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## Ethiopia, Saudi to deepen economic ties

BY ESSEYE MENGISTE

**ADDIS ABABA** – Ethiopia has extended an invitation to Saudi Arabian investors to expand their participation in its economy, following discussions with the Saudi Arabian Chamber of Commerce.

During a meeting in Riyadh, Foreign Affairs State Minister Mesganu Arga (Amb.) engaged with leaders of the Saudi Arabian Chamber of Commerce to explore avenues for enhancing economic cooperation between the two nations, according to the Saudi Press Agency.

Ambassador Mesganu emphasized the strategic partnership between Ethiopia and Saudi Arabia, particularly in the economic sector. He expressed Ethiopia's eagerness for increased Saudi investment, assuring that the

See Ethiopia, Saudi ... Page 3

## Stakeholders see promising future for mining in Ethiopia

BY TSEGAYE TILAHUN

**ADDIS ABABA** – Investors are optimistic that addressing challenges such as outdated technology and a shortage of skilled professionals, coupled with investment in modern technologies and expertise, could unlock Ethiopia's mining sector's full potential

Approached by *The Ethiopian Herald*, they expressed belief that

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Prof. Kassahun Tesfaye

## Ethiopia implements 5 projects to improve health, agriculture:

**BETin**

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## Experts hail GLI in bid to boost forest Mgmt.

BY HAILE DEMEKE

**ADDIS ABABA**—The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) has commended Ethiopia's forest management efforts, recognizing the nation's progress in forest restoration and development through the transformative Green Legacy Initiative (GLI).

This initiative, spearheaded by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD), has restored millions of hectares of degraded land, advancing Ethiopia's green economy goals, combating climate change, and improving local livelihoods. The forestry sector now contributes 12.8 percent to the national GDP, underlining its economic significance.

Ethiopia has set an ambitious target of restoring 15 million hectares of degraded forest lands by 2025, with plans to leverage forest resources to transition to a middle-income economy by 2030. The FSC's recent launch of the Interim Forest Stewardship



Annah Agasha



Jens Kanstrup

Standard (IFSS) for Ethiopia further accelerates these efforts by providing a framework for voluntary accreditation and certification. This milestone connects Ethiopia to global markets for certified forest products, ensuring the country's adherence

to responsible forest management practices.

Speaking to *The Ethiopian Herald*, Annah Agasha, FSC Coordinator for Eastern Africa, emphasized that Ethiopia now joins

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Kassahun Gofe (PhD)

## MoTRI says inflation fight gains ground

- Thousands of illegal traders penalized

BY YESUF ENDRIS

**ADDIS ABABA** – The Ministry of Trade and Regional Integration (MoTRI) has reported progress in stabilizing the market through its inflation management strategies.

Thousands of illegal traders, identified as key contributors to inflation, have been penalized as part of the government's crackdown on market irregularities.

Speaking to members of the House of People's Representatives yesterday, Minister *Kassahun Gofe* (PhD) outlined significant achievements in controlling inflation and easing the cost of living. He credited the progress to the implementation of cost-effective inflation management mechanisms, emphasizing the government's active intervention in the trade system to curb illegal practices.

The Minister highlighted the importance of increasing the supply of basic commodities as a central strategy to address inflation. He warned that mismanagement of macroeconomic reforms could derail these efforts. "Visible actions against illegal merchants are being taken to ensure market stability," he stated.

Government subsidies on imported commodities such as oil and gas remain in place, further demonstrating its commitment to stabilizing prices. Additionally, the nationwide rollout of 1,134 Sunday markets has been a notable success, providing essential goods at discounts of 10-30 percent. Plans are underway to expand these markets and establish larger centers in state towns to further enhance accessibility and affordability.

While acknowledging some challenges, such as the quality of locally produced goods, *Kassahun* projected substantial growth in export revenue. Coffee and *khat* were identified as leading contributors to Ethiopia's export performance, signaling optimism for the country's economic prospects.

The government's multi-pronged approach to inflation control, including market regulation, subsidies, and expanded access to affordable goods, reflects its commitment to easing the financial burden on citizens and fostering sustainable economic growth.

## Calling for all parties' active participation in Nat'l Dialogue

BY MESERET BEHAILU

**ADDIS ABABA** – Ethiopian National Dialogue Commission (ENDC) appreciated the participation of Political Parties Joint Council in the national dialogue and called on the rest to contribute fair share to realize national consensus.

Briefing journalists yesterday about the national dialogue process, ENDC's Chief Commissioner, Prof. Mesfin Araya said that the political parties' joint council is among the five major actors that would help the ENDC in its effort to undertake inclusive, participatory, impartial, and effective dialogue across the country.

He called up on the Ethiopian political parties' joint council to appeal and incorporate other political parties who shunned the national dialogue process.

Ethiopian Political Parties' Joint Council, Chairman Solomon Ayele on his part said that the parties have an indispensable role in bringing sustainable peace and true democracy, protecting rights, and encouraging harmony.

According to Solomon, the council's agenda, which delivered to the ENDC has seven chapters encompassing issues such as historic and rhetoric concepts, nation building and harmony, constitutional, economic, social, cultural and institutional structures, identity, regional and administrative issues, and foreign policy



and diplomatic affairs.

The council also renovates the agreement to succeed peace and stability, development, democracy, and the likes in the country through working in cloth with the ENDC, he stated.

So far, Ethiopian National Dialogue Commission has identified participants and gathered agendas within nine states, according to Mesfin.

He stated that some 2,200 partners have received training from the ENDC to make the national dialogue a success.

ENDC is working to commence agenda

gathering on 12 December 2024, in more than 350 districts in Oromia state with the participation of over 7,700 citizens, he expressed.

The commission is set to discuss with Amhara state administration and other concerned bodies to create an enabling environment for the national dialogue, he added.

Mesfin said that the commission is striving to carry out various activities in Tigray state soon so that it has discussed with the interim administration and the four universities there to conduct a successful national dialogue.



## Tigray targets over 70,000 hectares with summer irrigation

BY BETELHEM BEDLU

**ADDIS ABABA** – Tigray State has set a plan to cultivate over 70,000 hectares of land using summer irrigation, according to the State's Agriculture Bureau, Horticulture Department Office.

The Horticulture Department Director, Haile Tadele, disclosed that the state has already achieved 27.5% of its plan, benefiting approximately 228,905 citizens. Efforts focus on cultivating crops such as cabbage, potatoes, peppers, tomatoes, and onions using a cluster method. Additionally, the state aims to plant 1,400 hectares of

wheat, with three districts showing notable progress.

The state has prioritized ensuring a sufficient supply of fertilizers, distributing 68,000 quintals of its planned 150,000 quintals. Farmers are also supplementing this with natural fertilizers. However, the availability of high-quality seeds remains a challenge, with only 4,000 quintals utilized out of the required 14,000 quintals.

Tigray's mountainous terrain and limited water resources make water pumps critical for irrigation. The Ministry of Agriculture has supplied 94 and 72 water pumps in consecutive years. These pumps are

being allocated to elderly farmers and unemployed youth unions, while farmers digging and pumping water independently are receiving additional support, Haile elaborated.

To enhance productivity, training programs have reached over 228,905 beneficiaries, including skills training provided to 505 professionals and officials in Weqero Town.

While the summer irrigation project is progressing as planned, efforts are being intensified to offset the reduced production from the rainy season. Addressing the shortage of improved seeds remains a pressing priority, the director emphasized.

## Ethiopia implements 5 projects to improve health, agriculture: *BETin*

BY MISGANAW ASNAKE

**ADDIS ABABA** – Ethiopia is implementing five projects to advance traditional herbal medicine, mineral development and agricultural activities, Bio and Emerging Technology Institute (BETin) announced.

The BETin Director General, Prof. Kassahun Tesfaye told the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) that a plan of action has been designed focusing on managing soil acidity, energy, bioscience, pesticide, and other research areas in agriculture and health sectors thereby substituting imports.

Accordingly, the Director General stated that experts and researchers are working on preliminary activities and collecting laboratory data on insecticide, traditional herbal medicine, bio and emerging technology and soil fertility.

Kassahun added that the institute, having biotechnology and emerging technology centers, is implementing indigenous and scientific knowledge to produce medicines, soil fertilizers and soaps locally.

In this regard, he expressed that the country is striving to manufacture different chemicals from leaves or roots of various herbs to make pesticides,

and other chemicals to control bacterial diseases that attack mango fruits and vegetable species.

“We are making significant progresses and very practical projects, potentials for new research breakthrough and commercialization by building strong technology, innovation, capacity building, and training facilities,” he said.

Such research projects will transform into commercialization, thereby translating the bio economy strategy into wealth and entrepreneurship through employing knowledge, Kassahun stated.

“To achieve this, we are also working in collaboration with South Africa in knowledge exchange through which a plan of action is prepared to make the project effective” he said, mentioning that an agreement has been signed by the representatives of the two countries to start the project.

Moreover, he noted that Ethiopia and South Africa are also working together in advancing technologies and researches with a strong ambition, in which, such collaboration can be expanded into BRICS countries in the future to control emerging and recurrent infectious diseases in Ethiopia and other member states.

## Ethiopia, Saudi to deepen ...

government is committed to providing the necessary support to facilitate this growth.

The State Minister highlighted a recent delegation visit led by the Federation of Saudi Arabian Chambers of Commerce to Ethiopia in June, describing it as a milestone that opened a new chapter in strengthening economic relations between the two nations.

The Saudi Arabian Chamber of Commerce President, Hassan Al-Huwaizi, stated that discussions are underway to increase Saudi investments in Ethiopia. Both sides reviewed the delegation’s achievements, including agreements on joint projects and progress toward a potential investment protection treaty.

The Saudi-Ethiopian Business Council Chairperson, Abdullah Al-Ajmi, reaffirmed

the ongoing efforts to encourage Saudi investors to expand their engagements in Ethiopia. He commended the Ethiopian government for its support of investors while emphasizing the need to address existing challenges swiftly to ensure a conducive business environment.

With diplomatic ties spanning over 70 years, Ethiopia and Saudi Arabia have strengthened their partnership through growing economic collaboration. The two nations are actively cooperating in sectors such as manufacturing, agriculture, and real estate, creating jobs and boosting bilateral economic ties.

Ethiopia’s invitation signals a renewed commitment to fostering strategic economic partnerships with Saudi Arabia, leveraging mutual opportunities for sustainable growth and development.



Abraham Gushe



Getachew Hailu

## Stakeholders see promising future ...

these measures will enhance productivity and contribute significantly to the country’s economic progress.

Gudelo Mining General Manager Abraham Gushe highlighted the sector’s promising future. “Despite challenges like outdated laboratory testing equipment, our company has successfully exported products to international markets,” Abraham said. His company has created 171 local jobs and remains optimistic about the sector’s potential to become a major source of foreign exchange.

However, Abraham emphasized that replacing outdated laboratory equipment with more advanced technology is crucial for improving efficiency. “Currently, we are forced to export our products for testing. Investing in modern facilities could drive significant growth,” he said. The investor stressed the importance of specialized education, such as geology schools, to develop local talent and support the sector’s expansion.

Gemstone and Industrial Minerals Export and Import General Manager Getachew Hailu shared similar concerns. His company exports over 50 types of raw minerals to markets in Thailand, India, Germany, the UAE, and beyond. While the company faces challenges, particularly the shortage of skilled professionals like designers, Getachew is optimistic about the future of value-added exports.

“With the right expertise, Ethiopia could increase its export earnings and transition from raw mineral exports to refined, value-added products,” he said.

Technological innovation, especially in geological surveying and mineral identification, is critical to unlocking the sector’s potential. Both Abraham and Getachew agree that adopting advanced survey technologies would greatly improve mineral discovery and extraction processes.

Investors are also hopeful that recent macroeconomic reforms will improve the sector’s investment climate. “The reforms are expected to enhance investor effectiveness and foster greater collaboration with foreign partners, bringing in modern technologies and expertise,” Getachew noted.

Both industry leaders are committed to working with international investors and government stakeholders to overcome challenges and drive sustainable growth in Ethiopia’s mining sector. “We are ready to collaborate with foreign investors to bring the technologies and expertise needed to elevate the sector,” said Abraham.

With continued focus on technological upgrades and skill development, Ethiopia’s mining industry is poised to become a major driver of economic growth and a key source of foreign exchange in the near future.

## Experts hail GLI in bid ...

over 85 countries with FSC standards, enabling responsible forest management and traceable products in global markets. “This allows Ethiopia to responsibly produce forest products that meet global standards of sustainability, social equity, and economic viability,” she noted.

Jens Kanstrup, Technical Expert in Forest Management at Forests of the World, praised Ethiopia’s strides in the GLI, stating that the initiative sends a strong global signal by significantly reducing carbon emissions and contributing to economic growth. He described the FSC certification as a milestone reflecting Ethiopia’s commitment to sustainability and its green economy agenda.

The IFSS will be piloted on 1,000 hectares of bamboo forests in the Adiyo District of South West Ethiopia Peoples State, a collaboration between INBAR and Ethiopian Forestry Development (EFD). This certification represents a commitment to environmental sustainability and

positions Ethiopia to benefit from global market opportunities for certified forest products.

EFD Director General, Kebede Yimam, highlighted Ethiopia’s intensive restoration efforts under the GLI and ongoing collaboration with key stakeholders. “By enhancing the sustainable use of forest resources, we can stimulate economic growth, create jobs, and support local communities while maintaining the integrity of our forests,” Kebede said.

The FSC certification is expected to play a pivotal role in Ethiopia’s forest sector by promoting diverse and sustainable forest ecosystems for future generations. It also ensures the billions of trees planted under the GLI comply with global standards, creating long-term economic and environmental benefits.

Ethiopia’s collaborative forest management approach demonstrates the potential for transformative change, showcasing the nation as a model for sustainable development and a green economy on the global stage.

# Opinion

## Tapping into bonanza of COMESA, AfCFTA

BY ADDISALEM MULAT

It is common knowledge that Ethiopia has been registering uninterrupted growth at various points in time taking the country to the next level of accomplishment in the shortest possible time. In actual fact, Ethiopia has been engaging itself in a broad range of development undertakings that have been expediting the country's growth time and time again.

If the current situation keeps on going in the same path, Ethiopia for sure will go to the next frontiers and new perspectives through the passage of time. In point of fact, the country has been at all hours of the day and night partaking in various fruitful development undertakings.

In actual fact, accession into the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) allows Ethiopia an opportunity to pave the way for its various ongoing restructuring processes. What is more, the incorporation of the country within this geographical setup will further give the green light the country to pursue deeper economic relationships with its neighbors, possibly bringing about higher levels of cross-border investments. This well-placed move is likely to reinforce the growth of the nation's expanding private sector without doubt.

Taking into account the various benefits Ethiopia secures out of COMESA, the country should pave the way for joining COMESA without batting an eye. As joining COMESA plays a paramount role in taking the country to the next level of success, Ethiopia should go to the ends of the earth to make the most out of it.

Apart from improving business relationship, financial liberalization in Ethiopia for the most part backs in offering a clear route toward trade. Companies that take part in regional trade must raise subscriptions of revenue services, by which, if financial services will become accessible, it would also suggest that the government encourages tries who want to expand its business across the border.

The Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa, a regional economic organization in Africa, urged African countries to implement targeted policies to improve access to information and communications technology (ICT) services on the continent.

COMESA Director for Infrastructure and Logistics, Bernard Dzawanda, made this remark in the recent past at the start of a meeting on enhancement of governance and enabling environment in ICT program in Lusaka, the Zambian capital, according to Xinhua, as cited by a local media.

While acknowledging that access to and use of affordable ICT services was important to ensure economic development, Dzawanda said only 37% of Africa's population uses the internet compared to the global average of 67%. Furthermore, only 25% were connected to the internet compared to the global average of 57%.

"The issue of affordability is very critical in achieving universal and inclusive access to ICT services. Even where service is available, internet use is constrained by low affordability of both the data a digital device," he said.

He reiterated the importance of ICT in

driving development and regional integration within the COMESA bloc, noting that the organization has a strategic plan to foster digital transformation through appropriate policies and legislation.

Dzawanda emphasized the potential of ICT in addressing various challenges, including climate vulnerability, gender inequality, and health emergencies.

He stated that COMESA's initiatives in enhancing governance and creating an enabling environment for ICT have led to significant progress, including the completion of studies related to roaming, interconnection, and optic fiber policies.

Ethiopia's textile and apparel sector has seen remarkable growth, with an average annual export increase of over 50% in the last decade, positioning it as one of the country's leading sectors (EIC, 2020). This growth has been driven by establishing industrial parks such as the Hawassa Industrial Park, attracting substantial Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and contributing to thousands of jobs. Ethiopia's textile industry is now better positioned to compete both regionally and globally, with advantages in labor and manufacturing efficiency costs.

Further increasing their competitiveness, accession to the COMESA Free Trade Agreement would grant them duty-free access to regional markets. At the moment, Ethiopia is facing more than 30% tariffs when exporting to COMESA countries, placing its exporters in a highly disadvantageous situation compared to the Free Trade Area (FTA) member countries that enjoy duty-free access. The FTA would usher in enormous trade opportunities for Ethiopia, placing it ahead in the competition in most of the markets in the regions of Kenya, Uganda, and Sudan.

Recent financial sector liberalization in Ethiopia is consistent with its goal of promoting regional trade. The Ethiopian government has recently allowed foreign investment in banking, insurance, and telecommunication sectors. These reforms will create incentives for private sector growth and improvement in financial inclusions and attract FDI inward flow.



laying a very firm basis for sustainable growth and development.

The continuous growth of Ethiopia has been manifested in all aspects of development undertakings that raise economic performance for the nation to position it for further successes both regionally and globally.

Membership in COMESA FTA will complement the latter, as deepened regional economic relationships and induced cross-border investment will enhance an accelerated development of Ethiopia's emerging private sector. Moreover, financial liberalization can increase the ability to access financial services by firms in regional trade, leading to trade enhancement. Exporters and importers need a well-functioning cross-border financial transaction. The opening up of the Ethiopian financial market is yet to further facilitate trade efficiency.

The Ministry of Trade and Regional Integration (MoTRI) said it is working with stakeholders to promote market access in the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

The Ministry made the remark at a workshop organized by Center for International Private Enterprise (CIPE) and KONRAD ADENAUER STIFTUNG (KAS) in collaboration with the Ethiopian Chamber of Commerce and Sectorial Association under the theme "Navigating regulatory barriers to trade and find out the pathways: Maximizing private sector under AfCFTA in Ethiopia."

The event was aiming at navigating and overcoming possible challenges in AfCFTA and enhancing private sector's and exporters outreach.

Speaking at the workshop in the recent past, MoTRI Senior Expert Gebretsadik Tassew said that the government in collaboration with stakeholders has been working to effectively implement the agreement and promoting the private sectors to promote the established market access.

Apart from exchanging experiences on how Ethiopian companies access the preferential market, the workshop helps catalyze stakeholders and the business communities pressing issues while implementing the AfCFTA.

Ethiopia has finalized preparations to offer goods and service offers to the areas in the near future. The implementation of the AfCFTA is highly believed to boost the inter Africa trade and promote African infant industry to use inputs originated across the continent which in turn grow the economies.

Enhancing trade competitiveness requires holistic trade development strategy, thus trade facilitation measures are a pillar to enhance foreign trade efficiency and ensure economic development of the country and trade competitiveness and market integration.

Reforming and modernizing border management, changing transportation policies and infrastructure investments are critical in this regard. The business community also requires capacity building training, technical and financial support to fully leverage the establishing market access.

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

In fact, the exporters and importers require frictionless financial transactions. The hardships that are there at present for the industries to engage in cross-border trade could be eased and supplemented with a more liberalized financial market. This will not only allow smoother operations but also increase confidence among the sellers.

The financial liberalization will enhance the overall efficiency of the trade procedures; therefore, as under the improved access of businesses to the relevant financial assets, these will be capable of participating in regional markets in an altogether more efficient manner.

The membership to COMESA FTA and opening of its financial sector has left Ethiopia confident that it is bound to accelerate its financial development. These creations will bring an enabling environment for trade and investment, and will make sure that the private sector continues to thrive and contribute towards the nation's development in the shortest time possible.

The country has been established at the most outstanding growths over at various points in time, which drive the country's remarkable achievements within a short period of time. This consistent growth is long acknowledged and serves as a signpost to the country's evolutionary path.

It has actively participated in different development programs. These contributions have increased the overall growth of Ethiopia, enhancing the economy of the country. Ethiopia has begun to practice holistic development. It is implementing changes by focusing on the various sectors.

The commitment of Ethiopia to various development projects signifies the commitment to improving citizens' living standards and economic activities. In so doing, it takes on board different needs and challenges simultaneously and thereby leaves a mark on the overall development.

These aspects of ongoing development manifest the strategic planning and vision of the government towards the future. While this is done with regard to infrastructure, education, and other important sectors, the nation is

# Editorial

## Practical step to sustain peace

Bringing the reign of peace in the skies of Ethiopia is the number one priority of the reform government. It has been devising all possible mechanism to ensure peace and security since long back cognizant of the fact that peace is the keystone of every fruitful activity.

This commitment reveals itself when Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (Ph.D) called on all parties to resolve differences in round table discussions. Since then, countless parties that previously opted for violence as a means to achieve political goals heeded the call and put down their arms, and have become committed to present their respective queries to the concerned body. Such an affirmative stride has started bearing fruits as the stability of the nation has been well restored though there are minor irregularities here and there.

Despite the two-year war that was meant to uphold the rule of law, and the subsequent loss of lives from both sides, a reign of peace has been achieved on the heels of the signing of the Pretoria agreement that was signed two years plus ago.

Today, the news of Oromo Liberation Army (OLA), whose senior commander signed a peace deal with the Oromia State government, has filled the air with hope and optimism in Ethiopia. That is not the only case, the group that calls itself 'Kimant fighters' has also been paving the boulevard to come to the right track as these factions agreed to voice their respective concerns in a peaceful means.

It is well recognized that a peace agreement would help stop violence, address the roots of conflict and revive mechanisms for non-violent resolution of conflicts.

Cognizant of the fact that successful peace deal creates an environment supportive of self-sustaining, attracts durable peace, prevents conflict from restarting, integrates general public, and addresses underlying structural and societal issues, the Ethiopian government has been working from dawn to dusk towards this end.

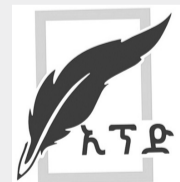
Unequivocally, the Ethiopian Government is duty bound to provide citizens with stable, serene and calm living area. That is why it is taking the lion's share in inviting those who are warring here and there residing in the jungles. Yes, nothing is much more exciting than helping citizens breathe a sigh of relief. As the Pretoria Peace Agreement has enhanced a new culture of putting an end to conflicts by soliciting political solutions through round table discussions and close talks, the same fashion has been applied these days towards creating a stable and lively nation. This bold move amplifies the importance of a mature and resolute decision of the government to prevent future generations from inheriting a birthright of winners and losers characterized by loathing and ill will.

In sum, the positive strides commenced to instill the reign of peace have to be well duplicated and put widely into practice to help Ethiopians have a well intertwined harmonious way of living.

The government has also been diligently working with competing parties to develop an everlasting peaceful culture. True, the government is expected to take remarkable swift action in sustaining peace and tranquility across the nation.

Let Ethiopia learn from past scenarios and fetch cardinal lessons out of it with a view to coming up with a new generation who are fond of collaboration over confrontation and amity over enmity.

Yes, the aforesaid agreement of state government with armed forces would open wider doors to peace and confidently help Ethiopia address the long-heaped troubles.



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# Opinion

## Ethiopia's commitment in restoring peace, addressing challenges

BY MENGISTEAB TESHOME

Despite facing numerous challenges, Ethiopia remains steadfast on its path to prosperity. The government has shown a strong commitment to transforming the nation from a state of economic, social, and political deadlock into a more inclusive and dynamic society. Through a series of reforms, Ethiopia is beginning to see positive results that promise a brighter future.

In a recent address to the House of Peoples' Representatives, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) declared that this year will mark a period of significant growth for Ethiopia. The government has acknowledged the necessity for comprehensive reforms to tackle the complex challenges facing the nation. These reforms are designed to boost economic growth, enhance social cohesion, and promote political inclusivity. By focusing on these critical areas, the government aims to cultivate an environment where all citizens can prosper, irrespective of their backgrounds. The reforms have already begun to bear fruit in various sectors. Economic policies focused on liberalization, investment, and infrastructure development are attracting both domestic and foreign investments. This influx of capital is crucial for stimulating job creation and driving economic growth. Additionally, initiatives aimed at supporting local businesses are fostering entrepreneurship, empowering citizens to contribute to the economy.

On the social front, the government is working to promote inclusivity and equity. Efforts to improve access to education and healthcare are ongoing, ensuring that marginalized communities have the opportunities they need to succeed. By addressing social disparities, Ethiopia is laying the groundwork for a more cohesive society, where individuals feel valued and empowered.

Politically, the government is striving to create a more inclusive environment. Engaging various stakeholders in the decision-making process is vital for fostering trust and collaboration. By encouraging dialogue among different groups, Ethiopia aims to build a political landscape that reflects the diverse voices of its population.

Despite these positive developments, Ethiopia continues to confront challenges from both internal factions and external pressures. However, the government's determination to push forward with reforms demonstrates resilience in the face of adversity. By maintaining a focus on peace and stability, Ethiopia can navigate these challenges and continue its journey toward prosperity.

Ethiopia's trek toward prosperity is a testament to the nation's resilience and commitment to reform. By addressing economic, social, and political issues holistically, the government is laying the foundation for a more inclusive and prosperous future. As reforms continue to take shape, Ethiopia stands poised to overcome its challenges and emerge as a beacon of hope and progress in the region.

In a world fraught with conflict, the pursuit of

peace remains an invaluable goal. Ethiopia's recent efforts to translate the Pretoria Peace Accord with the Tigray People's Front (TPF) exemplify the importance of dialogue in resolving African conflicts. This approach not only emphasizes the value of peace but also showcases the concept of "African problems requiring African solutions."

Ethiopia's commitment to peace is evident in its ongoing rehabilitation and reintegration initiatives for ex-combatants in the Tigray Region. The National Rehabilitation Commission (NRC) has reported the successful reintegration of 640 ex-combatants who completed their rehabilitation training at centers in Mekelle and Edaga Hamus. This milestone represents a significant step towards restoring community life and ensuring that those who once took up arms can return to society as productive members.

The NRC's efforts are guided by a win-win philosophy, recognizing that true peace benefits everyone involved. Currently, 1,360 additional ex-combatants are undergoing training, with a focus on inclusivity—particularly for women and individuals with disabilities. Lt. Col. Gosaye Tilahun, the NRC's director of demobilization, highlighted the importance of enhancing training center capacities to facilitate smoother transitions for former militants.

This proactive approach not only addresses the immediate needs of ex-combatants but also fosters community cohesion. By focusing on rehabilitation rather than punishment, Ethiopia is laying the groundwork for a more peaceful and stable society.

The NRC has set ambitious goals, aiming to support 75,000 ex-combatants from the Tigray region over the next four years. In total, the commission plans to disarm and rehabilitate 371,000 ex-combatants within two years. This comprehensive strategy reflects Ethiopia's commitment to peace and societal reintegration, demonstrating that rehabilitation is not just a process but a pathway to sustainable development.

While Ethiopia's initiatives are commendable, the role of the international community remains crucial. Support from global partners can enhance these efforts, providing resources and expertise to further strengthen rehabilitation programs. Collaborative efforts can lead to a more productive East Africa, where peace prevails, and communities thrive.

Ethiopia's journey towards peace through dialogue and rehabilitation serves as a model for conflict resolution in Africa. By prioritizing the reintegration of ex-combatants and fostering inclusive practices, the nation is not only addressing its internal challenges but also contributing to a broader narrative of peace and cooperation on the continent. As Ethiopia continues to implement the Pretoria Peace Accord and expand its rehabilitation efforts, it stands as a beacon of hope for other nations facing similar struggles, proving that dialogue and a commitment to peace can lead to a brighter future for all.

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

# Business & Economy

## Water resource progress for augmenting economic progress



*Water resources should be managed properly for better economic benefit*

BY MENGESHA AMARE

As population grows and economy expands, it is undeniable that the demand for water has been alarmingly skyrocketing. Yes, the financial and environmental costs of developing new water supplies has to begin to exceed the economic benefits in the least marginal uses of existing supplies.

Taking this fact into account, *The Ethiopian Herald* had a stay with Serkalem Seboka, who graduated from Arba-Minch University in water engineering, to have a piece of opinion about the firm tie between water resource and economic growth.

She said, “Water is an essential component of the economy of a given nation and is at the centre of economic and social development. As it is vital to maintain health, grow food, manage the environment and create jobs, there is a close link between water and economic growth of the country, too.”

According to Serkalem, improving water resource management requires recognizing how the overall water sector is linked to the national economy. Understanding how alternative economic policy instruments influence water use across the nation as well as between local, regional and national levels, the role of households, farms and firms is regarded as quite decisive. Yes, it is quite better to well recognize the connection between macroeconomic policies and their impact on, for example, technical areas such as irrigation.

“It is obvious that the water sector can have a strategic impact on resource allocation and aggregate demand in the economy. A country’s overall development strategy and use of macroeconomic policies - including fiscal, monetary and trade policies-directly and indirectly affect demand and investment in water-related activities. The most obvious example is government expenditures, fiscal policy, on irrigation, flood control or dams,” she added.

National development strategies can directly influence water allocation and use in other ways. In the case of a food self-sufficiency strategy, the government may subsidize water-intensive inputs to encourage farmers to produce more wheat. By providing financial incentives for wheat and rice producers, the government is influencing the demand for water and private irrigation investment

through price policies, she added.

Water resources are a vital component of economic growth and development, and investing in water management and sanitation can have significant economic benefits. To mention but a few, she stated that economic growth—this entails that improved water resources management and sanitation can boost economic growth and help eradicate poverty. Productivity—better water management can increase productivity across economic sectors, health—improved access to clean water and sanitation can improve health and reduce healthcare costs.

Water resources can help protect biodiversity, improve soil, and mitigate disasters and helps create job opportunities, water projects can create jobs in the water sector.

She said, “As water resources are essential for many aspects of life, including growing food, managing the environment, creating jobs, supporting health and livelihoods, underpinning food and energy security as well as defending environmental integrity, these precious assets have to be well nurtured. However, water scarcity can be a barrier to sustainable development. Poor drainage can also lead to problems that are often perceived as water shortages.”

As to Serkalem, since water is increasingly recognized as a scarce resource, the use of economic arrangements for water resources management seems increasingly promising. Experiences show that economic arrangements can contribute to a more efficient use of water resources, but only if specific conditions are met, related to a well-functioning institutional framework and regulations that ensure that the use of economic arrangements is balanced with broader societal objectives, she added.

No doubt, she said, water is an essential element in a progressive strategy of economic development. The lack of access to sufficient quantities of adequate quality water can significantly hinder growth and human development but improved water management can generate huge benefits for health, agriculture and industrial production providing an opportunity for economic growth, poor eradication and social fairness.

“Using economic arrangements in water management can be useful as a means to capture certain important values in cash flows and to allow economic exchange mechanisms

to support the allocation of water resources and the associated costs and benefits among stakeholders. Although the available examples show that economic arrangements can be successfully applied to deal with scarcity issues in water resources management, various authors have convincingly argued that water is not an ordinary economic good,” she opined.

The successful application of economic arrangements for agricultural water management is not straightforward but needs to be balanced with the use of institutional arrangements to safeguard broader societal interests and to reduce or mitigate the negative impacts of market failures.

Improved water supply and sanitation and water resources management boosts countries’ economic growth and contributes greatly to poverty eradication. Resolving water related challenges requires that the costs for improved water supply and sanitation and water resources management be seen as sound public and private investments and key to a strategy that boosts economies, enables individuals and businesses to explore new income opportunities and provides them with a fair chance to prosper.

According to Serkalem, there is also an awareness of increasing water demands and widespread cases of dwindling and mismanaged water resources and the inadequacy of water infrastructure. Water management is an important factor in economic growth and development because water is a vital resource for people and the economy via reinvigorating economic growth—improved water management can boost economic growth, reduce poverty, and make economies more resilient to rainfall variability. Productivity—better water management can increase productivity and efficiency across economic sectors, Health—access to clean water and sanitation services is a key strategy for economic growth and the health of a nation.

“Climate changes—water management can help adapt to climate change and reduce vulnerability to drought, flooding, and chronic water scarcity. Improved water supply and sanitation and water resources management boosts countries’ economic growth and contributes greatly to poverty eradication. The greatest potential gain for increased productivity and production within both

households and economic sectors is found in the total convenience time saving – water collection and sanitation access,” she added.

What is now becoming increasingly clear to many governments is that reliable access to water resources is a competitive advantage and attracts business opportunities.

Water and related services must be a part of the economic development business. Better access to clean water, sanitation services and water management creates tremendous opportunity for the poor and is a progressive strategy for economic growth. Good management of water resources brings more certainty and efficiency in productivity across economic sectors and contributes to the health of the ecosystem.

“Green growth means fostering economic growth and development while ensuring that natural assets continue to provide the resources and environmental services on which our well-being relies. To do this it must catalyze investment and innovation which will underpin sustained growth and give rise to new economic opportunities,” she opined.

It has been well attested that economic arrangements can offer useful tools for efficient, equitable and sustainable water resources management, but that they need to be accompanied by adequate administrative arrangements and embedded in an appropriate institutional framework. The journey to economic arrangements has been successfully implemented and exhibited that the economic arrangements have been the result of a negotiation process among multiple stakeholders.

Traditional economic valuation methods need to be complemented by stakeholder-oriented approaches that help to facilitate dialogue among stakeholders and that can effectively incorporate the broader societal concerns related to social equity and environmental sustainability, beyond mere monetary values.

In sum, further work in this area is needed, building on the experiences that have already been gained and from which a process for stakeholder-oriented valuation emerges. Besides, more insight is needed into these multi-stakeholder processes, to identify certain commonalities that can help support future negotiations among parties about the regulations and conditions required to put in place sustainable economic arrangements for water resources management.

# Art & Culture

## Pilot's triumphant escape from hijackings

BY ABEBE WOLDEGIORGIS

(Book Review)

Title of the Book: Captain Leul Abate: his life journey, flight and memory of plane hijackings

Author- Captain Leul Abate

Number of pages- 291

Published in 2023

Recently, the retired pilot, Leul Abate, wrote a book focused on his school years experiences and his long career at Ethiopian Airlines as a technician and pilot until his retirement. He demonstrated his working and living experiences throughout his entire life with photographs that can capture the reader's attention.

The book also covered the story of the Comoros incident as reported by international media.

According to the book, Ethiopian Airlines was established in 1946 by Emperor Haile Selassie I with the support of an American-based company, Trans World Airlines. The first flight was conducted from Addis Ababa to Cairo using the Douglas C-47 aircraft.

After the Derg regime came to power and political upheavals grew, Captain Leul withdrew from Addis Ababa University's science faculty and joined Ethiopian Airlines in 1977. He started as a ground technician for two and a half years and later graduated as a co-pilot with the 16th round of pilot trainees.

Most of the flight trainers were well-trained and had rich experience as fighter jet pilots in the Ethiopian Air Force. This experience helped Leul enjoy the profession and learn valuable lessons from his instructors.

Leul began his domestic flight career as a co-pilot in 1981 in a DC-3/C-47 aircraft. After serving as a co-pilot for one and a half years, he trained as a flight engineer for Boeing 707/720 airplanes in London and graduated. In 1987, he became a co-pilot of a Boeing 707. In 1992, he became a captain and flew from Addis Ababa to Asmara. In 1996, he became the Boeing 767/757 Captain, the highest rank in Ethiopian Airlines' pilot history.

The book details various challenges Leul faced during domestic and foreign flights as a co-pilot and pilot. While some experiences were unforgettable and tragic, he overcame many challenges.

Ethiopian Airlines faced various challenges, including plane hijackings since 1968. Hijackings often occurred during domestic flights and ended with forced landings in neighboring



countries like Somalia, Djibouti, Sudan, and Aden, as well as in European cities. Negotiating with hijackers to save passengers' lives and protect the airline's security was challenging and cumbersome.

Some hijackers showed recklessness towards passengers, crew, and themselves, with little sympathy for innocent civilians. They often made demands that were impossible to fulfill, leading to disastrous consequences. Some hijackers were motivated by economic interests, while others had political reasons.

In the 1960s, the student political movement in Ethiopian politics reached a higher stage and changed their struggle tactics from protest to violence in order to topple the old imperial regime. The hijacking of the ET-708 Boeing plane in 1972 serves as a prime example. The plane was flying from Addis to Greece via Asmara when, minutes later and not far from the capital's airspace, it was hijacked by six members of the Hilasilasie I student movement. Ultimately, five male hijackers and one female hijacker were killed, but another woman was captured and imprisoned.

The book reveals that in earlier times,

both domestic and international flights were escorted by anti-hijackers, allowing pilots and passengers to travel safely from place to place. However, after the downfall of the Derg regime in 1991 and the rise of EPRDF regime, airplane hijackings became a frequent phenomenon. Following the regime change, the anti-hijackers were banned from flying with passengers. From 1991 to 1988, a total of 17 plane hijackings were committed.

In 1985, Captain Leul experienced his first encounter with a plane hijacking during a domestic flight. The plane took off from Debremarkos to Addis Ababa airport, but shortly after, it was hijacked by two Ethiopians in their twenties. The hijackers forced him to fly to Nairobi, but the plane ultimately landed in Djibouti after intense negotiations. No casualties were reported.

Captain Leul encountered a plane hijacking for the second time in 1995 while on a domestic flight from Addis Ababa to Bahirdar. As the plane descended for landing, a person entered the cockpit and announced the hijacking. The hijackers demanded to be flown to Sweden, threatening to burn the plane. However, Leul managed to land the plane in El Obeid, Sudan, after hours of

negotiations with Sudanese officials.

The Comoros incident occurred in 1996, marking Leul's third encounter with a hijacking. Assigned to fly to Cote d'Ivoire in West Africa, Leul piloted a Boeing 767 with advanced technology and a capacity for 193 passengers.

When the plane took off, there were 175 passengers, including seven hostesses, two pilots, one technician, and two security team members.

The plane was destined for Kenya and flew at 39,000 feet above the land. However, minutes later, a heavy noise was heard in the passenger's room, and two men entered the cockpit, informing the pilots that the plane had been hijacked. The hijackers claimed to have bombs and weapons and demanded that the pilots fly to Australia.

Leul, one of the pilots, informed the hijackers that the plane's fuel tank only had 12,000 liters of fuel, which would only take them to Mombasa port in Kenya.

He pleaded with them to land in Mombasa, but they refused. Leul then contacted air traffic controllers in Nairobi to discuss the situation, but the hijackers dismissed his request. They also asked for a telephone number to contact airline officials in Australia, which was not provided.

The frustrated hijackers then banned the pilots from making any contact with the ground. As they approached Mombasa, Leul warned the hijackers that the plane would soon run out of fuel, but they ignored him. He tried to appeal to their humanity, mentioning that the passengers on board had families who depended on them. The hijackers, however, were determined to make history and refused to listen.

As the plane flew over Zanzibar, Leul pleaded with the hijackers to allow him to land and refuel, but they insisted on reaching Australia. They ordered Leul to contact Australia via radio, and he took the opportunity to alert Tanzanian air traffic controllers in Dar es Salaam about the situation.

As the plane approached Comoros Island, with less than 4,000 liters of fuel left, Leul informed the hijackers that they only had 45 minutes left before running out of fuel. The left engine of the plane stopped functioning, causing a rapid descent towards the sea. Despite Leul's efforts to save the plane and passengers, it crashed into the ocean upon impact.

Leul and his co-pilot survived the crash, but many others lost their lives. Rescue workers soon arrived at the scene.

# Indepth

## Africa's making progress against HIV, but donor funds are drying up – what must change

**R**emarkable progress has been made against the HIV epidemic in the last two decades.

However, a loss of momentum in fighting HIV across the globe threatens to undermine the strides that have been made.

There is a crisis in sustainability as the urgency surrounding funding for the HIV response dwindles. This despite the disease claiming a life every minute in 2022.

An estimated 39.9 million people globally were living with HIV in 2023. Of these, 9.2 million did not have access to lifesaving antiretroviral treatment and 630,000 died from AIDS-related illnesses.

These are not merely statistics. Each life lost to HIV is a life too many.

Sub-Saharan Africa, home to 65% of the people living with HIV globally, has been the hardest hit by the HIV epidemic. Global social solidarity has enabled a response.

Between 2001 and 2023, African countries expanded access to lifesaving antiretroviral therapy, reduced AIDS-related deaths and witnessed significant declines in annual new HIV infections, particularly in eastern and southern Africa (59% reduction) and west and central Africa (46% reduction).

We have been public health policymakers and practitioners for decades. We write here under the auspices of the Africa HIV Control Working Group, an institution that seeks sustainable ways of eliminating HIV as a public health concern in Africa.

We look at what has been achieved so far and ways to make sure the fight against HIV does not lose momentum.

### What progress has Africa made?

Political commitment, prioritized funding and innovative technologies such as pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) have proven to be effective tools in efforts to advance the HIV response.

To date, 95% of people with HIV in seven eastern and southern African countries are receiving antiretroviral treatment (Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Rwanda, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe). Of these Botswana, Eswatini, Rwanda, Tanzania and Zimbabwe have met the targets for HIV testing (95% tested), treatment (95% of those tested on treatment) and viral suppression (95% of those on treatment who don't show the virus).

Eight more are on track, but many others will require sustained support to reach these goals. All need to have the resources to sustain these gains.

Despite these achievements, we are seeing increases in HIV infection rates in countries in North Africa which are also facing substantial funding shortages.

### Unwavering commitment, innovative solutions

Solutions to the HIV crisis exist.

Through shared expertise and technologies



Africa can scale up the use of HIV prevention tools like PrEP (pre-exposure prophylaxis drugs) and the dapivirine vaginal ring.

But using the existing tools will not be enough to end HIV. Dedicated investment in new, game-changing tools like vaccines and long-acting prevention and treatment will be critical.

Strategic investments in African-led research and development are also important, as is local and regional manufacturing of pharmaceuticals. The COVID-19 pandemic showed the importance of local production.

About 95% of medicines used in Africa are imported. The continent produces only 3% of medicines used globally.

While Africa's contribution to global publications on HIV increased from 5.1% in 1986 to 31.3% in 2020, this is still low relative to the burden of HIV in Africa.

Done together, shared expertise and dedicated investment could offer a more effective approach to combating HIV in Africa.

However, this requires financial and political commitments from governments, donors, civil society and the private sector.

### Donor priorities

In 2022, funding for low- and middle-income countries to fight HIV amounted to US\$20.8 billion. This is a far cry from the US\$29.3 billion needed by 2025 for a sustainable response to HIV.

Africa's fight against HIV, long reliant on external funding that often tends to focus on donor priorities rather than country contexts, must be reimagined as the global landscape shifts.

We suggest the solutions lie in innovative public-private-philanthropic funding models that incorporate strategic taxes, diaspora bonds, co-financing, grants,

loans and restructured debt.

In addition, African countries should move more rapidly to local and regional production of commodities. They should pool resources to procure commodities and share risks.

The Global Fund's shift towards supporting country-led initiatives also exemplifies how African countries can achieve sovereignty in their HIV responses.

Aligning funding with national priorities can help to make health outcomes reflect the needs and aspirations of Africa's communities.

Debt-for-health swaps could be another viable strategy. Creditors would forgive a portion of a country's debt in exchange for commitments to invest the equivalent amount in health initiatives.

### The need for self-reliance

South Africa's remarkable journey in increasing domestic funding for HIV programmes shows what's possible. With contributions from the fiscus towards fighting HIV ranging from 69% to 77% between 2017 and 2020, the country has demonstrated that self-reliance in health financing is possible.

Rwanda's innovative strategies, including free access to antiretroviral therapy and extensive testing campaigns, offer a roadmap for nations seeking to enhance their HIV interventions.

Zimbabwe's HIV/AIDS levy, a 3% tax on corporate profits and personal incomes, is another example.

These countries are proof that a sustainable response to the HIV epidemic is a political and financial choice. What Africa needs now are the commitments and actions that will get us firmly started on this path.

*Source: The conversation*



**The Global Fund's shift towards supporting country-led initiatives also exemplifies how African countries can achieve sovereignty in their HIV responses**



# Law & Politics



## Perpetual heroism

BY DESTA GEBREHIWOT

**E**thiopia, a nation renowned for its rich history and resilience, has long held an unwavering commitment to fostering peace both within Africa and across the globe. Despite its own trials and tribulations, the country has continually stepped forward as a beacon of hope, courage, and resolve. Its peacekeeping missions under the United Nations (UN) and African Union (AU) have become a testament to the country's deep-seated values of solidarity and its unwavering belief in the sanctity of peace.

The country's heroic soldiers have distinguished themselves in global peace efforts, serving in conflict zones such as Korea, Congo, Somalia, Rwanda, Sudan, and Liberia. Their dedication to duty and ability to uphold their mission with honor has garnered international recognition. This legacy, deeply rooted in Ethiopia's historical ethos, reflects a tradition of standing firm for noble causes.

The country's unwavering resolve to advance Africa's and the world's cause has not and will not falter with time and has remained steadfast through changing governments. Its impeccable peacekeeping missions are a stark reminder of its strong, unflinching stand and are part and parcel of its dedication to noble causes.

As a key participant in UN peacekeeping missions across conflict zones and contributing significantly to regional and global peace efforts, Ethiopia has earned a strong reputation for mediating disputes and brokering peace in countries like Somalia and Sudan, further solidifying its role as a regional stabilizer. The country's peacekeeping forces have made tremendous

sacrifices in the pursuit of peace, often paying the ultimate price. Since the Korean War, the country has contributed significantly to international peacekeeping efforts. Its diplomatic resilience maintaining strong ties even with adversaries has been a hallmark of its foreign policy.

The country has played an indispensable role in curbing the prolonged conflict in Somalia, working to restore order, peace, and stability by countering the Al-Shabaab insurgency. Its contributions have been vital in helping Somalia, once a stronghold for Al-Shabaab, rebuild a functioning state and achieve self-reliance. Since 2007, Ethiopian forces under the African Union Mission to Somalia (AMISOM) have been key in combating Al-Shabaab and stabilizing the country. Ethiopia's efforts in restoring peace and stability in Somalia have earned widespread recognition, with Ethiopian National Defense Force (ENDF) soldiers receiving African Union medals in acknowledgment of their service.

The recent awarding of UN medals to Ethiopian peacekeepers under the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) is not merely a ceremonial act but a profound acknowledgment of the selflessness and dedication of those serving in some of the world's most challenging conditions.

Alongside peacekeepers from South Korea and India, Ethiopian forces have demonstrated an unwavering commitment to restoring peace and stability in South Sudan's volatile regions, particularly in Jonglei and the Greater Pibor Administrative Area.

The peacekeepers deployed in South Sudan under the United Nations Mission (UNMISS) have received UN medals for a variety of key contributions in South Sudan.

"While giving medals to uniformed peacekeepers may appear to be a standard procedure, it is an act that carries profound meaning. The Blue Helmets who receive them have proved their worth by demonstrating selflessness, commitment, and sacrifice, often under challenging circumstances," said Lieutenant-General Mohan Subramanian, Force Commander of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), at three recent medal-pinning events in Bor.

The 18th Ethiopian contingent conducted 124 short and long-duration patrols, including some by air, to deter violence against civilians. They have also completed about 1,000-foot patrols and provided force protection for countless missions undertaken by UNMISS and humanitarian partners.

That was the gist of the message delivered by Lieutenant-General Mohan Subramanian, Force Commander of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), at three recent medal-pinning events in Bor.

"While it means hard work and sometimes daunting tasks, I feel privileged to contribute to the pursuit of peace. After 14 years in the military, the experience of helping create a better world is both rewarding and unforgettable," said Bezawit Girum, a medical doctor in the Ethiopian army.

She was one of 68 women peacekeepers from Ethiopia and South Korea having her efforts recognized during the award ceremonies. In total, more than 1,700 military personnel – 643 from Ethiopia, 268 from South Korea, and 850 hailing from India – have been honored for their outstanding service in the name of peace since their deployment in April this year.

The 18th Ethiopian contingent's significant

role in keeping convoys of humanitarian aid safe as they bring life-saving supplies to those most in need was duly highlighted by the visiting Force Commander.

This recognition is a justification of Ethiopia's valor and heroism towards maintaining global peace and rekindling hope for the desperate.

From the Korean War to modern-day conflicts, Ethiopia has played an indispensable role in mediating disputes and stabilizing volatile regions. Its efforts in Somalia, particularly under the African Union Mission to Somalia (AMISOM), have been pivotal in countering the Al-Shabaab insurgency and helping restore governance. Ethiopian soldiers have paid the ultimate price, demonstrating unparalleled sacrifice for global peace.

Ethiopia's commitment to peace transcends regimes and political shifts. Whether in restoring order in Somalia or earning accolades in South Sudan, Ethiopian forces have remained steadfast allies to the international community. Their valor and heroism remind the world that Ethiopia's role as a peacekeeper is not just a legacy but an ongoing mission.

As history unfolds, Ethiopia's torchbearers of peace will undoubtedly continue their journey, lighting the way for those in despair and reaffirming the nation's unwavering resolve to promote harmony across borders. To sum up, Ethiopia has remained a steadfast partner to countries near and far even during periods of nation upheaval. Across successive regimes, the country has demonstrated unwavering loyalty and credibility in its efforts to foster peace and stability. This glittering track record will continue down the roads with the valor and determination of its troops.

# Women in Focus

## Strength does not come from physical capacity, but from an indomitable spirit

BY ELIZABETH MENGISTU

She is a woman whose indomitable spirit shines even in the face of adversity. She never allows letting problems overwhelm her or ruin her future. Instead, with determination, she confronts challenges unwaveringly, follows her heart, and transforms obstacles into opportunities.

Her life is a testament to resilience. Regardless of the difficulties she encounters, she firmly believes that hard work is the guiding light that leads to success. As a result, this mindset has enabled her to establish her own business, manufacturing a variety of leather products, including bags and shoes.

Berhan Kenea was born in Wolliso, a town in the Southwest Shewa Zone of Oromia State. However, at a young age, she moved to Addis Ababa, where she grew up with her siblings.

“I attended my high school education at Menelik II Secondary School. However, despite my best efforts, I could not score the grades required for university admission, so I decided to enroll in a technical and vocational college. Actually, some people had advised me to pursue other courses, but I followed my passion and chose a technical and vocational program,” she reflected.

According to her, it was during this time that she discovered her passion for leather work, and she began carving out her own path to success, prioritizing her own dreams.

At first, Berhan was unaware that the school was providing courses in the leather field, however, when she learned that the college offers the course during registration, she chose the leather department over management and accounting, despite her academic performance in those fields.

However, considering their advice, she completed her diploma in accounting through an extension program, alongside her vocational studies at technical and vocational at level four in a regular program.

Attending two different areas of fields at one time- vocational and accounting- has proven invaluable. It gave her the financial knowledge, enabling her to manage her business confidently.

While she is talking about how she established her own business, Berhan said: “After graduation, I entered the job market, but the salary I earned was too low. It was too discouraging for me. So, I decided to start my own business.



Berhan Kenea

Developing my business plan, I applied to government bodies to secure a workspace.”

Luckily, because she passed the practical exam and her academic performance was good, her inquiry was approved. The other challenge she faced was the issue of securing startup capital. Determining not to succumb to despair, she sought loans from financial institutions, which enabled her to purchase essential equipment such as sewing machines, leather cutting blades, and raw materials.

As chance would have it, her efforts bore fruit and purchased the necessary equipment such as sewing machines, leather cutting blades, and raw materials.

“The institution that granted me the loan was governmental, and since I followed all the necessary procedures, my application was approved,” she explained.

According to her, before fully engaging in her business, she worked at a manufacturing company that manufactures various types of leather products. This has provided her with a good learning opportunity allowing her to gain valuable knowledge in shoe and bag production.

“My experience at the company was very

beneficial. It has helped me to develop my knowledge and skills. For instance, if I see a product that entices my interest, I don’t imitate the design as it is, but, I adapt it to create something new with different design and style. If I copy that same design and supply it to the market, it gets me no benefits because it doesn’t make me competitive in the marketplace; it only create a crowded market,” she added.

Thus, she always strives to learn new things, upgrade her knowledge and skills, and remain creative.

“Hard work is the only path to a brighter future,” she highlighted, embodying the essence of perseverance.

Currently, by participating in various bazaars, she showcases her unique products to a broader audience and supplying her products to wholesalers.

Berhan is the symbol of resilience, determination, and innovation. Her story is a powerful reminder that with hard work, passion, and unwavering vision, any obstacle can be turned into a stepping stone toward success.

This is also reflected in every stitch of her leather products. One can see

Berhan’s strong spirit and commitment to turning dreams into reality in her creative products.

When Berhan first entered into the leather industry, there was skepticism surrounding her. However, believing that passion, determination and a proactive mindset can overcome any obstacle, she commenced the business. Today, she advises others to trust their instincts and follow their passions and work relentlessly to achieve their ambitions.

Berhan aspires to expand her business; and in the long run export leather products to different countries. She also envisions a bright future for the Ethiopian leather industry, recognizing the country’s potential in the area.

According to her, the country needs to put more effort into developing the industry and maximizing the economic returns from leather products. She emphasized that increasing support and collaboration are essential to unlocking the industry’s full potential.

The journey Berhan has traveled so far has not been a bed of roses, but one filled with numerous hurdles. Despite the challenges she has encountered along the way, Berhan remains undeterred.

As a child, she suffered a lot from a severe injury that occurred on her leg accidentally. Although she underwent surgery, even these days, she feels persistent pain whenever she walks long distances. However, instead of letting her pain and physical limitations define her, she embraced them as part of her journey to success. Her mantra, “I can make it” further strengthened her to adopt a positive mindset and overcome the challenges with confidence. It did not lead her to hopelessness because she is not the type of woman discouraged by problems.

Her resilience, hard work, and unwavering vision, being the driving forces, led her to success, and to the point where she now.

Despite facing numerous obstacles, Berhan has consistently pushed forward, demonstrating that determination and a clear sense of purpose can overcome even the toughest challenges. Every step of her journey reflects a deep commitment to her goals, showcasing her ability to transform adversity into opportunity.

However, the challenges she currently faces, such as financial constraints and the availability of raw materials, must be addressed, not only to help her realize her dreams but also to inspire many others who aspire to follow their passion and achieve their own ambitions.

# Society

## Quality village for quality life!

BY TEWODROS KASSA

Addis Ababa, the capital of Ethiopia and Africa deserves to shine up to its name. The city sought to be more vibrant and preferable for life as the government is undertaking enormous mega projects to change its look and improve the lives of its residents.

Recently, the concept of a quality village has gained popularity as a solution to the growing need for sustainable and comfortable living environments in Addis Ababa. The issue of quality living spaces is highly sought after by Addis residents looking to enhance their quality of life.

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed officially inaugurated the 'Quality Village' recently. During the ceremony, the Prime Minister said that the new facility would help the nation maintain the quality of domestic products and increase international competitiveness.

The Premier added that the "Quality Village" is designed to enhance the competitiveness of the local products in global markets and improve the country's participation in global value chains.

"As one of our leading national institutions, it will play a vital role in strengthening our export capabilities and ensuring that we remain competitive in the international arena," the prime minister added.

The newly Inaugurated 'Quality Village' is a critical institution designed to catalyze the competitiveness of Ethiopia's local products in global markets and enhance its participation in global value chains, Abiy stated.

In a social media post, the Premier also said, "Before officially inaugurating 'Quality Village, I had the opportunity to visit and review the National Quality Infrastructure we have developed," the Premier said on a social media post.

The Office of the Prime Minister announced that the "Quality Village" is a landmark national quality infrastructure project initiated several years ago during Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed's tenure as Minister of Science and Technology.

Accordingly, the institutions housed within Quality Village include the Ethiopian Standards Institute, Ethiopian Conformity Assessment Enterprise, Ethiopian Metrology Institute, Ethiopian Accreditation Service, and Ethiopian Technology Authority.

Moreover, Ethiopia's National Quality Infrastructure (NQI) aims to enhance the quality assurance services available to businesses by strengthening the country's overall quality framework. According to the Office, the NQI encompasses standards development, metrology, accreditation, conformity assessment, market surveillance, and quality promotion.

Equipped with state-of-the-art technology and enhanced capabilities, Quality Village positions Ethiopia to align more effectively with international standards, reducing technical barriers and enabling greater participation in global trade, the Office said.



The government reiterated its commitment to penetrating the global market with high-quality export products as it inaugurated a quality infrastructure dubbed "Quality Village" in the capital.

So far, the infrastructure inaugurated by Prime Minister Abiy was built at a cost of over 5.3 billion Birr, aimed at maximizing the quality and volume of products.

Similarly, Deputy Prime Minister, Temesgen Tiruneh said that the establishment of the "Quality Village" is of great importance to upgrade the quality of Ethiopia's export products.

According to Temesgen, a strong quality control system should be developed as it helps ensure the standard of production, productivity, and procurement process.

"Particularly, in agriculture, manufacturing industry, medical sector, technology, and other fields, the "Quality Village" is of great importance to maintain quality and avoid waste. What is more, it helps to ensure international competitiveness," he said.

He further stated that the "Quality Village" infrastructure assists in laying the foundation for sustainable development through exporting quality products and realizing global competitiveness.

Approached by *The Ethiopian Herald*, Trade and Regional Integration Minister, Kassahun Gofe (PhD) said that Ethiopia has built Africa's leading "Quality Village" allocating a huge amount of money aimed at realizing quality products.

As a country amongst the major producers of cereals, pulses, and oilseeds, Ethiopia is striving to take a unique position in the global markets with processed export products, he stated.

The newly inaugurated "Quality Village" incorporates laboratories that test ceramic, battery, and solar energy equipment, which are not widely available in many African countries. According to the Prime Minister's office, the infrastructure houses institutions such as the Ethiopian Standards Institute, Ethiopian Conformity Assessment Enterprise, Ethiopian Metrology Institute, Ethiopian Accreditation Service, and Ethiopian Technology Authority.

Meanwhile, as part of the 5th anniversary of the Prosperity Party, members of the society

from different parts of the country visited the recently inaugurated Quality Village. According to them, the facility will enable Ethiopia to become competitive globally by exporting quality products.

Underscoring the value of quality in all aspects, the delegates highlighted that it should always be the center of all activities. They also appreciated the high attention the government has given to quality, referring to the state of the art that the Village is constructed. They shared their views on the importance of maintaining such emphasis for quality across all domains.

No doubt, living in a quality village offers numerous advantages for residents. From well-designed housing units to green spaces and community amenities, these villages are designed to enhance the overall quality of life for inhabitants. By prioritizing comfort, sustainability, and community engagement, quality villages in Addis Ababa are setting a new standard for urban living.

Therefore, living in a quality village can significantly improve the quality of life for individuals and families. With access to modern amenities, green spaces, and a strong sense of community, residents can lead healthier, more fulfilling lives. The emphasis on sustainability and environmental consciousness also contributes to a better quality of life, both for current residents and future generations.

Experts also emphasize that with the rapid urbanization and population growth in Addis Ababa, the demand for quality living spaces has never been higher. Choosing to reside in a quality village offers a host of benefits, including a higher quality of life, sustainable and eco-friendly living spaces, community engagement and social connections as well as access to modern amenities and conveniences and enhanced safety and security measures.

In sum, as the city continues to grow and evolve, the concept of quality villages is sounding and will play an essential role in shaping the urban landscape. By prioritizing quality living spaces and community well-being, the city can create a more sustainable and vibrant city for all its residents. With a focus on innovation, sustainability, and community engagement, quality villages are paving the way for a brighter future in Addis Ababa.



**'Quality Village' is a critical institution designed to catalyze the competitiveness of Ethiopia's local products in global markets and enhance its participation in global value chains**



## Published Weekly in Collaboration with Haramaya University

# HU assists farmers providing the best wheat seeds

BY EPHREM ANDARGACHEW

**H**aramaya University (HU) has donated three million birr worth of the best wheat seed to 300 farmers in Girawa, Malka Ballo, Meta, and Tulo Woredas of the East and West Hararge zones.

Dr. Yishak Yousuf, HU's Vice President of Research and Community Engagement, stated that the university has been conducting agricultural research and developing technologies to enhance the lives of local farmers by increasing their production and productivity.

He explained that the best wheat seed donated by HU is crucial for improving farmers' lives because it is tailored to their needs and can yield results in a short time.

The university is striving for autonomy, he mentioned. Therefore, in the future, HU will make every effort to sell improved seeds at a reasonable price in addition to offering them as donations or for free. This, in turn, will enable



farmers to access the best seeds in their area.

Kamal Kassim, the Director of HU's Community Engagement and University-Industry Linkage Directorate, highlighted that the university has been providing various forms of support, including technical assistance and improved technology, to the community.

He emphasized that supporting the best wheat seed is part of the university's community participation initiative.

This donation is crucial as it will improve farmers' lives by helping them withstand the effects of climate and disease while increasing their yields.

The university is dedicated to modernizing agriculture to enhance product quality and productivity by providing farmers with professional, technological, and high-quality seeds. The best wheat seed donated to farmers covers 300 hectares of land and yields over 8100 quintals of wheat.

Abdujbar Umar, the Head of the Agriculture Office in Malka Ballo Woredas and a recipient of the donation, stated that the best wheat seed provided by HU is essential for ensuring food security in their zones through increased output and productivity.

To address societal issues, HU has shared diverse research findings and better technologies with farmers to improve their lives. He expressed gratitude to the university for its unwavering efforts.



## Published Weekly in Cooperation with Dambi Dollo University

# DaDU's effort to improve fish farming system

BY EPHREM ANDARGACHEW

In recent years, fish farming in Ethiopia has received more attention as a means of improving food security, creating jobs, and enhancing nutritional outcomes. The country has extensive freshwater resources, such as lakes, rivers, and reservoirs, making it ideal for aquaculture.

Recognizing this potential, Dambi Dollo University (DaDU) has been actively working to expand and maximize the benefits of fish farming in its vicinity. One significant effort has been the establishment of an integrated agricultural research center to support fish farming.

The center is focused on addressing community service issues related to fish farming and conducting research to enhance outcomes and make fish farming a sustainable source of income. Assistant Professor Soressa Shuma, Director of the

Dambi Dollo University Integrated Agricultural Research Centre, stated that the main objective of modern fish farming is to cultivate fish in a



modern and easily accessible facility.

The center aims to address the limited fish supply in the country, improve fish reproduction and distribution for the population, and provide valuable insights and practical lessons to agricultural college students. It is gradually evolving into a hands-on learning environment for these students.

The university initially supplied 3,000 tilapia, catfish, and carp from the renowned center in Batu. Through extensive adaptation, research, and

breeding efforts, the population of these species has grown significantly to over five million. These fish varieties are highly sought after for breeding, with individual weights reported to reach up to 8 kg and 10 kg, according to the director.

The center has successfully distributed fish fry to seven districts within the region to promote fish farming as a means of community support and income generation for local farmers. Plans are underway to expand the distribution of fish fry to additional districts and private farmers capable of establishing suitable lakes for aquaculture.

The Agricultural Research Center at Dambi Dollo University plays a crucial role in advancing fish farming initiatives for research and community service. These initiatives have been well-received by the local community for their potential to improve livelihoods through fish multiplication and distribution, serving as a significant source of internal income. Efforts are ongoing to further enhance the university's capabilities.

Overall, the future of fish farming in Ethiopia looks promising, with opportunities for growth and development in the sector. By addressing existing challenges through education, infrastructure development, and increased market access, Ethiopia can enhance its aquaculture industry, contributing to food security and economic development. The establishment of an integrated agricultural research center for fish farming at DaDU is essential for promoting sustainable fish farming practices not only in its immediate surroundings but also across the country.

(Source: DaDU Public and International Relations Directorate)



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