warmly welcomes Africa's first Airbus



A350-1000, becoming our first passenger flight destination with this state-of-the-art aircraft," the Airlines said.

Ethiopian Airlines, the biggest carrier in Africa, received the first A350-1000 passenger plane in Africa named: "Ethiopia: Land of Origins" from Airbus company in a ceremony held in Toulouse, France recently.

The delivery of Africa's first Airbus A350-1000 has been considered as a historical move to Ethiopian Airlines. It is also a step that signifies both the airline's growth trajectory and its commitment to operating one of the most modern fleets on the continent.

This aircraft is now joining Ethiopian's growing fleet of Airbus A350-900s and Boeing 787 Dreamliners, both known for fuel efficiency and long-haul capabilities, it was learned.

The A350-1000 variant, a larger and more powerful version of the A350 family, can accommodate up to 395 passengers across business and economy classes, with a more extensive business section than Ethiopian's existing wide-body configurations.

The Ethiopian Airlines Group has been moving forward in the right direction to connect the global community putting a plethora of effective strategies into effect that can take the Airlines to new frontiers and new heights.

In actual fact, it is becoming the choice of most travelers in Africa and the rest of the world. On the heels of its high standard service, customers over and over again have been expressing their infinite satisfaction.

As the Airlines attaches special attention to its customers, it has been bending over backwards and pulling out all the stops to ensure the satisfaction of its customers.

There is no doubt that the speediest growing and rapidly expanding Ethiopian Airlines in the entire continent of Africa over the past several decades has been witnessing spectacular changes. In the current climate, the flag carrier has been offering well-organized and actual operations in diverse sections of the world.

The Airlines which is one of Africa's leading carriers earning abundant universal accolades for its strategic attainment and perseverance to all-in-one landmark for travelers worldwide. It has been getting higher its destinations to quite a lot of destinations worldwide by ticking all the boxes.

Since time immemorial, the Airlines has been going to the ends of the earth to meet the interests of its customers. As there is

nothing which makes the airline happier than meeting the satisfaction of its customers, it has been over and over again bringing about the deliberate objective and the intended purposes by augmenting its connectivity.

The Ethiopian Airlines which is one of the oldest and most appreciated Airlines in the world has been ameliorating the aviation industry. Other than that it has been bringing a broad range of modern commercial planes and cargos to Ethiopia.

Ethiopian Airlines will be launching Air Congo that co-owned with the Congolese government and is part of Ethiopian's strategy to grow its footprint across the African continent, the Group CEO Mesfin Tasew disclosed.

Speaking to ENA, Mesfin revealed that Ethiopian Airlines, Africa's largest carrier, will launch this new airline within a month in Congo, Air Congo, with a 49% stake. Starting in early December 2024, Air Congo will be becoming operational with two Ethiopian Airlines' fleet Boeing 737-800s, Mesfin pointed out.

The Ethiopian has also planned to increase its fleet to six 737-800s within a year, the CEO revealed. The launch of Air Congo backed by Ethiopian Airlines is part of Ethiopian's strategy to increase its presence on the African continent and tap into growing demand for air travel.

This launching also marks another great move for the Ethiopian Airlines, following the success of Ethiopian's joint ventures with Togo's ASKY, Zambia Airways, and Malawi Airlines, Mesfin underscored.

The CEO added that the Ethiopian Airlines Group is on a fast and all-round track of growth in all directions to achieve its vision.

Noting that Ethiopian Airlines will hold a 49% stake in Air Congo, with the Congolese government holding 51%, however, Mesfin announced that Ethiopian will fully manage it.

The launching of Air Congo is expected to boost air travel in the Democratic Republic of Congo and enhance the revenue of the Ethiopian Airlines, where the country has sizable population and the demand for air transport is high, the CEO noted.

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

Editorial

Addis Ababa: Epicenter of African diplomacy, growth

Addis Ababa, the political heart of the African Union, and the seat of major international organizations, is steadily moving forward and transforming itself at an extraordinary pace.

Predominantly, following the massive development activities carried out under the ambitious initiatives of the 'Dine for Sheger' and 'Corridor Development' that were designed to upgrade its infrastructure and build a more livable, sustainable urban environment; the capital is moving to a new chapter in its history.

The initiatives have transformed the city's landscape, leading it to live up to its name; altering the negative narration- for not matching up its name and fame.

Currently, Addis is witnessing remarkable progress and emerging as a captivating destination not only at the continental level but also at the international stage by enhancing its competitiveness.

More than a few regional, continental, and global conferences that the city has hosted over the past two months and the upcoming ones that are scheduled to take place are solid testaments in this regard.

'The Africa Urban Forum' and the 'World Without Hunger' held at Adwa Victory Memorial Museum from September 4 to 6, 2024, and from November 5-7, 2024, respectively, the International Inter-Religious Conference took place at Haile Grand as well as the ongoing forum at the Millennium Hall are some of the showcasing that prove city's capacity to effectively organize grand conferences.

The conferences have brought together thousands of prominent participants, including leaders and ministers across the globe, making it a favorable destination for conference tourism.

In fact, Addis's move to beautification and modernization is not just a story of urban renewal. Rather, it goes beyond; and has a wide range of essences. It is a reflection of the nation's broader ambitions to foster an environment of inclusivity, innovation, and international cooperation.

What is more, it is a symbol of Africa's rising prominence in global affairs in addition to becoming a model country for how urban development can expedite development and catalyze global diplomacy and cooperation.

Its vision for the future also creates an inspiring spirit of how urban development can catalyze diplomacy, unity, and growth, concurrent with expanding its role on the global stage for peace, culture, and international dialogue.

Simultaneously, as the city continues beautifying its roads, green areas, public spaces, and corridors, it creates spaces that promote a high quality of life for its residents and those visiting Addis Ababa.

Unarguably, in the coming decades, the city will be fully revamped to the rank of an international metropolis beautifying itself and attracting leaders, innovators, and thought-leaders from around the world.

As the push to modernize Addis is part of a broader vision of the government to create a vibrant metropolis and elevate Addis Ababa as a world-class city, its corridors will not only provide physical pathways for its citizens and visitors but will also serve as a gateway toward the global community.

Thus, the ongoing massive evolution activities initiated to modernize and beautify Addis Ababa continue to position the capital not only as a political center but also as an integral player on the world stage, and a city that embodies progress, sustainability, and inclusivity.

Opinion

Coders' Initiative to Realize Digital Ethiopia

BY SOLOMON DIBABA

Five Million Ethiopian Coders is a joint initiative between the Government of Ethiopia and the Government of the United Arab Emirates. This program is an offshoot of the historic One Million Arab Coders program, which was announced in 2017 by His Highness Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum.

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed launched the program a couple of months ago, heralding an excellent opportunity for Ethiopian youth.

Computer coding, also known as programming, is the process of writing instructions for a computer to execute tasks. These instructions are written in coding languages like Python, Java, JavaScript, and C++. Coding enables computers to perform various functions, from simple calculations to complex software applications. The essence of coding is transforming human logic into a format that computers can interpret, typically involving problem-solving and logical thinking to design and implement programs.

A coder, or programmer, creates "code" to instruct a computer on how to behave or respond. This can be seen in various applications, such as developing websites, games, apps, and artificial intelligence systems. The process of coding typically involves planning a solution, breaking down tasks into smaller, manageable components, writing code, and testing to ensure the code functions as intended.

In Five Million Ethiopian Coders, Ethiopian learners will have the opportunity to gain foundational level skills across three domains: Programming Fundamentals, Data Science Fundamentals, and Android Kotlin Developer Fundamentals. Learners will be supported by mentors who will assist them on a dedicated Community Platform to unblock technical questions on a daily basis throughout the 6-7 week course. Upon successful course completion, learners will be awarded with skill-based certifications.

This article will provide a short analysis of what Ethiopia can achieve through this massive training program and the impacts of the expected outputs.

Computer coding training can significantly impact Ethiopia's workforce and economy by empowering youth with valuable tech skills and supporting the growth of the digital economy. Here are some initiatives and strategies that can enhance coding education in Ethiopia:

- Integrating coding into the school curriculum helps students develop digital skills early. Programs like Africa Code Week provide a foundation, but a sustained national effort would be impactful.
- The Ethiopian Ministry of Education could collaborate with tech companies and NGOs to offer coding programs in schools. For example, Microsoft's Hour of Code initiative offers easy-to-implement lessons for educators.
- Launching boot camps focused on web development, data science, and mobile app development can create job-ready candidates quickly. Initiatives like Gebeya Academy and Moringa School already support coding in East Africa and can be expanded.
- Partnering with platforms like Coursera, Codecademy, and Khan Academy allows Ethiopian students to access global coding

resources, which are often low-cost or free.

- Establishing innovation hubs like Ice Addis and Blue Moon can foster a community of developers, provide mentorship, and help coders transition into tech startups or freelance work. These hubs offer resources, networking opportunities, and business support, helping coders apply their skills directly to real-world problems.
- Integrating computer science programs in universities and promoting STEM fields can increase the number of Ethiopian software developers and tech entrepreneurs. Government scholarships and incentives can attract more students to these programs.
- Expanding internet access and affordability is key to ensuring that rural and underserved communities can participate in online coding programs.
- Providing subsidies or partnerships for low-cost devices allows more youth to practice and develop their coding skills.
- Partnerships with tech giants like Google, Microsoft, and IBM can offer training programs, certification opportunities, and even recruitment pipelines for Ethiopian coders. These companies often support African tech education through grants, training resources, and mentorship programs.

By equipping Ethiopian youth with coding skills, the country can drive digital innovation, boost entrepreneurship, and create a skilled workforce to meet local and global tech demands, fueling economic growth and supporting Ethiopia's goals for digital transformation.

Ethiopian learners will have the opportunity to gain foundational level skills across three domains:

Programming Fundamentals, Data Science Fundamentals, and Android Developer Fundamentals. Learners will be supported by mentors who will assist them on a dedicated Community Platform to unblock technical questions on a daily basis throughout the 6-7 week course. Upon successful course completion, learners will be awarded with skill-based certifications.

According to the organizers of the training program, training in Programming Fundamentals is one of the tracks in which trainings are provided in web development, how web pages are structured from scratch using a language called Hypertext Markup Language (HTML) and how this HTML structure is designed and styled using another language called Cascading Style Sheet (CSS) and finally how this styled structure gets converted into an interactive application using JavaScript.

The other track of training is entitled Data Science Fundamentals. This track aims to teach the core fundamentals of data analysis and refine your ability to work with massive and complex data sets. One would learn to manipulate and prepare data for analyzing and create visualizations for telling stories with data.

The other important stream relates to Android Developer, which deals with how application layouts are created and how interaction with users takes place, and the basics of Kotlin language specially designed with speed in mind. It compiles faster and makes your application more lightweight and prevents them from increasing in size.

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Office of the CEO

Tel. 011-126-42-22

Fax. 251-011-156-98-62

email- epa@press.et

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Department

email: etpresspromotion@gmail.com

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

Telegram :- 0976084707 - press

Editor-in-Chief: Worku Belachew

email- workubelachew@press.et

Address- Nifas Silk Lafto Sub-city

Woreda - 05, House No----

Tel- +251 111 26 41 98

Managing Editor: Wakuman Kudama

Email: wakuma220@gmail.com

Deputy Editors-in-Chief:

Alem Hailu

Elizabeth Mengistu

Zekarias Woldemariam

Desta Geberehiwot

Daniel Beyene

Website: www.press.et

email: ethiopianherald@press.et

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The Ethiopian Herald

Business & Economy



Ways to make agriculture sector rewarding

BY MENGESHA AMARE

Among the ways to visualize contribution of agriculture to development is by measuring forward linkages with other sectors of the economy in the country. Forward linkages mean economic activity generated beyond the farm as products move along the supply chain to final consumers.

Over time, policies and incentives should be implemented to stimulate more value added activities so that the economic impact of every drop of coin generated at the farm level increases.

Asked about the contribution the agricultural has been making to economic growth, Shiferaw Mendida, an agro-economist graduated from Arba Minch University said agriculture is a key contributor to economic growth in many ways. He said, “A range of tributes can be cited like job creation, food security, generating higher incomes, which reflects strong agricultural sectors have higher per capita incomes, total factor productivity, as agriculture contributes to economic growth by positively impacting total factor productivity and global trade that has linked the nation with other nations via fostering planetary commerce.”

As to him, among the variety of means to boost agricultural output improving inputs, enhancing management techniques, expanding irrigation farming, and using technology and farm management practices have come to the forefront as these means are of paramount importance in increasing agricultural production and productivity.

He said, “A strong agricultural economy brings social progress by increasing productivity, employment and income. No doubt, agriculture is the main driver of development in most rural areas. As demand for staple foods, agricultural commodities has increasingly risen in developing countries like ours, the call for meeting these needs the agricultural and food sectors must be modernized and well reinigorated.”

Shiferaw further stated that sustainable economic development brings social progress through the creation of jobs and income, as well as the integration of poverty groups, young people and the unemployed. Markets require public support and regulation, too. The economy is organized along value chains, because the point of reference for all economic activity is the products and the markets on which they are sold.

As to him, the purpose of establishing economic structures and increasing value creation in the nation is to come up with reliable development and ecologically sustainable as well as socially equitable forcefulness.

As far as Ethiopia is concerned, a range of institutions are working with all stakeholders to develop strategies for agricultural-based economic development. Agricultural-based economic development is to be understood as bridging the gap between market-oriented development and numerous development policy issues and goals, above all poverty reduction and gender justice, adaptation to climate change and ecological transformation of the economy, and the formation of structures for public action and participation.

According to him, the formats for agricultural-based economic development are correspondingly diverse: from the comprehensive promotion of certain sectors of the agricultural economy to measures in specific areas, such as cooperation among farmers, contract farming, agricultural financing or laws and standards. Every approach and every measure must take into account the overall framework and all parts of the value chain, in fact.

The position of agriculture within the economy seems more important in Ethiopia so and less important in developed countries. The contribution of agriculture in food, raw materials, and financial surplus including foreign exchange to invest is essential for the process of industrialization, for which the country has been long aspiring.

“The transition from a traditional agrarian economy to an industrialized economy is a dynamic process that inevitably involves complex interactions among many economic as well as social factors. The role of agriculture in the transitional process varies conditioned by factor endowment, institutional arrangements, cultural background, historical factors, policy choices, etc.,” he underscored.

Yes, he added, one can identify several important roles played by agriculture in the transition process, and agriculture generates markets for industrial products, especially light industrial products which have ready markets in the agricultural sector.

He further stated that the sector provides food and raw materials for industrial processing, builds adequate food supplies

which are a crucial factor in sustaining price stability, provides exports to earn foreign exchange, supplies the non-agricultural sector with capital and labor through the gradual accumulation of entrepreneurship and marketing capabilities in the agricultural sector as well as eases the process of industrialization.

True, the agricultural sector supports industrialization by providing a source of labor, capital and raw materials to the nonagricultural sectors and by generating demand for industrial products. The relationship between agriculture and industry may be one of interdependence and complementary, too. For example, while providing inputs to industry, agriculture receives from industry modern farm inputs, advanced technologies, and consumption goods to increase agricultural productivity.

As the natural resource base on which agriculture depends is poor and deteriorating, productivity growth is therefore increasingly more difficult to achieve. Hence, focusing on the sector is the best remedy to come up with lasting solutions thereby promoting production.

Recognizing and correctly valuing the performance, critical importance and increasing role of agriculture in economic development have important implications for public sector budgetary allocations and actual expenditures in agriculture, which continue to be low and inadequate, he added.

Economic development and pro-poor growth should receive due emphasis, of course as economic growth can petty lead to poverty reduction. As farmers struggle with low productivity and high subsistence needs, low input use, low incomes, poor infrastructure, high risks, and the like, the amount of profit to be made in market chains for food staples remains low and unattractive for much private investment. However, as to Shiferaw, if agriculture is given due attention, it would definitely contribute to environmental services such as soil conservation, watershed services, biodiversity, and carbon sequestration; poverty reduction apart from ensuring food security.

Generally, a number of ways have to be employed to help the agriculture sector grow. To mention but a few: smart water management; reduce water usage in agriculture by using smart water management practices; boost irrigation, which refers to develop irrigation to increase

food production; reduce dependency on rain-fed agriculture, and improve household incomes. As to him, as expanding irrigation farming can help boost agricultural output, the Ethiopian government has a plan to replace wheat imports with local production by using irrigated farming techniques.

He said, “Agriculture remains a critical part of Ethiopia’s economy, accounting for 40% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), 80% of exports, and an estimated 75% of the country’s workforce. Sector’s productivity remains low due to limited private investment, fragmented markets, environmental degradation, and recurrent shocks. These challenges need to be well addressed for the betterment of the sector.”

He further stated that the country has to foster private enterprise development in the food and agriculture system in order to increase employment, income, and access to healthy diets. True, he said, increasing access for small and medium-sized agri-food enterprises and smallholder farmers to business development services including finance, selected seed, improved technologies, mechanization, marketing, and the digital economy are quite important in this regard.

Generally, the agriculture sector has to be given due emphasis as it has long been the basis of economic growth and economic sovereignty though a lot remains to be done along this line. Endowed with a range of arable land, irrigable potential, abundantly available water source, it is quite unfair to talk about food insecurity in Ethiopia.

The agricultural production systems in the country have to be made well mechanized to help the sector grow better. Sector’s contribution to the economic growth in general and poverty eradication in particular has to be credited and all possible efforts need to be exerted to put the sector in a good position.

Job creation, food security, national income generation are resulted from strong agricultural sector coupled with viable economic growth are immensely attributable to national change. Hence, these moves are expected to be well nurtured and taken care of for they are paramount importance in fostering economic sovereignty. Ethiopia has to pursue the right track it has been trekking so far.

Art & Culture

The efficacy of cultural exchange for changing African narrative

BY MEKDES TAYE (PhD)

Africa has been raised and identified by the stories that amplify its degradations and backwardness in almost all subjects for centuries. The region has been described with words like hunger, conflict, displacement, dispute, poverty, war, pandemics, and what have you? Since the influencing actors are still in favor of stretching this story, the continent is forced to pass through this challenge for periods. But these days' discussions and agendas are progressively being done to combat the trend. African people are increasingly bringing issues that are aimed at reshaping and changing the entrenched negative narrative regarding Africa.

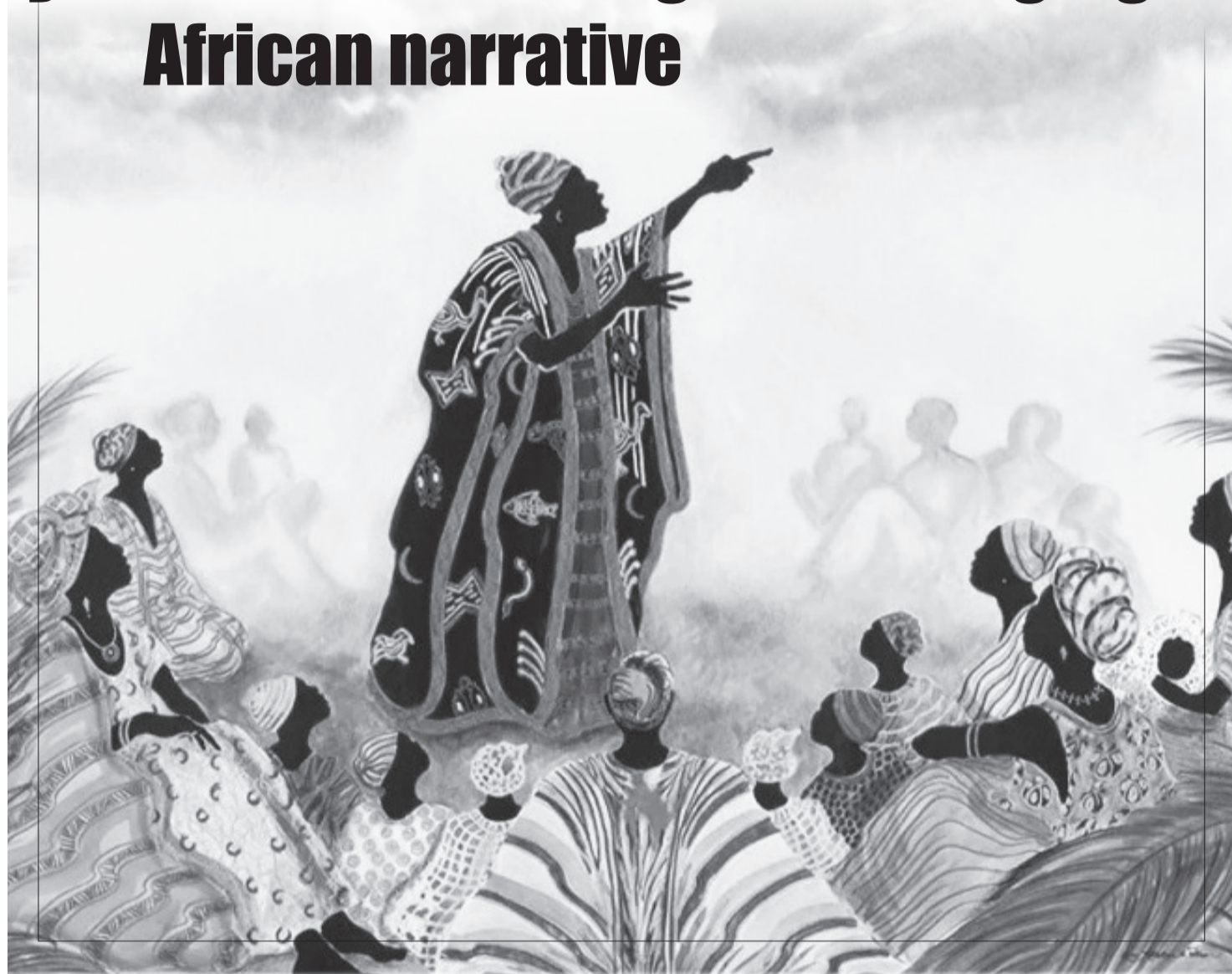
Discussions, panels, conferences, and research are continuously under examination on the continent. The panel made in Zoom with three participants is found to be very relevant to this article. The basic issues raised in the discussion are presented below. Have a good read.

PRCA TV, based in Uganda Kampala, was organizing an online panel discussion on how to change the African narrative. The two panelists were from South Africa and Ethiopia. The moderator picks up the issue about the positive things that the continent had to celebrate and tell the world to be raised by the panelists. Leul Mekonnen the CEO of Spotlight Ethiopia was the first to address the question. He said, "Africa is the most action-packed and politically, culturally and economically the most complex continent in the globe." He added that the region is extremely fast in adapting mobile technologies and digitalization. The cultural diversity and tourism industry are also unique and fascinating things that can be shared to the world.

Christina, the creative group head of Razor PR, from South Africa believed that Africa is an incredibly diverse continent and that each country has its own innovative potential and can create startup technologies. Thus, this potential can be used as the best way to change the narratives that the world is using to identify the continent. She believed that African people are very creative that this is one thing to be told to the world.

Juliet Cele from the same office was asked about the things that Africa should consider for changing its narrative. She said that the first thing is thinking over the type of audience that Africa had. It is important to know the predisposed perceptions and needs of the audiences to change their perception. She believed that it was the media platform that affected Africa to keep its degrading identification in the minds of the universe. For her, the global media is dominated by the champions so that Africa had been forced to be represented in a way they needed.

As the panelists commonly rose the major media platforms hold their audiences using the approach that they had as nations. But



in the case of Africa building one common media platform could be very challenging that the continent is composed of diverse nations, nationalities and languages. Thus, the most agreeable technique which was raised to be used as a best means to change the narratives of Africa is culture. Leul especially stresses that for African people the basic point to be underlined is that people should own their own stories. The factual stories should be narrated by African themselves. Thus, in Ethiopia he said, the Ethiopian Airline is functioning as the 'diplomat' in speaking out the identity of Ethiopians.

He said that the airline had a variety of techniques to introduce the who of the people. The magazine and the digital media platform carried the culture of the nations that mount up over 85 in the country when accessed while looking for the airline's services. The dressing style, foods, and basic cultures are detailed in its platform. It also included the basic tourist attraction areas to be visited in the country, apart from the mentioned basic pillars. Ethiopian Airlines also practically announces the identity and culture of the people through the dressing styles and customer handling strategies of its hostess. The host's greeting and each body gesture are technically modified as per the real indigenous cultures of Ethiopians that newcomers did find clues from the service.

Leul mentioned the film industry of Nigeria which is the best tool to correct the negative narration of Africa. But since the industry is taken by Netflix the contents and gist are being abused by the owners. Thus it is impossible to bring the stories of Africa independently. Thus, based on this lesson Ethiopia is planning an independent

platform for film industries. He said Ethiopia is steaming a platform that is going to be launched. Thus, Netflix is not the player in this market including Google Amazon prim. Thus, as he said this platform in association with Ethiopian filmmakers, is a great leap forward in terms of owning the country's content. As he confirmed this is the best step to own and control his own story and to avoid any stereotypes on the nation's identity.

Christina raises the idea of metaphor. She believed that these days the digital media platform can be used as an opportunity to revisit and transform metaphoric expressions in various forms. She believed that innovations, skills, and ideas that promote the positive image of Africa can be easily loaded on media platforms.

The last point the moderator of the panel raised was what should the next generation do to change the Africa narrative. Leul, on his turn, says, "We Africans need to be honest to ourselves more than anything." He added that education is at the heart of this issue. He said we need to re-educate ourselves regarding the facts of the continent. "We need to know each other." He believed that Africans should be sensitized on the principle of pan-Africanism. He believed that before talking about the continent, the people of the region should first know and understand the history, politics, culture, and economic backgrounds of countries in the continent. Leul affirmed that the potential of cultural exchange between African communities is so low that it exposes the region to various forms of stereotypes. Thus, cultural exchange is very relevant for knowing and identifying the nations on the continent, which is crucial for narrating the story based on knowledge.

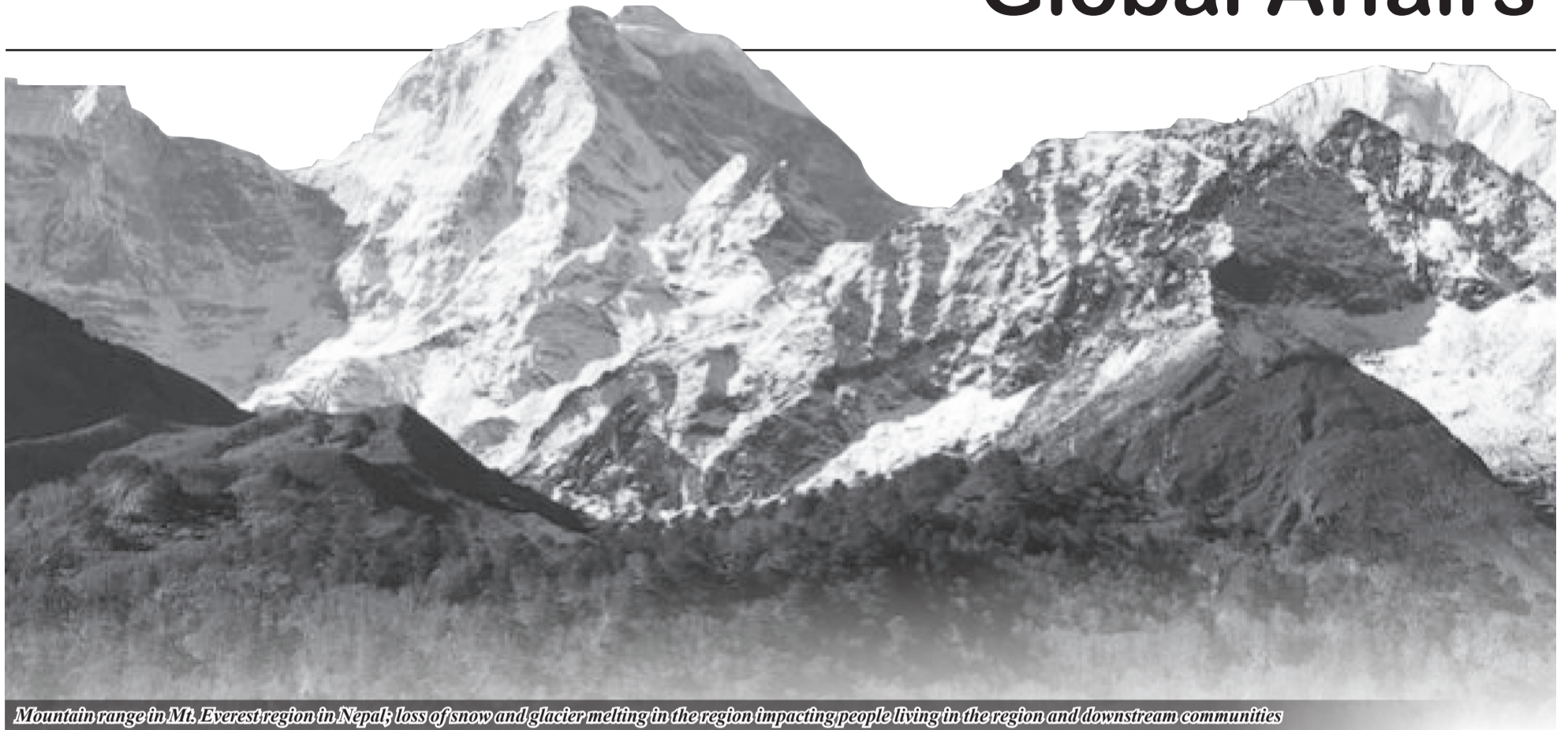
Thus, before communicating about Africa on a given media platform, it is necessary to know the people through education and cultural exchange.

The panelists believed that there is no quick fix on the issues, but it is at hand to start the journey through education and cultural exchange in various ways.

The idea of creating one strong medium for Africa, as Leul pointed out, is very difficult since the countries of Africa are very diverse in their identities. Thus, the best and safest way to be followed for shifting the narrative and implementation of African culture. It is believed to be the best steppingstone for alerting oneself about the people of the continent. Since culture is the softest and simplest aspect to enrich a given nation, it is a key to paving the way to knowing about the people. Cultural exchange, by its very nature, is a peaceful approach that never demands the application of language. Through this sector, the identity and reality of the people can be learned. This knowledge is a base to narrate the real Africa in many forms. Juliet was also arguing that cultural exchange is the best tool to better narrate African reality. The people of the continent need to be bolder on their communal issues and need to connect more in a way that can transform the negative narratives.

Thus, conversation and connections are more impactful. Christina argued that more spaces for Africans need to be made to expose their potential. Thus, she believed in the expansion of investments in every aspect. African creativity and possibility need to be supported so that Africans can boost their efficacy that can alter the previous narration next to cultural exchange.

Global Affairs



Mountain range in Mt. Everest region in Nepal; loss of snow and glacier melting in the region impacting people living in the region and downstream communities

Cryosphere crisis: Scientists warn of devastating global impacts without urgent climate action

Scientists warn of vastly higher impacts on billions of people's livelihood and cost to the global economy by the accelerating losses in the world's snow and ice regions, aka the cryosphere.

Over 50 leading cryosphere scientists released an annual report on the status of the world's ice stores on Tuesday (November 12) at the UN Climate Conference (COP29) in Baku. An updated report on the world's ice warns of "drastically higher costs without immediate emissions reductions."

The State of the Cryosphere Report 2024 titled *Lost Ice, Global Damage*, coordinated by the International Cryosphere Climate Initiative (ICCI), says that current climate commitments are nowhere near to avoid irreversible consequences for billions of people from global ice loss.

After analyzing most recent cryosphere science, scientists underscore that the costs of loss and damage if our current level of emissions continues—leading towards a rise of 3°C or more—will be even more extreme, with many regions experiencing sea-level rise or water resource loss well beyond adaptation limits in this century. Reports say mitigation also becomes more costly due to feedback from thawing permafrost emissions and loss of sea ice.

For the first time, the report notes a growing scientific consensus that melting Greenland and Antarctic ice sheets may be slowing important ocean currents at both poles, with potentially dire consequences for a much colder northern Europe and greater sea-level rise along the U.S. East

Cryosphere scientists are pleading for urgent climate action to avoid catastrophe for coastal cities and downstream communities in the mountain regions

Coast.

Cryosphere scientists (ICCI) stress that only definitive and rapid measures to reduce emissions can avert the worst loss and damage impacts of ice and snow loss and cut the ultimate costs to vulnerable nations and high emitters alike.

"The drastic changes we are seeing in the cryosphere while mountain and downstream regions all over the planet are suffering floods, droughts, and landslides provide the most compelling arguments we could have for immediate climate action," said Regine Hock, an IPCC author and glaciologist. "The cryosphere can't wait. It must be put at the top of the global climate agenda."

To underscore the situation, scientists gave an example of the Greenland Ice Sheet, which is currently losing 30 million tons of ice per hour, "something I never thought I would see in my lifetime," said IPCC scientist Dr. Rob DeConto. "If climate pledges are not taken seriously, global temperature rise may exceed 3°C, with Antarctic ice loss potentially causing sea levels to rise much faster than we think."

Cryosphere scientists are pleading for urgent climate action to avoid catastrophe for coastal cities and downstream communities in the mountain regions.

Dr. James Kirkham, an author on the report, said, "We are not talking about the distant future; the impacts of cryosphere loss are already felt by millions. But the speed of action we take today decides the size and speed of the challenge to which future generations will need to

adapt. The impacts of cryosphere loss will only become greater with every hour that leaders delay action now."

Impact is not only limited to coastal or ice sheet regions but also impacts the day-to-day livelihood of Himalayan regions too.

"There is a very clear connection between changes in the cryosphere in high mountain regions and downstream impacts," climate scientist Dr. Miriam Jackson said. "Some of these are related to hazards, including thawing of permafrost (frozen ground) and floods that originate in glacial lakes, commonly called GLOFs—glacier lake outburst floods."

In Asia, the frequency of GLOFs is expected to triple by century's end without substantial emission reductions. Jackson added, "Glaciers are continuing to shrink, affecting and changing water runoff. Snow cover and number of snow-covered days are also showing decreasing trends, affecting people who depend on melt water runoff for irrigation."

A change in water resources will affect agriculture and probably lead to higher food prices.

To avoid multilayered impacts, urgent climate responses and emissions cuts are necessary.

"Whilst some devastating losses and impacts are now locked in," Kirkham said, "how bad the intensity and severity of cryosphere impacts will continue to grow in the future is still very much to be decided based on the policy decisions we will make in the coming five or so years."

SOURCE: INTER PRESS SERVICE

Law & Politics

A cooperation gaining momentum with new initiatives

BY EYUEL KIFLU

Ethiopia and Russia are two historical countries which enhance cooperation in the context of new developments within the BRICS and the Summit Russia-Africa. During the past year that Ethiopia became a member of the BRICS group of nations; both countries are interested in developing their foreign policy dialogue and partnership.

Appointment of Ethiopia to the group is considered to have provided ample chance of enhancing the relations between the two countries. In the 16th BRICS summit from 22nd to 24th of October 2024, in Russia, Ethiopia's Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed and Russia's President Vladimir Putin had talks on diplomatic relations. They both avowed high interest in enhancing the cooperation of the two organizations.

Prime Minister Abiy express his deep gratitude to President Putin for the constructive discussion, the relations between Ethiopia and the Russian Federation are only developing. He also said that membership in BRICS group of which Russia is a founder has created opportunities for improving economic relations.

He commends Russia for being determined to stay on financial stability despite the odds and at the same time assures Ethiopia's commitment to strengthening up the partnership. In his remarks, President Putin pointed to the progress in diplomatic relations in the last one year saying that bilateral trade between Ethiopia and Russia has been showing positive growth. He reiterated Russia's determination towards diversification of relations including now in the pharmaceuticals as well as in other fields.

It will be recalled that as part of the strategies aimed at improving relations with Ethiopia and other African countries, President Putin declared that the Chairperson of the Council of the Russian Federation will have to visit Ethiopia soon. Collectively, the two countries show that their relations have historical dimensions and strong bonds enhance by religious similarities as well as healthy people interconnection.

In a recent interview with the Ethiopian News Agency (ENA), Russian Ambassador to Ethiopia Evgeny Terekhin has also stressed the accelerating bilateral and multilateral

cooperation between Russia and Ethiopia, after the meetings of the heads of the two states at the Russia-Africa summit 2019 and 2023.

According to the words of the Ambassador Evgeny Terekhin, there is tremendous political trust and confidence between Putin and Abiy. At the same time, he pointed to the fact that the meetings have enhanced the process of the formation of bilateral cooperation in various fields several times faster than without such top-level meetings.

"We coordinate very much inside of different international institutions especially where we work on the key issues of the both countries are interested," the ambassador said, adding that he has high expectation this cooperation will be shown in more sectors soon including and focusing on energy, trade and food security ,etc.

This is what prompted him to hold the view that the Economic Partnership is gradually improving even though he agreed with the argument that the improvement rate may not be as high as possible. "In the economic sphere, we are advancing, and I see the changes in this direction," he said.

Of course, the presence of Ethiopia within the BRICS and during the Russian presidency was also noted by Ambassador Terekhin. He pointed out that this format facilitates more effective efforts to build up mutual cooperation, as a wide list of advanced partnership initiatives is being implemented.

Russia and Ethiopia are quite clear on the nature of the world order that they wish to see one that is, multipolar and based on law, including international law and the UN Charter. The ambassador added that Russia has been keen on enhancing the number of scholarships for Ethiopian students' yearly thus enhancing people to people relations.

"We are also deepening our cultural relations as well," he said, noted the Russian cultural events that took place in Ethiopia during Meskel festival (the finding of the true cross) such Russian chorus from a Russian monastery at Meskel Square in Addis Ababa. He too called for similar cultural entertainments in the future as a way of enhancing relations between the two countries.

Moreover, Ethiopia's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Gedion Timothewos (PhD) had a productive meeting with his

Russian counterpart on 8th November 2024. This conversation was provided prior to the First meeting of the Russia-Africa Partnership Forum in Sochi and was devoted to the plan of further cooperation and the major challenges in the Russian-African relations.

Despite the fact that, the two ministers reaffirmed their desire to extend the already existing bilateral relationship by increasing economic cooperation as well as improving the relations in different fields of common interests such as Trade, Energy, Agriculture and Security.

Russia has also displayed a lot of interest in funding Ethiopia's energy sector and utility of natural resources.

The current kind of economic interaction between the two countries can be said to be growing.

It also from November 12 to 14, 2024, Addis Ababa hosting the international business forum "Russia-Ethiopia: Time Does Not Wait!" which was held under the Russian Coordinating Committee for Economic Cooperation with African Countries (AFROCOM) together with the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the Russian Federation, under the support of the Roscongress Foundation.

This forum will afford Russian and Ethiopian businessmen the opportunity to build good business relations and successfully introduce Russian goods and technologies to the African continent. Presenting companies are from different fields such as industry, agriculture, transportation, banking and financial, digital solution, and educational sectors.

Some of the members of the Ethiopian delegation are the Ethiopian Investment Holding, Ethio Telecom, the Ethiopian Construction Works Corporation and industrial parks. Mali, Burkina Faso and Ivory Coast will also be represented.

The Chairman of AFROCOM, Igor Morozov, said that this economic forum is an important step towards marketing Russian high-tech products and other enterprises that could meet the need of the Ethiopia's market.

Overall, Ethiopia has a clearer potential for contributing to improving the Ethiopia- Russia cooperation which may lead to increased understanding of the realities of economic and geopolitical regional and global orientation.

Russia and Ethiopia are quite clear on the nature of the world order that they wish to see one that is, multipolar and based on law, including international law and the UN Charter

International News

Ghana: Avoid Hate Speech Ahead of Elections! ... NCCE Cautions Ghanaians

The Chairperson of the National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE), Ms Kathleen Addy, has cautioned Ghanaians against hate speech as it could cause conflict in the lead-up to the General Election.

She asked citizens to be mindful of their utterances because most individuals react to what they hear in different ways, which can lead to misunderstanding and rivalry.

Ms Addy made the call at a two-day annual conference, organized by the Society of Catholic Social Scientists, in Accra on Friday, on the theme: "The voice of the people: Elections for a more responsive government," to discuss ways of improving democracy in the country, and to educate citizens on electoral issues.

"It is not good for politicians to sit on social media and spread insults since it can lead to violence, so let's change and avoid these negative sentiments," she said.

Ms Addy urged Ghanaians to consider electing their leaders based on proper assessment, and not individuals who sought to attack and rain insults on their political opponents.

Ms Addy said that the NCCE was dedicated to promoting democratic values through public civic education.

She encouraged citizens to participate in the upcoming elections, saying voting was an important civic responsibility.

"Voting is the backbone of democracy, and without it, democratic societies crumble. Democracy thrives when citizens actively participate," she said.

Ms Addy said that inclusive citizen engagement was essential for democratic governance and crucial to ensuring sustainable development

He advised citizens to refrain from misinformation and disinformation as it could lead to misunderstanding and tension in the country.

"Misinformation is very predominant since the elections are approaching, and people use social media to push their own agenda and share all sort of information, which are untrue and misleading," she noted.

The Executive Secretary of the National Media Commission (NMC), Mr George Sarpong, highlighted that the credibility of this year's elections would be on the performance of the Electoral Commission (EC) as well as the media.

He said that the NMC was working with relevant bodies to ensure that news coverage was based on verified facts but not speculation.

"As we go to elections, there is the need for citizens to trust the Electoral Commission and work collectively with it to promote a smooth electoral process," he said.

Mr Sarpong also encouraged journalists to familiarise themselves with provisions of the 1992 Constitution, and inform the public about the rights and duties of citizens.

He also appealed to the media to refrain from using their platforms to spread misinformation, personal attacks and divisive utterances.

Source: Ghanaian Times.



Africa: New Surveys of Children Highlight Education Challenges Across Eastern and Southern Africa

Johannesburg — Ahead of World Children's Day 2024, data from multiple countries reveal children's awareness of their rights, but significant barriers to education persist

A new survey, conducted by UNICEF in collaboration with national governments and partners, reveals both encouraging awareness and pressing challenges faced by children across Eastern and Southern Africa. Collected from over 5,471 children across multiple countries, the data highlights significant barriers to education even as children become increasingly aware of their rights. The findings, released just ahead of World Children's Day 2024, underscore the urgent need for policies and support to address these obstacles and improve educational access across the region.

Children from Botswana, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe took part in U-report surveys, online polls and face-to-face consultations which highlight that over 87 per cent of children are aware of their rights, with 50 per cent recognizing their right to education as one of their most important rights. Despite this awareness, significant barriers persist. The survey indicates that the

lack of learning materials, school fees, long distances to school and overworked teachers, are critical challenges. Encouragingly, 62 per cent of children reported feel they have a role to play in improving the quality of education. During a virtual consultation, many girls raised concerns about access to menstrual hygiene products and called for schools to improve their support for menstrual health and hygiene.

Over 14,000 children in Tanzania recently participated in a survey exploring the country's Vision 2050. The results from one of the surveys reveal that 40 per cent of U-Reporters believe education should be the nation's top priority by 2050, while 30 per cent prioritize infrastructure. When it comes to education reforms, digital literacy emerged as the leading focus, followed closely by entrepreneurship and vocational training.

UNICEF Somalia recently held consultations with 321 children from five states to inform its new country program strategy. The face-to-face interviews revealed that a significant portion of the children, particularly those who are internally displaced and from minority communities (totalling 50 per cent of the 321), reported that they do not attend school in a safe, clean, or

accessible environment. Notably, girls—making up 52 per cent of the sample—and children with disabilities face particularly significant challenges. Although results vary considerably across geographic and demographics, the country has an overall primary school enrolment rate of only 34 per cent. Additionally, many children indicated that their schools lack essential learning materials, such as desks and chairs. Furthermore, many girls expressed feeling unsafe both in their schools and in the surrounding neighborhoods.

Education challenges faced by children across sub-Saharan Africa are stark, with 9 out of 10 children aged 10 years old unable to read a simple text or solve basic math problems. This lack of foundational skills threatens not only the futures of individual children but also the overall development of nations.

As World Children's Day approaches, UNICEF calls on governments across the region to prioritize education in their national budgets – devoting at least 20 per cent to learning – to help ensure all children have access to quality, inclusive, and relevant education.

Source: United Nations Children's Fund

Africa: Russia-Africa Partnership Gains 'More and More' Strength

Monrovia — African ministers attending the Russia-Africa Partnership Forum in Sochi have been assured of Russia's 'total support' to the continent in 'different sectors', reports the [BBC](#).

The statement, made on behalf of Russian leader Vladimir Putin by his Foreign Minister, Sergie Lavrov, comes at a time when some African nations have severed ties with the West over accusations of interference or acts of neocolonialism.

Analysts say Russia is seeking to bring countries from other regions of the world, including Africa, into its sphere of influence as it faces increasing isolation from the West over its military campaign

in Ukraine.

Putin said the forum was an opportunity for Russia to promote its vision of a "bipolar world", according to [Moscow Times](#). He said his country's relations with Africa have been strengthening "more and more". Three countries in the Sahel region of Africa - Niger, Mali, and Burkina Faso - recently [turned their backs](#) on former colonial power France.

Mali's Foreign Minister Abdoulaye Diop is [reported](#) to have said "Russia is not a Colonial power" - a reinforcement of Russia's position not to meddle in the internal Affairs of African nations. "On the contrary," the minister is quoted as saying,

"it has stood shoulder to shoulder with the African peoples and other peoples around the world to help them emerge from the colonial system."

Putin promised to work with African nations in their "struggle against terrorism and extremism, combating epidemics, food problems and the consequences of natural disasters".

The Sochi meeting is the first Ministerial Conference of the Russia-Africa Partnership Forum, which the organizers say is to build on the success of the second Russia-Africa Summit held in 2023.

Source: [allafrica.com](#)

Planet Earth

Developing, renovating hidden opportunities

BY GIRMACHEW GASHAW

Before things changed to normal and all the challenges encountered turned into multiple opportunities, no one was visionary enough to think about the possibility of extracting something new from Lake Beseqa, which was once a public threat but has now become a tangible opportunity.

Lake Beseqa is one of the Rift Valley Lakes located to the Northeast in the Fentale district, approximately 230 km from the Central Rift Valley Cluster Lakes. Its exact location is 210 km East of Finfinne, adjacent to Metahara town.

It is a small saline lake that offers lake scenery and some aquatic bird viewing, especially pelicans. What makes it unique is that it was not formed by the drainage of watershed collected in a deep basin, but emerged on flat land from underground water.

The lake had no natural outflows and has expanded dramatically in size since the 1960s due to factors such as groundwater discharge, inflow from hot springs, and excess irrigation water joining the lake through subsurface flows.

Once upon a time, when this writer visited the lake, it was continuing its expansion and was a significant challenge for surrounding communities and various stakeholder groups. The writer witnessed the lake submerging even government institutions, including schools and hospitals.

At that time, there were attempts to slow the expansion of the lake, and a two-tunnel system was built to release excess water from the lake into the Awash River. This saved the nearby upstream town of Metehara from being submerged. However, sulfuric and saline water from the lake have also affected the river's water quality, impacting farmers and agro-pastoralists downstream by aggravating soil salinity and reducing farm yields.

Due to the daunting challenge, Hotels and households began to leave Metehara town out of fear of being submerged by the expanding lake. Experts suggested that addressing these challenges requires considering the complex interconnectedness of the Awash Basin, the lake, its users, and its history.

At that instant, no one wanted to be farsighted and observe the opportunities that the lake brings to the surrounding community, except to talk about the challenges they faced. Some mentioned the possibility of generating 50MW of electricity power, but they quickly dismissed this idea, claiming that the cost outweighed the benefits that could be gained from the lake. Until the new government led by Prime Minister Abiy came to power, without exaggeration, no one dreamed of transforming the place into a tourist attraction.

When the real sons and daughters of this



Beynouna Village is a unique getaway that has undergone a remarkable transformation from a landscape of volcanic remnants into a peaceful retreat and flourishing green farmland.

country saw the lake not as a challenge but as an opportunity, they brought about a plan that transformed the previous environment into an amazing tourist destination. Within a short period of time, the reform government turned this magnificent plan into a reality. Recently, the Office of the Prime Minister (PMO) announced the launching of the hidden gem of Lake Beseqa, a secret called 'Beynouna Village.'

"Today, we unveil the hidden gem of Lake Beseqa: a secret called 'Beynouna Village,'" the Office revealed.

Beynouna Village is a unique getaway that has undergone a remarkable transformation from a landscape of volcanic remnants into a peaceful retreat and flourishing green farmland. Located near the town of Metehara and proximate to Awash National Park, Beynouna Village is a popular destination that combines traditional architecture with modern construction, creating more tourism potential for the area.

Prime Minister Abiy, speaking at the inaugural ceremony, noted that the area where Beynouna Village is located has a very difficult climate and landscape. However, he stated that it was possible to realize this stunning village by coping with these challenges.

Beynouna Village stands as a testament to the belief that anything is possible, the premier underscored.

Apart from entertainment facilities, the village also includes fruit cultivation and the development endeavors of the Bounty of the Basket Initiative, drawing important lessons linking agriculture with tourism destinations.

The cultivation of oranges, lemons, papaya, mangoes, as well as livestock development of chickens, camels, cattle, and goats is being carried out in the village.

Prime Minister Abiy, in a social media post, stated, "We will build on our efforts in the tourism sector and continue showcasing

Ethiopia to the world."

The construction of the village has been carried out through collaborative efforts between the governments of Ethiopia and the UAE, as well as the private sector.

The Prime Minister announced that the management of the village will be handed over to the Skylight Hotel.

Looking at the ongoing development efforts and witnessing the struggles of the Ethiopian government with nature, one can easily predict a prosperous future for the country. In addition to identifying untapped potential, it is imperative to promote both developed and underdeveloped facilities that will play a significant role in advancing Ethiopia's economic growth and enhancing its reputation. In order to continue this development effort, the hands of partners must continue to be extended to further accelerate the ongoing growth and development.