



# The Ethiopian Herald

Vol. LXXXI No 080 12 December 2024 - Tahisas 3, 2017

Thursday

Price Birr 10.00

## President appeals to youth on spearheading anti-corruption sweep

BY MISGANAW ASNAKE

**ADDIS ABABA**—President Taye Atske-Selassie emphasized the role of youth in the fight against corruption, advocating for an education system that fosters strong moral values and social responsibility.

Speaking during the closing ceremony of the 21<sup>st</sup> International Anti-Corruption Day held yesterday at the Adwa Victory Memorial Museum, the President urged schools to cultivate a generation that champions integrity and actively promotes ethical behavior and transparency. “We need to instill accountability, responsibility, and fairness in the hearts of our youth, empowering them to lead their communities with integrity,” he remarked.

President Taye further highlighted the need for a dedicated media landscape to facilitate open discussions about corruption, which he described as essential for addressing the issue effectively.

The President has also described corruption as a “pervasive disease” that threatens national development and perpetuates

See *President appeals ... Page 3*



**AGI** CONSTRUCTING THE FUTURE AFRICA  
Abyssinia Group of Industries

Manufacturer of Rebars, Angles, Channels, Flat Bars & Round Bars. Introducing cut & bend service for rebars.

**Contact & Address**  
Tel: +251 116 63 97 55/ 251 116 63 51 22/25  
Mob.: +251 962 009 072/ +251 949 440 868  
+251 911 45 9790  
E-mail: sales@agiethiopia.com  
4th Floor, Dabi Building, Bole road Addis Ababa Ethiopia

**Siingee**

**DOWNLOAD SIINGEE BANK MOBILE BANKING APP**  
from play store & start your transaction now

www.siingeebank.com



Keiredin Tezera (PhD)

**World Vision, EU launch 2 mln Euros peace-building project**

Page 3

## Ethiopia, Somaliland eye enhanced historic ties: Official

BY HAILE DEMEKE

**ADDIS ABABA** – Ethiopia and Somaliland are collaborating to consolidate their deep-rooted bilateral relations in education, commerce, and other sectors, the Republic of Somaliland, Supreme Constitutional Court Member said.

In an exclusive interview with *The Ethiopian Herald*, Somaliland’s Supreme Constitutional Court Member Yahya Ali Idris said that the relationship between Ethiopia and Republic of Somaliland is deep rooted intertwined by blood.

The two nations have been collaborating and working together in diverse areas of cooperation so as to ensure mutual benefit, he mentioned.

He stated that the cooperation between Ethiopia and Somaliland is at the highest

See *Ethiopia, Somaliland ... Page 3*

## Addis to host upcoming AU Summit with grand hospitality

BY YESUF ENDRIS

**ADDIS ABABA**—The Ethiopian Tourism and Hotel Market Association has announced its readiness to host guests for the upcoming African Union (AU) annual summit, with enhanced hospitality services and unique cultural experiences.

Speaking to *The Ethiopian Herald*, the Association’s President, Getahun Alemu, revealed that discussions on welcoming protocols and hotel services have been held with the Office of the Prime Minister. “This year’s hospitality services aim to be more attractive, with hotels incorporating unique experiences such as Ethiopian coffee ceremonies and cultural performances,” he said.

Getahun noted that the Association plays a vital role in facilitating guest experiences, as its members are key players in the hospitality sector. Hotels in Addis Ababa have been encouraged to invest in service quality, sustainability, and guest satisfaction. “We



are putting significant effort into creating an environment that ensures seamless marketing and guest satisfaction,” he added.

AU guests are also being encouraged to explore Addis Ababa’s growing tourist attractions, particularly those developed

under the city’s corridor project. Specially trained tour guides will be available to provide in-depth insights into the city’s landmarks and its evolving tourism destinations.

See *Addis to host ... Page 3*

## Hawassa attracts 1.1 bln Birr investment

BY BETELHEM BEDLU

**ADDIS ABABA**—Hawassa City recorded 14 new investments with a combined capital of 1.1 billion Birr in the first quarter of this budget year, according to the City Administration's Investment Expansion Office.

The Office Head Tadasse Fikire told the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) that a plan was set to involve over 45 high-level investors in the industry, urban agriculture, and service sectors this fiscal year. The city aims to achieve a total investment capital of 4 billion Birr while creating employment opportunities for over 2,500 citizens.

Within the first quarter, 14 new projects have been licensed and made operational, generating a total capital of 1.1 billion Birr and providing jobs for 1,400 citizens.

In addition to attracting new investments, the city has been addressing issues related to underutilized investment lands. Over 15.7 hectares of such land have been reclaimed and returned to the land bank for redistribution to other potential developers.

Despite these achievements, challenges persist, including delays in credit services and input shortages due to foreign currency limitations. However, Tadasse noted that the government's macroeconomic reforms have started yielding positive results for the investment climate.

The Head emphasized the importance of creating a conducive environment for investors and highlighted the city's efforts to ensure peace and stability for those keen to invest. Currently, Hawassa has prepared approximately 103 hectares of well-developed, infrastructure-ready land for investment. This includes 35 hectares allocated for industrial purposes, 55 hectares for urban farming, and the remaining land designated for hotel and tourism development.

Tadasse extended an invitation to investors to explore and engage in the diverse investment opportunities available in Hawassa, underscoring the city's commitment to fostering a thriving investment environment.

## IPDC, EPA ink MoU to garner global ranking industrial parks

BY ASHENAFI ANIMUT

**ADDIS ABABA** – The Industrial Parks Development Corporation (IPDC) and the Ethiopian Environmental Protection Authority (EEPA) signed a collaborative Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to realize internationally green certification for special industrial economic zones.

Speaking at the signing ceremony yesterday, IPDC CEO Fisseha Yitagesu(PhD) said that this certification would help expand eco-friendly industrial parks development trends in all special industrial economic zones competency on the global stage.

He further emphasized that most of the industrial parks have their own waste treatment plants that help discharge zero pollution waste management mechanisms and practice eco-friendly industrial parks practices.

“Furthermore, this initiative creates an enabling platform to share professionalism, knowledge transfer and international best practices and experiences with partners collaboratively.”

Since the past few years, Ethiopia has been undertaking wide-ranges of greenery activities notably under the green legacy initiative throughout the country.

According to the CEO, this renewed commitment for the development of this initiative endures special economic zones embracing advanced technologies.

“This also helps the country promote its rank and keep up its excellence at international level,” he added.



During the ceremony, the managements on both sides have established a taskforce who monitor the overall implementation endeavors.

EEPA Director-General Lelise Nemie (Eng.) remarked that this green certification framework which rates the parks' standards would help promote socio economic benefit and environmental sustainability.

Aligning with the international convention and mandates which advocates for nurturing healthy and productive citizens, she highlighted that this also be a significant milestone for the promotion of quality

production and productivity.

“Apart from ensuring eco-friendly industrial parks and sustainable development goals, the certification framework would help create green jobs, energy management, waste reduction and lure anchor investors to invest in the country,” she underscored.

She further emphasized that this ice-breaking green certification program would be serving as a launching pad for other parks' development. Accordingly, this pilot implementation phase will be putting in place in four special economic zones and expanded to other private industrial parks.

## Ethiopia hosts Talent Cloud Summit to shape Africa's gig economy

BY NAOL GIRMA

**ADDISABABA**-As the gig economy becomes a critical driver of employment opportunities across Africa, Ethiopia is taking a leading role in this transformative movement, according to the Ministry of Labor and Skills (MoLS).

The Talent Cloud Summit, a pivotal event aimed at shaping the future of gig work in Africa, was launched yesterday in Addis Ababa.

During the event, MoLS State Minister Solomon Soka highlighted the importance of leveraging technology to connect freelancers with job opportunities, improve payment systems, and enhance skills training. The summit is intended to serve as a platform for discussing the future of gig work across the continent, particularly the innovative technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI) and mobile applications that are shaping the future of Africa's gig economy.

“The gig economy has become a critical driver of employment opportunities across Africa, and Ethiopia stands at the forefront of this transformative movement,” said Solomon. He added that the summit provides a unique opportunity to shape policies,



Solomon Soka



Menna Tafesse

build partnerships, and create a supportive ecosystem for freelancers and gig workers.

Gebeya's Chief Impact Officer Menna Tafesse explained how Gebeya empowers organizations to build, manage, and scale ecosystems of top global talent. “Through our configurable, no-code Talent Clouds, companies can source, vet, qualify, and engage with a global network of professionals tailored to their specific needs,” she said.

Gebeya's CEO Amadou Daffe, expressed his excitement about bringing the event to Addis Ababa. “We are happy to unite key stakeholders in shaping the future of freelancing in Africa,” he said. “This summit

underscores our commitment to empowering African talent through technology, policy support, and innovation.”

The launch event was attended by representatives from the United Nations International Trade Centre (UNITC), the Ministry of Labor and Skills, and the National Technology and Innovation Fund for Ventures (NTFV). The summit brought together policymakers, industry leaders, freelancers, gig workers, and platform founders to discuss the evolving dynamics of freelancing in Africa and its significant impact on the workforce. Gebeya is a leading Talent Cloud company in Ethiopia.

## World Vision, EU launch 2 mln Euros peace-building project

BY HAILE DEMEKE

**ADDIS ABABA**—World Vision Ethiopia, in collaboration with World Vision Australia and the European Union (EU), has unveiled a 2 million Euros peace-building initiative targeting conflict-affected areas in the Tigray, Benishangul Gumuz, and Amhara states.

Speaking at the launch event, State Minister of Peace, Keiredin Tezera (PhD), emphasized the commitment of the EU and World Vision to Ethiopia's peace process. "This project is a testament to their unwavering support for fostering peace in the country," he remarked. The initiative aims to address tensions, rebuild trust, and promote social cohesion in 12 districts across the three states.

"The project focuses on reducing existing tensions and preventing future violence by fostering a culture of dialogue and reconciliation," Keiredin noted. "It will also enhance the capacity of local governments to manage conflicts effectively and engage youth in peace-building efforts actively."

World Vision Ethiopia's National Director, Karmen Till, highlighted the project's expected impact, which will directly benefit over 35,000 people, including 30,000 individuals affected by conflict. Additionally, the initiative will involve 1,200 youth peace-builders and 1,200 faith leaders, creating a broad-based approach to conflict resolution and reconciliation.

"This 18-month project, funded by the EU, seeks to rebuild trust, promote dialogue, and establish sustainable conflict-prevention mechanisms across 12 targeted districts," Till explained.

She also underscored World Vision Ethiopia's extensive experience in peace-building, citing successful efforts in states like Gedeo-Guji, Welega, and Kamashi. "We've worked to expand conflict-sensitive programming, equip diverse groups such as youth, children, women, and faith leaders with conflict resolution skills, and promote unity. These efforts have laid a strong foundation for sustainable peace," she added.

"With this new initiative, we aim to create



David Krivanek

an even greater impact by empowering communities, especially youth, to lead peace-building efforts. By strengthening dialogue and inclusive peace structures, we can contribute to lasting stability aligned with government initiatives," Till remarked.

Tigray Interim Administration Head, Getachew Reda, commended World Vision

for its longstanding support to the state, even during times of severe conflict. "The state is recovering, and projects like this are vital to rebuilding and assisting our communities. Nothing is more important than peace," he stated.

Deputy Head of Delegation for the EU in Ethiopia, David Krivanek, reaffirmed the EU's commitment to peace-building efforts in Ethiopia. "This project represents a profound dedication to fostering peace, reconciliation, and stability in some of the most affected regions of the country. By promoting trust, mutual understanding, and dialogue, we are addressing one of the most pressing challenges of our time: the need for enduring peace," he said.

Representatives from Benishangul Gumuz and Amhara states also expressed their enthusiasm and pledged collaboration with World Vision to ensure the project's success.

This initiative underscores the importance of sustainable peace in Ethiopia, offering hope for lasting reconciliation and stability in states that have endured significant conflict, it was learned.

## President appeals to youth ...

poverty. According to him, corruption operates like a deeply entrenched network, hindering progress and undermining public trust. He called for transparency, accountability, and tangible actions to address this issue, urging the nation to go beyond rhetoric.

The President warned that if corruption escalates unchecked, it poses a severe threat to the very foundation of society, destabilizing systems, eroding trust in institutions, and potentially leading to national disintegration. "It is vital that we dismantle the networks of corruption that stifle our potential and work towards a future where integrity and justice prevail. This is the only way to pave the path for sustainable development and uplift our nation from the grips of poverty," he stated.

Federal Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission Commissioner, Samuel Urkato (PhD), also underscored the grave impact of corruption, calling it the "main enemy of development, equality, and justice." He urged all Ethiopians to fight corruption with determination and consistency to bring about lasting



solutions. "Institutions must reform their practices related to corruption to ensure proper resource utilization and achieve the nation's development goals," he said.

Samuel acknowledged that corruption has plagued Ethiopia for decades and stressed the need for long-term, sustainable solutions. "In the Ethiopian context, corruption has existed with us for many years, and we need to struggle in a consistent and committed manner to ensure a sustainable solution for future generations," he said. The commissioner also emphasized the importance of building advanced service systems that empower youth to combat corruption

effectively while focusing on enforcing laws, investigating acts of corruption, and recovering stolen property.

Samuel concluded by emphasizing the need to strengthen mechanisms to tackle corruption at all levels. He stressed that achieving Ethiopia's development goals requires a holistic approach that includes building systems that promote accountability, enforcing the rule of law, and empowering the next generation to resist corruption.

The 21st International Anti-Corruption Day was celebrated across the country under the theme "Youth-Centered Anti-Corruption Struggle: Builds Tomorrow's Personality."

## Ethiopia, Somaliland ...

level and the two nations are committed to further elevate the existing diplomatic relations to the highest level.

"The two countries are enjoying a fantastic diplomatic relations from post 1991 to date when Republic of Somaliland declares its independence from Somalia," Ali said.

There are many similarities between Ethiopians and Somalilanders, which can be observed in aspects such as population, culture, language, religion, and tradition. Ultimately, these commonalities foster a sense of unity and mutual understanding among the diverse populations of the Horn of Africa, he noted.

In January 2024, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) and the Somaliland President Muse Bihi Abdi have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in Addis Ababa, paving the way to realize the aspiration of Ethiopia to secure access to the sea and diversify its seaport options. The MoU also strengthens security, economic and political partnership between Ethiopia and Somaliland is also the pathway to bolster their political and diplomatic relations.

Ali described the agreement as a significant milestone to further solidify the bilateral ties between the two nations. It plays a significant role in unlocking new economic opportunities, enhancing regional connectivity, thereby benefiting the two nations and the wider Horn of Africa region.

Recalling the recently concluded democratic elections of the Republic of Somaliland in November 2024 electing Abdirahman Mohamed Abdullahi as a president of Somaliland, Ali expressed his enthusiasm for the strong and solid diplomatic relationship between the two nations to be in the highest level of cooperation.

## Addis to host upcoming AU Summit ...

"Visitors will be briefed on completed and upcoming tourism projects, which will help promote Addis Ababa as a thriving destination," Getahun explained.

The Association is collaborating closely with the government to enhance the capacity and cooperation of tourism and hospitality service providers. "We are strengthening partnerships among stakeholders to ensure a successful hosting experience," he emphasized.

Meanwhile, the National Committee for the

Preparation of the African Union Summit, led by State Minister for Foreign Affairs Birtukan Ayano (Amb.), is overseeing the preparations. According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA), the committee comprises representatives from various institutions who are monitoring and evaluating the progress.

MoFA Spokesperson Nebiyat Getachew (Amb.) told journalists that this year's summit will reflect the city's enhanced tourism infrastructure and improved hospitality services.



Getahun Alemu

# Opinion

## The economic prospect of Grand Renaissance Dam

BY ABEBE WOLDEGIORGIS

**G**ERD as one of Africa's grand hydropower dams will have the potential to position Ethiopia as a key player in regional energy production, with the ability to meet much of its domestic electricity needs and export surplus power to neighboring countries.

As it is clearly observed, the dam is strategically located on the Blue Nile River 100 meters above sea level, one of the Nile River's two major tributaries (the other being the White Nile). The Blue Nile contributes about 85 percent of the total water flow of the Nile, making it critical for the river's overall water volume. GERD's construction near Guba in the Benishangul-Gumuz region of Ethiopia places it at the heart of the Blue Nile, providing Ethiopia with significant control over the river's water resources, a matter of vital importance to the country and the region as a whole.

The Reservoir, created by the GERD, will have a storage capacity of 74 billion cubic meters of water. This makes it one of the largest reservoirs in the world. The size of the reservoir is crucial because it allows the dam to regulate water flow, enabling a consistent energy output for the hydropower turbines. The large storage capacity will also help manage seasonal fluctuations in water levels, ensuring a stable electricity supply year-round.

What sets GERD apart from many other major infrastructure projects is that Ethiopia has largely financed it on its own. Rather than relying on external loans or aid, the government has funded the project through government domestic bonds and public donations. This financing strategy reflects Ethiopia's desire to maintain full control over the dam and its associated benefits. The people of Ethiopia have played a vital role in funding the dam, with citizens contributing to national campaigns. This self-reliance is a testament to Ethiopia's ambition for energy independence and sustainable development.

GERD's construction has had a major impact on employment in Ethiopia. The dam project has provided thousands of jobs to local workers, from skilled labor to administrative and managerial roles. This has not only supported the Ethiopian economy but also contributed to the development of the Benishangul-Gumuz region, which had previously seen less industrial activity.

GERD's construction has also helped develop the surrounding infrastructure, including roads and transport system, benefiting local communities and the country at large.

While it has brought the potential for regional cooperation, it has also sparked significant tensions. The dam has been a point of contention between Ethiopia, Sudan and Egypt, both of which are downstream countries. The core issue revolves around the dam's impact on the Nile's water flow, particularly during the filling of the reservoir. Egypt, which relies heavily on the Nile for its water supply, has expressed concerns

project as a crucial step towards breaking free from energy dependence and asserting their place on the African continent. It has united the Ethiopian people, who have supported the project with enthusiasm, and is often celebrated as a modern marvel.

It also indicates that how the country has prepared itself to bring better future to the coming generations and improve its global images and play pivotal role for regional economic integration.

Once completed, GERD is expected to significantly enhance Ethiopia's energy production, not just for domestic use, but also for regional energy export.

The dam will allow Ethiopia to supply electricity to neighboring countries, including Sudan, Kenya, Djibouti and Tanzania. This has the potential to foster regional economic integration, creating energy markets across East Africa. The electricity generated by GERD could also stimulate industrial development in these countries, leading to greater economic stability and cooperation and helps to meet their aspiration to develop green economy.

Compared to fossil fuel-based power generation, hydropower is considered a more environmentally friendly energy source. GERD, as a clean and renewable energy provider, will help reduce Ethiopia's reliance on coal, oil, and gas. The expansion of the utilization of renewable energy helps to save the nation badly needed hard currency allocated for the importation of carbon based none renewable energy. Reduce emission gas released from industries and transportation sector.

The beginning of electric powered transportation system including vehicles and trains further increases the nation's efforts to mitigate global warming and climate change which has been a pressing matter for the developing countries including Ethiopia.

However, the dam has raised concerns about its impact on ecosystems and local communities. The removal of vegetation cover to create water bed in the dam might bring its own consequence. The filling of the reservoir could disrupt traditional river flows, affecting local agriculture and fish populations. Furthermore, while hydropower is a clean energy source, large-scale dams can lead to the displacement of people living near the construction site, and the potential loss of biodiversity is a subject of ongoing debate from some corner.

As the result, soil erosion and land degradation is exacerbated from time to time. The soil that has been taken by flood found its way to the dam which intern affects the power generation capacity of the dam and shortens its span. Therefore, soil and conservation work has to be a priority agenda for securing the nation energy generation capacity.

The government long ago has aspired side by side with achieving economic growth to attain structural change. Currently agriculture is the main stay of the nation

economy. It is characterized by rain fed and subsistence and yet it is also the means of living of the 85 percent of the population. It is the major export earner which contributes about 69 percent to the export income and supply food at least at subsistence level yet the sector is vulnerable to climate change and global warming. Attaining sustainable development without transforming the economy is unrealistic.

To realize the aspiration, the government has been exerting its time and finance for the expansion of manufacturing. It constructed industrial parks and supplied the necessary infrastructure. Expanding this sector without supplying sufficient renewable energy is unthinkable. Therefore, it should be recognized that exploiting energy sources mean accelerating the nation industrialization process. Expanding manufacturing serves to attract foreign investment, boost export, substitute imports, creates linkage with agriculture through utilizing raw materials, creates job opportunities to thousands, advances innovation and the role of the private sector in the economy.

Therefore, it should be understood that, in line with developing energy sources paying attention for soil and land conservation makes the development endeavor sustainable.

Since its inception in 2011, the construction of GERD has been marked by significant challenges. These include geopolitical tensions, technical hurdles related to the dam's scale, and financial constraints. The dam's construction has faced delays due to these factors, and it has at times been a point of international controversy. Despite these challenges, Ethiopia has remained committed to the project, and progress has steadily continued, with the dam expected to be fully operational in the near future. The dam stands as a testament to the resilience and determination of the Ethiopian people in the face of adversity.

The Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) much more than just a major infrastructure project; it is a symbol of Ethiopia's growth, self-reliance, and determination to reshape its energy future. Ethiopia has abundant natural resources which serves for harnessing of renewable energy including, Hydropower, Solar, Wind, Geothermal and others. So far the resource is not harnessed as the nation demands. Shortage of finance, technology and well trained manpower inhibited the nation not to do so. Therefore, the money generated from energy export to the neighboring countries can be invested to exploit the mentioned energy sources.

As the dam nears completion, it will not only play a pivotal role in Ethiopia's energy sector but also have far-reaching implications for the wider East African region and the global energy landscape.

**The dam is viewed as a milestone of the country's economic growth, self-reliance and ambition to harness its natural resources for development**

that GERD could reduce the amount of water available to them. Over the years, the three countries have held numerous rounds of negotiations brokered by international bodies, including the African Union and the United Nations, to reach a consensus on the dam's operation and water-sharing agreements.

For Ethiopia, the GERD is more than just a dam—it is a symbol national pride and sovereignty. The dam is viewed as a milestone of the country's economic growth, self-reliance and ambition to harness its natural resources for development.

It has become a focal point of national identity, with Ethiopians perceiving the

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

# Editorial

## Ethiopia and Somaliland: Strengthening economic cooperation

It has been almost a year since Ethiopia and Somaliland signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for sea access. While pursuing this, the two sides have also intensified their economic cooperation especially in the field of port services that plays an integral role in their economy.

Recently, Somaliland has inaugurated the Ethiopian Transit Clearinghouse at Berbera Port. The new clearinghouse is tasked with managing the transportation of cargo unloaded at Berbera Port to various destinations across Ethiopia, thereby streamlining logistics and enhancing trade efficiency between the two nations.

Regional economic integration is a vital step to give economic leverage to the member countries. Such regional integration can lead to substantial economic gains, such as increased trade and investment, improved standard of living, and reduced dependence on imports. Furthermore, the regional integration can improve market efficiency and create a larger market for the production and sale of goods and services.

However, the economic integration of the member countries does not come at one time or overnight. It is a step by step journey that embraces the genuine interests and benefits of the people of the two countries with a view to realize it in the long run. Therefore, the member countries should take measures step by step until they reach to the level of exploiting all the available opportunities.

As such the countries of the Horn of Africa have a big opportunity to gain economic leverage from economic integration. Yet, so far integration has been under challenge due to various reasons despite the countries having the interest.

Despite all these Ethiopia and Somaliland have been working on up scaling their economic ties. Ethiopia is a country of more than 120 million people which makes it among the most populated both in Africa and the world. Coupled with its large and rapidly growing economy it needs to increase its access to modern, high capacity maritime facility to accommodate its rapidly growing import and export trade.

Somaliland also owns important port facilities that can serve not only the country but also its neighbors. These port facilities can give economic benefit to the country by integrating its ties with Ethiopia which is highly in need of the port services.

The successful opening of the clearinghouse is a good start for even stronger economic and trade relations that can be good example for other regional integrations. The smooth operation of the clearing house and the forthcoming strong transaction is likely to be a part and parcel of the efforts underway at continental level to create a free trade area.

The commitment observed in both Ethiopia and Somaliland to carry on the project of opening the clearinghouse facility deserves due appreciation. It is clear that the journey thus far was not a bed of roses. It won't be either in the future. However, the burning needs of the economies of the two sides and the interest of the two peoples are much higher than any challenge that stands in its face.

The two sides need to continue working remaining policy and infrastructural issues until the people start to reap the economic and social benefits of the facilities and leave their finger prints to inspire much other integration across the region and the continent.

In Sum, the economic cooperation between Ethiopia and Somaliland marks a significant step towards regional integration that promises to yield substantial benefits for both nations. As they navigate the challenges ahead, it is crucial for both sides to address remaining policy and infrastructural issues to fully realize the potential of their partnership. By fostering stronger ties and enhancing trade efficiency, Ethiopia and Somaliland can set a powerful example for other countries in the Horn of Africa, paving the way for broader economic collaboration across the continent.

# Opinion

## Appealing economic reform against all odds

BY ADDISALEM MULAT

It should be emphasized that the recently effectuated macro-economic reform policy with certainty has embarked on giving a boost to the country's economy at the earliest possible juncture. In actual fact, if the entire situation keeps going in the same path, the country's economy will come up with better prospects and better future.

For the realization of the macro-economic reform policy goals every Tom, Dick, and Harry ought to be at the leading age and in center stage turning a blind eye and deaf ear to cooked up stories.

As Ethiopia's adversaries hate to death the growth of the country, they every so often have been pulling out all the stops to blemish the positive strides of the macro-economic reform policy.

Notwithstanding the fact that they leave no stone unturned to pour cold water on the ongoing reform policy coming up with a broad range of barefaced lies, the whole thing has been moving forward in the right direction as a result of the concerted efforts of Ethiopians.

As putting in place the macroeconomic reform policy without a shred of a doubt assist the progress of securing plethora of benefits in taking the country to whole new level and further stage, each and every one should join hands and stand in unison.

It is crystal clear that as sticking to the newly implemented macroeconomic policy breathes new life into attracting investors from the length and breadth of the world, catapult the country's economy, eradicate poverty, transform the lives of the general public and other related aspects at the earliest possible time, the general public should give the cold shoulder to trumped up stories.

Ethiopia's recent macroeconomic reform measures have increased remittance inflow to the country while narrowing the gap between official and parallel markets, economic experts said.

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

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

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

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

In actual fact, taking golden prospects unfolding in every corner of the country into consideration, Ethiopians residing at home and abroad should cross-pollinate positive ideas with regard to the macro-economic reform. It is a well-known fact that the government has set up major strategic guidelines with the purpose of making certain macro-economic reform program.

As the macroeconomic reform policy paves the way for the general economic growth of the country in terms of a diverse range of sustainable development goals and gives a boost to the country's economy, all sections of the population should combine efforts.

Ethiopia, which is one of the fastest growing economies, has been attaining vigorous economic progress. Reasoning from this fact, the country is turning out to be a noteworthy player in the African economic setting as well as showcasing its pledge to bring about sustainable Development Goals.

As the reform set the scene for significant economic encounters, remedying the imbalance, easing the debt burden, and getting higher growth sources irrespective of remaining reform ranges, every single one should stand by the side of the government.

It is true that following the implementation of the macro-economic reform, all components of the population have been tossing around their ideas along these lines. Needless to say, the country secures several benefits from the newly implemented macro-economic reform.

Key objectives and goals of the macro-economic reform program revolve around correcting foreign exchange distortions and solving the structural balance of payments deficit problems, and reducing inflation by modernizing the monetary policy framework. Apart from strengthening the inclusiveness, competitiveness, and soundness of the financial sector, the reform creates a favorable balance to achieve our national development needs through domestic capacity by solving debt vulnerability and increasing domestic income, according to sources.

If truth be told, the macro-economic reform policy effectuation has been making progress in the face of some encounters that arise from some groups endeavoring to drag through the mire the positive developments of the reform.

Ethiopia's live animal export volume has seen significant progress following recent macro-economic reforms, the Ethiopian Agricultural Authority (EAA) revealed.

Speaking to the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA), EAA Animal Drug Regulatory Lead Executive Officer Solomon Kebede (PhD) in the recent past stated that the reforms have been a turning point for the development of the livestock sector.

He explained that the authority has been actively monitoring the sector and providing support to animal husbandry farms through vaccine distribution and fodder supplies. Additionally, the EAA has extended incentives to local manufacturers, encouraging them to produce high-quality and effective veterinary medicine.

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



## The Ethiopian Herald

Established in 1943

Published daily except Mondays  
By The Ethiopian Press Agency

### Office of the CEO

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

### Advertisement and Dist. Department

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

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

### Deputy Editors-in-Chief:

Alem Hailu  
Elizabeth Mengistu  
Zekarias Woldemariam  
Desta Geberehiwot  
Daniel Beyene

Website: www.press.et  
email: ethiopianherald@press.et  
Fb//Ethiopian Press Agency/  
The Ethiopian Herald

## Business & Economy

# Increasing production, productivity by liming acidic soil

BY BACHA ZEWDIE

One of the problems that threaten Ethiopia's agricultural production and productivity is soil acidity. According to data, about seven million hectares or 43% of the country's arable land is currently affected by soil acidity. Of this, three million hectares are considered to be highly acidic. Agricultural experts indicate that this problem has been neglected until recently, causing a significant negative impact on productivity.

Data also indicate that if only seven million hectares of this acidified land were treated with lime, production and productivity could be increased by fifty percent. They also mention that using lime alone; productivity could be increased from 10 quintals per hectare to 40 to 50 quintals.

National agricultural reform programs are being implemented to ensure that agriculture contributes positively to economic growth beyond food self-sufficiency. Among these are cluster farming, summer wheat, urban agriculture, etc.

Another issue that has received attention is increasing the productivity of acid-affected land by treating with lime; it has been observed that land that has been considered unproductive is bearing yield and remarkable changes have been recorded.

One of the areas where increasing the productivity of acid-affected land by treating with lime is the West Shewa Zone of Oromia Regional State. During this year's harvest season, productivity of barley crop sown on 853 hectares of land treated with lime in the Tesse Baranda village of Haro Boki Kebele, Wolmera Woreda in the West Shewa Zone; has shown more than double growth.

During a recent field visit by a team led by the regional speaker, Sa'ada Abdurahman, the zone administrator, Dida Gudeta, said that one of the areas in the Oromia region where soil acidity is prevalent is the West Shewa zone. In this year's harvest season, 108,886 hectares of land which was affected by acidity and have not been able to produce the desired yield for a long time was planted with various crops.

According to the zone administrator, following the regional government's initiative to treat acidic soil with lime, a lime factory was built in the zone for this purpose. Accordingly, it has been possible to treat soil acidity with lime and increase productivity.

Dida further explained that productivity of the zone could be increased by planting various crops on more than 40,000 hectares of land affected by acidity via treating by lime during the 2024 harvest season. Encouraging results are being achieved by treating the acidity of the soil with lime, he added.



*Managing acid soils for better production and productivity*

Deputy Administrator of Wolmera Woreda and Head of Agriculture and Land Sector, Desalegn Teshome, on his part, said that this year's harvest season was successfully completed by treating acid-affected land with lime in collaboration with the Holeta Agricultural Research Center and with the support of the Oromia Agricultural Bureau and the zone.

Desalegn mentioned that 173 farmers organized on 853 hectares of land in cluster farming have treated their farmland with lime and covered it with barley seeds, and the results are encouraging. Recalling that the land had been affected by acidity, which had weakened its ability to produce; Desalegn said that productivity is increasing due to the reforms the government made in the agricultural sector and that local farmers have also been able to achieve results by using the technology of treating their land with lime.

Although acid-affected lands were previously fertilized, their yields were low; however, since the beginning of lime treatment ten years ago, encouraging results have been recorded, Desalegn said.

He also stated that the Guder Lime Factory located near the woreda has made a significant contribution to agricultural productivity in terms of producing the lime needed to treat the land. At least 1,700 sacks/bags/ of lime have been used on 853 hectares of land in the land treatment process.

He said that the results achieved by farmers organizing themselves in clusters and treating their land with lime and using all agricultural packages will encourage them to listen to the advice of experts in the future and strive for better results.

During the barley harvest in Wolmera Woreda, farmers were able to obtain an estimated 70 quintals per hectare by using lime-treated land, using row sowing and

using agricultural packages to the full extent.

Dida Gudeta, the zone administrator said that a huge brewery is being built in Ambo town to use the barley produced by farmers as an input for industries. In order to increase the productivity of beer barley produced on lime-treated land, farmers have developed cluster farming practices and have created an opportunity to feed industries using new agricultural technologies.

He added that not only production, but also timely collection of ripe crops and storing them in the barn is another task that makes the agricultural sector effective; 40% of the crops that have ripened have been harvested so far. Although the practice to harvest ripe crops with machines was not common earlier, crops such as barley and wheat are being harvested with machines.

According to Melka Jote, a farmer from Haro Boki Kebele, Wolmera Woreda, West Shewa Zone, 10 years ago, local farmers did not know about acidic soils. Through a program run by the Woreda Agriculture Bureau, agricultural experts have educated local farmers about acidic soils and the conditions under which they can be treated with lime. Based on the training provided, the land is first examined to see if it is affected by acid; after its acidity is confirmed, lime treatment is carried out.

Melka said, "Our land has not been productive since 30 years ago, grain is sown and something called shemama grows, and that too does not grow well," and adding he mentioned that at that time, the white barley that was sown did not yield more than five to six sacks per hectare. Thanks to the development workers, this year, after consulting with the district agricultural office, they are able to obtain such a product by analyzing the land and using the necessary amount of lime.

"Land gets sick like a person; we do not leave it alone; we give it the necessary treatment

and allow it to be productive," he said.

As to Melka, the barley harvest treated with lime is very exciting compared to the previous years; the farmers should not have to follow their own path as before, but should accept and implement the advice given by the experts in the field. Applying this technology, there is hope of producing teff or other crops every year.

On her part, Speaker of Oromia Regional council, Sa'ada Abdurahman, said that the government is working to increase production and productivity by designing various programs to ensure food security. She announced that agriculture is being transformed from traditional practices to technology-based ones so that it can produce and market products that are not only for food consumption. Efforts are being made to ensure that all agricultural lands are not idle and are being used properly.

Extensive work is being done to utilize all the available potentials to increase productivity. The work implemented in the West Shewa Zone to increase productivity by treating the land with lime and growing summer wheat with groundwater is an example of the steps the government is taking in the agricultural sector. "There are many opportunities to increase productivity if we work hard; the malt barley productivity seen in Wolmera Woreda is an example of this," she said.

Recalling that malt barley, which is an input for beer factories, used to be imported; Sa'ada said that the results obtained by treating the acid-affected land with lime and using various technologies show that the country can be self sufficient with the product that can be an input for industries.

She mentioned that the fact that the land which was severely affected by acid and had difficulty producing crops was able to increase productivity beyond expectations has given hope to the farmers; next focus is on the land that was ignored because it could not produce crops and use all the options, which have been seen that productivity can be increased.

As to her explanation, if agricultural experts are committed to standing by the farmers and using the land properly in a manner that respects agro ecology, it will not only ensure food security but also produce marketable products. The acidic land treated with lime is a testament to the fact that if the farmers follow the government's development guidelines and accept the advice of experts and use them, they will not be victims but will benefit.

In the future, Sa'ada conveyed a message to the farmers to implement the work directions that the government will design to increase productivity with the help of agricultural experts.

## Art & Culture

# Artistic characterization evokes readers' sympathy in the novel "Bones"

BY MEKDES TAYE (PhD)

In the process of creating a cohesive society and better consensus on basic issues, literature is a relevant arena. Since art and creative work are meant for humanity, they have the power to bring people together, allowing them to feel and share the emotions mentioned in the work.

In the novel called "Bones," the writer, Chenjerai Hove, artistically created the major character Marita in a way that influences the empathy and critical thinking of the readers. Evidence for this statement is presented in the following paragraphs. Enjoy your reading.

Hove opened the story with the persuasive begging of the protagonist Marita. Marita, who had only one son in the military, worked as an employee on a white man's farmland alongside her husband Marume.

This white man abused the locals without any regard for them and was beyond the reach of local authorities. In their culture, having only one child was taboo, leading to psychological abuse directed at Marita. Even the white man, Manyepo, abused her severely because she had no child to work on his farmland. There was also a young girl who worked with her, named Janifa, who was the girlfriend of Marita's son.

Before joining the military, Marita's son wrote a letter to Janifa. Marita discovered this letter and frequently begged Janifa to read it to her, as it made her feel as though her son was still with her. "But she calls me to read the letter all the time without end, even in the night, everybody else asleep in their huts, on their mats, but she still wants to hear what he wrote to me. I say all the time, I feel ashamed" (1988, p. 1).

Despite being illiterate, Marita believed in the importance of education for women. She expressed this belief when preparing to listen to Janifa read the letter. She said, "It is good to send children to school, my child. Children should not be kept at home like cats and dogs" (1988, p. 6).

Marita's character was portrayed as sympathetic and caring for Janifa, who was forced to work on the white man's farm. Marita was concerned for Janifa's well-being and took on some of Janifa's work before starting her own. Janifa recalled Marita's words: "You should be in school so that you do not end up in the same grave that will swallow your mother and me?" (1988, p. 41).

She was very logical and saw things from different perspectives. As a trend, when workers in Manyepo's field became tired, it was their children who took over the task. Therefore, Marita was doing her best to

prevent Janifa from taking on the task of her parents. She did this by helping her with field work and giving her time to attend her school classes on time. Marita expressed her fear to Janifa, saying: "I feel sad for you... to think that Manyepo wants you to take your mother's place in the fields. We have better things to look forward to, child. Not this endless suffering. You were not born to suffer, child" (1988, p. 41).

The story of Marita was mainly narrated by Janifa. She told the story with deep sorrow and sympathy. In the ninth section of the novel, Marita's sympathy was portrayed. In one incident, some fighters, known as terrorists, arrived at the farm without guns so as not to arouse suspicion. They met Marita and engaged in dialogue about the events in the farm and how the white man was treating them. Janifa told us that Manyepo was a very exploitative and bad man who harassed both men and women workers in many ways. When one of the soldiers asked Marita about the white man, she said that he was just a man like any other. He was not that bad, and should not be blamed for anything. Here is the evidence from the novel:

"How is the white farmer you are working for? Does he do bad things to you and other workers? Say if he is evil and we will bring you his corpse in a short time. We have no time to waste. How is he? ...

I said his badness is just like any other person's badness. It does not deserve to earn him death" (1988, p. 62-63).

Even though Marita was telling the soldiers a different story, Janifa knew the reality and remembered her reaction to Marita's actions to the readers as follows: "Did I not see Manyepo kick you as if you were a football? Did I not hear him curse at you, calling you all the bad things that the tongue can mention and not rot? Marita, your heart surprises me" (1988, p. 63).

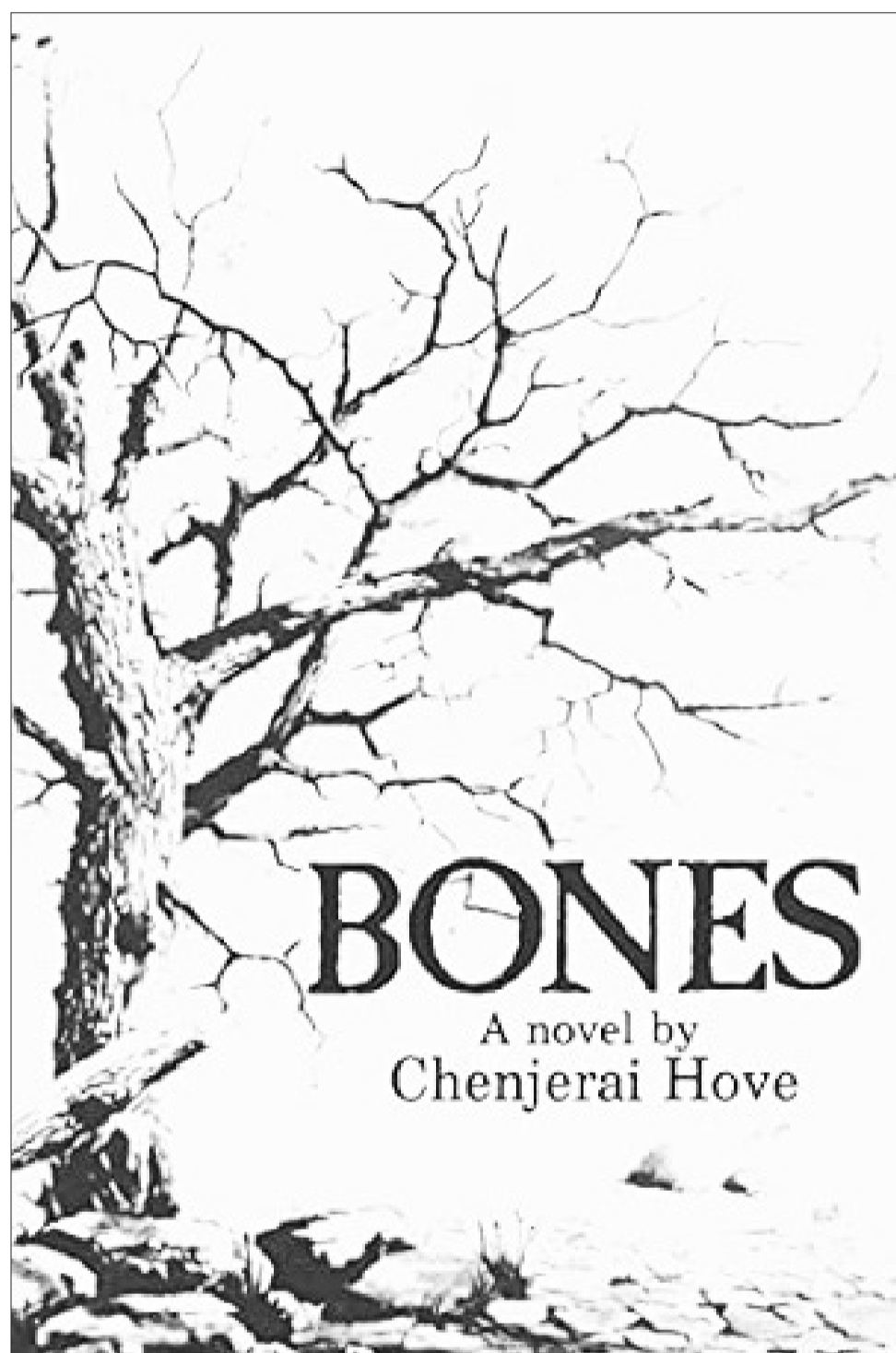
One could interpret Marita's response to the fighters as a lie. Janifa was also in dilemma for the mismatch that she saw between the words that Marita told her before and the lie that Marita did in this incident. The following is their dialogue that clearly showed the smartness and sympathy of Marita:

"But Marita, why did you save Manyepo's life by lying like that?"

"Child, what do you think his mother will say when she hears that another woman sent her son to his death?"

"But Marita, did you not say that the tongue that lies will die a shameful death?"

"Yes, child, but it is better to let that tongue



kill itself than to help it kill itself. The white man thinks we are children, that is why his tongue is loose. The day he learns that we are also grown-ups, he will learn to tighten his tongue. He was brought up like that. You do not expect him to think differently from what his mother told him" (1988, p. 63).

Marita was the most selfless and smart character in the novel. Instead of seeking revenge on the white man who violated her physically and psychologically, she chose to endure her pain internally rather than letting the white man's mother worry if he was going to die. She was fair and reasonable, believing that the white man's character was shaped by his mother, and therefore, he should not be blamed.

Her smartness is visible in two ways. First, she believed that since she knows the pain of losing a son, she does not want anyone else to feel it as she did. This is a display of humanity and empathy. Second, she blamed the mother of the white man because it was

his mother who did not teach him how to be a good man during his childhood.

Such thoughts are important for controlling one's emotions and judgments on issues that affect the well-being of individuals and groups. In this, Hove advised humans to be logical and critical before making decisions. Instead of becoming emotional and passing judgment, expanding one's thinking is important. Despite the painful realities that occurred, protecting one's emotions and giving others a chance is a sign of a thoughtful personality.

Overall, Marita's character in the novel "Bones" is portrayed as selfless and logical, providing valuable lessons for readers. The writer's use of humor, suspense, and language helped to convey the character's depth and complexity. By reading such works, readers can develop empathy and understanding for others, contributing to social cohesion. I invite you to read the book for a better understanding.

# Indepth

## Plastics, power, and politics: The high-stakes fight for a global treaty

As the fifth round of negotiations of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) for a global plastics treaty concluded in Busan, South Korea (25 November-December 1, 2024), the meeting underscored both the complexities and the promises of multilateralism. What we saw in Busan was indicative of other environmental treaty making spaces, including ones on climate and biodiversity.

There is a stark contrast between countries who are willing to show ambition and those who will engage in obstruction at any cost. This exposes the systemic challenges that both plague and demonstrate the enduring potential of multilateral environmental diplomacy to confront global challenges.

The plastics crisis affects every living being on the planet, becoming an undeniable reality rather than just a collection of statistics or headlines. Every day brings new stories of its impact on our health, environment, and livelihoods. Recognizing the scale of this crisis, countries around the world came together almost three years ago to say enough is enough.

The plastics treaty negotiations are the result of this collective realization, marking a critical step toward addressing a problem that touches every corner of our shared existence.

We were supposed to leave Busan with treaty text that would be ready for adoption. But instead, negotiators left without an agreement on the treaty, the barriers ahead are not only procedural or political; they are also philosophical. They reflect a deeper battle between the outdated paradigms of profit-driven growth and the urgent need for a collective reimagining of progress.

Petro-states are continuing to cling to fossil-fueled profits at the expense of collective well-being. It is not merely an economic strategy—it is a moral failure that will damage generations to come!

### A Tale of Two Ambitions

Despite significant challenges, the negotiations also showed critical pathways forward. Panama and the Pacific Small Island Developing States (PSIDS) emerged as powerful voices advocating for a global cap on plastic production—a bold proposal that garnered substantial support from 100 countries.

In a decisive show of ambition during the closing plenary, Rwanda, speaking on behalf of 95 nations, championed ambitious controls on plastic production, while Mexico, representing 85 countries, pressed for stringent regulations on chemicals of concern. These elements represent the backbone of a treaty that is fit to overcome the scale of the plastics crisis and deliver meaningful and lasting solutions.

### The Shadow of Petrochemical Interests

The petrochemical industry's influence loomed large over INC-5, with industry



Local people from Watamu, Kenya, work with Local Ocean Conservation to pick up plastic on the beach.



A 30-foot-high monument entitled *Turn off the Plastics Tap* by Canadian activist and artist Benjamin von Wong was exhibited at the UN Environment Assembly in Nairobi, Kenya, in 2022.

representatives forming the largest single delegation at the talks — outnumbering delegations of Indigenous Peoples, scientists, and some countries including the European Union and all of its member states.

This outsized presence underscores the strategic interest of fossil fuel giants toward plastics as renewable energy and progressive climate policies shrink traditional markets.

Petrochemicals, used in everyday products like plastics and medical equipment, are now the largest drivers of global oil demand, surpassing cars and planes. They are projected to account for over a third of oil demand growth by 2030 and nearly half by 2050, adding 7 million barrels of oil and 83 billion cubic meters of natural gas consumption daily by mid-century.

This shift represents a calculated gamble to embed plastics deeper into the global economy, ensuring the fossil fuel industry's continued dominance despite the environmental and health costs. Yet the environmental and health costs of this strategy are catastrophic. Without significant reductions in plastic production, the sector is poised to consume up to 31% of the remaining carbon budget needed to keep global warming below 1.5°C.

But climate impact is only part of the story. Plastics are fundamentally chemical products, often containing a cocktail of toxic additives that threaten human and planetary health. From endocrine disruptors

leaching into water supplies to carcinogens linked to manufacturing processes, the chemical footprint of plastics amplifies the crisis far beyond its carbon implications.

Decarbonizing the plastics industry, as some companies now propose, is a false solution. True solutions must address not only the climate footprint of plastics but also their broader toxic legacy.

### An Unfinished Fight

While the Busan meeting failed to produce a treaty, it succeeded in highlighting what must change for future negotiations to succeed. Moreover, it remained successful in retaining the obligations that mattered by countering derailing tactics by certain bad-faith actors. The next resumed session (INC-5.2) offers a critical opportunity to address key sticking points such as setting production limits, a global cap on plastic production is non-negotiable. Countries must resist attempts to dilute this measure and instead push for clear, enforceable targets. The treaty must include robust mechanisms to phase out harmful chemicals in plastics, coupled with transparency and traceability requirements to ensure that people have a right to know what chemicals go into their products. Developing nations are disproportionately affected by plastic pollution and they need financial and technical support to implement treaty obligations. The treaty should be funded by developed countries and should also ensure that the private sector, especially polymer

producers, pays its share. The exclusion of observers, Indigenous peoples, and civil society from critical stages of the Busan session undermined the treaty's legitimacy. Future sessions must prioritize meaningful inclusivity and transparency, ensuring that all voices, especially those from Indigenous Peoples and frontline communities, are heard.

### Holding Spoilers Accountable

It is imperative to call out countries that continue to obstruct progress in the INC negotiations. Saudi Arabia, Russia, and Iran, among others, self-organized under the so-called "Like-Minded Countries" bloc and have consistently opposed meaningful advances in the treaty process. Their tactics go beyond mere scepticism of the process. They actively undermine the treaty's ambition and hold back substantive decisions by weaponizing the requirement for consensus in all decisions.

Consensus, while valuable for inclusivity, is being misused as a way to stifle ambition. International precedent, from the Minamata Convention to the Montreal Protocol, demonstrates that incorporating voting as a last resort when countries can otherwise not agree, strengthens negotiation processes and ensures democratic decision-making. Without this safeguard, the plastics treaty risks being shaped by the interests of the few at the expense of the many.

To salvage the treaty's ambition, the INC must embrace procedural reforms that prioritize efficiency and inclusivity. Voting provisions are essential to overcoming the current impasse and enabling the majority of nations to push forward robust, science-based measures.

### A Path Forward

The road to a binding global plastics treaty will not be easy, but the urgency of the crisis leaves no room for complacency. Multilateralism, while imperfect, remains our best hope for tackling global challenges. The successes of past agreements, from the Montreal Protocol to the Minamata Convention, remind us that persistence and ambition can yield transformative results.

We may have left Busan without a treaty — but no treaty was better than a weak one. Civil society, scientists, and progressive nations must rally to maintain pressure, ensuring that the treaty addresses the full lifecycle of plastics—from extraction to disposal—and delivers justice for affected communities. High-ambition country negotiators will have to leave their diplomatic tightropes at home and bring their steel-toed boots to the next session.

In the words of Panama's lead negotiator, Juan Carlos Monterrey Gomez, "When we reconvene, the stakes will be higher. This is not a drill, this is a fight for survival. We did not accept a weak treaty here, and we never will"

(SOURCE: IPS)



# Law & Politics

## A timely ambition with collective dividends

BY DESTA GEBREHIWOT

For decades, Ethiopia has borne the economic and geopolitical costs of being landlocked. Despite being one of the fastest-growing economies in Africa and home to a burgeoning population, the country's lack of direct access to the sea has posed significant challenges to its ambitions for sustained economic development and regional influence. This disadvantage has increasingly fueled Ethiopia's unequivocal and persistent call for reliable sea outlets or alternative port access.

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, during a recent address to lawmakers, underscored Ethiopia's unwavering national interest in resolving this issue, stating, "We do not seek it through war or force... Ethiopia deserves access to the Red Sea by any law, by any country's experience." The prime minister's remarks reflect the country's commitment to achieving this goal peacefully, while simultaneously highlighting the imperative nature of Ethiopia's quest for a sea outlet.

The country's pursuit of this grand yet timely ambition is driven by national, regional, and global rationales. At its core, Ethiopia's ambition transcends individual interests, aiming instead to foster collective prosperity in the region. The potential benefits of granting Ethiopia access to the Red Sea extend far beyond the nation's borders, offering opportunities to enhance regional cooperation, stabilize a conflict-prone region, and create shared economic dividends.

The economy has undergone significant transformation in recent years, characterized by rapid growth, industrialization, and urbanization. However, its landlocked status has forced the nation to rely heavily on Djibouti for maritime trade, making it vulnerable to external factors that could disrupt its supply chains. This reliance poses considerable risks to Ethiopia's economic ambitions, including increased transportation costs, limited trade diversification, and reduced competitiveness in the global market.

A more efficient and competitive logistics network would not only enhance the nation's economic resilience but also contribute to sustainable development. Furthermore, Ethiopia's growing population, which is expected to surpass 120 million in the coming years, demands expanded economic opportunities and infrastructure to support its burgeoning workforce. Access to a seaport would play a pivotal role in meeting these demands.

The quest for sea access also has profound regional and geopolitical implications. The Horn of Africa, a region marred by recurring conflicts and political instability, stands to benefit significantly from Ethiopia's pursuit of alternative port access. By fostering regional integration and reducing tensions over scarce resources, Ethiopia's efforts

could serve as a catalyst for collective action to address shared challenges.

In an exclusive interview with the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA), Ambassador Dina Mufti, a member of the House of Peoples' Representatives Foreign Relations and Peace Affairs Standing Committee, emphasized that Ethiopia's approach to seaport access is rooted in a win-win framework. According to Ambassador Dina, Ethiopia's interconnectedness with its neighbors underscores the importance of collaborative solutions that benefit all parties involved. This perspective aligns with Ethiopia's broader foreign policy framework, which prioritizes peace, cooperation, and regional integration. By advocating for diversified trade routes and mutual dependency, Ethiopia seeks to contribute to a stable and prosperous Horn of Africa. This approach reflects the understanding that the destinies of regional nations are closely linked, and that collective prosperity is essential for long-term stability.

The country's pursuit of sea access is not solely an economic issue; it is also deeply tied to regional security. The Horn of Africa faces numerous security threats, including terrorism, piracy, and interstate conflicts. In this context, Ethiopia's efforts to establish reliable trade routes could serve as a foundation for broader regional cooperation on security matters. The nations of the Horn of Africa could develop a unified approach to regional security. Such cooperation would deter external interference, reduce vulnerabilities, and create a more stable environment for economic growth. Ethiopia's commitment to peaceful negotiations and regional collaboration underscores its role as a key player in fostering stability in the region.

As the government said time and time gain, the quest for sea access is not a zero-sum game; rather, it offers opportunities for mutual benefits and regional integration. Stable trade routes would not only facilitate Ethiopia's economic growth but also create a network of interconnected economies that depend on one another for prosperity. This interconnectedness has the potential to break the cycle of competition over resources that has historically fueled tensions among regional states.

For neighboring countries, the country's access to the Red Sea could open new avenues for trade and investment. For instance, port development projects in Eritrea, Djibouti, or Somalia could benefit from increased demand for maritime services, creating jobs and boosting local economies. Moreover, improved infrastructure and logistics networks would enhance the region's overall connectivity, making it a more attractive destination for international investors.

The proposed win-win approach to seaport access is emblematic of its commitment to

fostering regional cooperation. Prioritizing dialogue and collaboration, the country aims to build trust among its neighbors and create a foundation for long-term stability and prosperity.

Despite the potential benefits of Ethiopia's quest for sea access, some external forces have attempted to undermine the country's efforts. These forces often exploit historical grievances and existing tensions to perpetuate instability in the region. However, Ethiopia's open and genuine proposal for sea access offers a timely and constructive alternative to confrontation.

Advocating for peaceful negotiations and mutual understanding, Ethiopia is setting a positive example for the region. The country's commitment to a collaborative approach demonstrates that shared challenges can be addressed through dialogue and cooperation, rather than conflict and competition.

The implications of the country's pursuit of sea access extend far beyond its national borders. In a region beset by security threats, economic disparities, and political instability, Ethiopia's efforts represent a unique opportunity to promote collective prosperity and stability.

**By fostering regional integration and reducing tensions over scarce resources, Ethiopia's efforts could serve as a catalyst for collective action to address shared challenges**

Efficient management of resources, reduced reliance on external actors, and enhanced regional collaboration could transform the Horn of Africa into a hub of economic activity and innovation. Leveraging its strategic location and economic potential, Ethiopia has the opportunity to play a leading role in shaping the region's future. The quest for sea access is a just and timely initiative that has the potential to transform the Horn of Africa. Driven by economic necessity, regional rationales, and a commitment to peaceful negotiations, Ethiopia's efforts reflect a vision for a stable and prosperous future.

The country's approach to seaport access is rooted in a win-win framework that prioritizes mutual benefits and regional integration. By fostering cooperation and interconnectedness, Ethiopia aims to create a network of shared prosperity that transcends national boundaries.

Contrary to the attempts by some external forces to sow discord, Ethiopia's proposal for sea access offers a constructive path forward. By prioritizing dialogue and collaboration, the country is setting a positive example for the region and demonstrating that collective action can yield lasting dividends. Ultimately, Ethiopia's pursuit of alternative port access is not just about securing its economic ambitions; it is about building a foundation for regional stability and prosperity. In a world where challenges are increasingly affecting all, Ethiopia's commitment to a collaborative and peaceful approach serves as a model for addressing shared challenges and creating a brighter future for the Horn of Africa.

# Women in Focus

## Addressing Gender-Based Violence

BY STAFF REPORTER

Every year, various days are observed globally with the aim of raising awareness about important social issues and advocating for change.

One such prominent day is November 25th, which marks White Ribbon Day, also known as the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women.

First launched in Canada in 1991, White Ribbon Day aims to end violence against women and girls by engaging men in the issue, and challenging harmful attitudes, and promoting positive behaviors.

It is a key moment in the global effort to address gender-based violence. The day also marks the beginning of the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence, which runs until December 10th. This period serves as a powerful symbol in the movement to end men's violence against women and girls and acts as a reminder of the need for continuous action to promote gender equality. On this day, men demonstrate their year-long commitment to ending violence against women and girls.

Although White Ribbon Day has become a significant symbol in the fight against men's violence toward women, its impact over the past three decades has been less striking than expected.

Despite the efforts to prevent and end male violence against women and girls; even these days many young girls and women continue to face violence in their day-to-day lives. Sadly enough, a significant number of young girls and women experience harassments, including gender-based violence even from their family members and close relatives. This highlights the need for more action and attention to the issue.

This year's White Ribbon Day has also started with the theme 'It Starts with Men,' emphasizing the role of men in combating gender-based violence and promoting change.

In Ethiopia, White Ribbon Day is also being



observed in various parts of the country by organizing various awareness raising activities, including panel discussions.

In Harari State, the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence campaign is being marked by a series of events aimed at sensitizing the public about the issue and; end gender-based violence against women and girls. The campaign is being organized in collaboration with justice institutions and will run for 16 consecutive days. During this period, awareness-raising activities will be held in 11 schools, focusing on gender equality, with active participation from the State's Women and Children Affairs Bureau.

The campaign organized in collaboration with justice institutions and will run for 16 consecutive days. During this period, awareness-raising activities will be carried out in 11 schools focusing on gender equality with the active participation of the State's Women and Children Affairs Bureau.

Additionally, panel discussions were held at 4 institutions located in the State emphasizing the importance of increasing the participation of men in the fight against violence. These efforts are aimed at addressing gender-based violence and promoting gender equality, particularly for women and children, according to State's



Women and Children Affairs Bureau.

As part of the Campaign, participants of the panel visited the Hamlin Fistula Center and Darul Hijra Orphanage, which is providing services to women and children who need social and psychological support. On the occasion, sanitary materials were delivered for mothers and children residing in the centers.

In the same way, as part of the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence Campaign, training was given to local community leaders with the aim to strengthen the capacity of stakeholders in preventing and responding to gender-based violence.

On the occasion, the Deputy Head of Harari State's Women and Children Affairs Bureau, Muftiha Aliye, emphasized that efforts to combat gender-based violence should not only focus on responding to incidents but also on promoting fundamental cultural and behavioral changes. Thus, she called on all members of society and relevant bodies to take responsibility for preventing violence against women and children and to work together to achieve this goal.

Mentioning that the Harari State has been actively implementing various policies and strategies to address this issue, including working in partnerships at national and international levels, she said: "We work to prevent and respond to violence and harassment that are committed targeting gender."

According to her, programs designed to protect gender-based violence integrated with both the national and local levels. In this regard, The State has been actively implementing various policies and strategic frameworks to address this issue.

The event also focused on encouraging the active involvement of men and boys, traditional leaders, religious leaders, and community groups in ending violence. The main message was that violence against women is everyone's problem and must be addressed by all members of society,

regardless of gender, status, or background.

At a panel discussion organized in relation to this same issue, it was stated that the Ministry of Women and Social Affairs will work persistently to prevent and provide immediate response to gender-based violence.

Speaking at the panel on behalf of State Minister of Women and Children Department, Sileshi Tadesse said that the Ministry will work on issues that can bring about tangible policy, structural and behavioral change on violence and harassments that come to happen on women and girls.

He also highlighted the importance of institutional collaboration in addressing these issues and ensuring the effective enforcement of laws designed to protect women and children from violence. There must be sustained efforts to combat harmful cultural practices that contribute to gender-based violence, according to him. At the events officials emphasized the importance of coordinated efforts to curb violence against women and children, calling for a more holistic and integrated approach involving all relevant sectors.

"It is important to involve men, heads of traditional institutions, religious leaders, stakeholders and elders, and the mass media as active members of change and, as well as vocal gender rights advocates, to change the habits, attitudes and gender stereotypes that perpetuate violence against women and girls."

Equally, it was stated the need for justice system to strengthen its role in responding to gender-based violence.

The White Ribbon is an internationally recognized emblem, worn by individuals as a pledge to never commit, condone, or remain silent about violence against women and girls. The day is not just about raising awareness; it's a call to action for everyone—especially men and boys—to become active participants in challenging the harmful attitudes and behaviors that perpetuate gender-based violence.

# Society

## ‘*Xeer Ciise*’ customary law to sustain peace, strengthen social cohesion

BY MENGISTEAB TESHOME

Oral customary law plays a vital role in shaping the social, cultural, and legal frameworks of many communities around the world. Deeply rooted in tradition and passed down through generations, these laws are essential for maintaining order, resolving conflicts, and preserving cultural identity.

In today’s world, oral customary law remains a cornerstone of community life, providing mechanisms for conflict resolution, cultural preservation, and social governance. Its importance lies in its ability to adapt to changing circumstances while maintaining the core values and identity of the community. Understanding and respecting these laws are essential mechanisms for fostering social cohesion, promoting sustainable development, and ensuring a harmonious coexistence among community members with different cultures, traditions, social values. Different communities follow their own unique set of values to preserve the social values and improve societal well-being.

Ethiopia, as a country of diverse nations, nationalities, and peoples, is home to a tapestry of distinct cultures, traditions, customs, and wisdom. These are deeply embedded in centuries of cultural heritage and passed down verbally from generation to generation. Among these cohesive societal values and norms, oral customary laws are the one. These traditions and societal values, not only foster peaceful coexistence, but also contribute to the development of a collective identity.

These oral traditions in Ethiopia govern various aspects of life, from resolving family matters to addressing and arresting inconveniences and conflicts at community level. In turn, they do not only foster peaceful coexistence but also help shape a shared sense of identity and belonging.

The role of elders, who are regarded as the keepers of wisdom, is pivotal in ensuring that these laws remain relevant and adaptable to the changing circumstances, mainly in strengthening community ties and cultural identity, as well as addressing disputes and maintaining peace.

The Issa community, primarily located in the Somali State of Ethiopia and parts of Djibouti, is rich in its cultural heritage which is deeply intertwined with its oral customary law.

The Community’s oral customary law, known ‘*Xeer Ciise*’, and passed down from generation to generation through orally, has been practiced by the community for long to ensuring justice, strengthening rule of law and promoting development. This legal framework governs various aspects of community life, including social relations, conflict resolution, and resource management.



According to a piece produced by UNESCO and posted under the title “*Xeer Ciise*: Oral customary laws of Somali-Issa communities in Ethiopia, Djibouti and Somalia,” the *Xeer Ciise* refers to the oral customary laws of the Somali-Issa communities in Ethiopia, Djibouti and Somalia.

*Xeer Ciise* is a highly structured and rigorously codified system of democratic governance. The system has three main components: a political constitution, which defines the distribution of power and decision-making processes; a penal code, which establishes community justice, focusing on reconciliation and compensation; and a code of social conduct, which defines a series of metaphysical, spiritual and social principles and values to regulate collective and individual behavior.

These laws help ensure peaceful coexistence not only within the Issa community but also with other ethnic groups. They incorporate global values and principles, such as respecting the rights of women and children, environmental conservation, peaceful conflict resolution and mutual assistance.

*Xeer Ciise* is transmitted informally, including through tales, proverbs, games, poetry and initiation rites. It is also taught through formal educational curricula, panel discussions, symposiums and print and electronic media.

As to the article, for the Somali-Issa, the practice unites communities in the Horn of Africa and defines their collective and individual identity, their mutual solidarity and their social cohesion. The system promotes conflict resolution, peace, cooperation, and moral conduct, while enhancing social equity and good governance.

For these reasons, UNESCO recently officially

inscribed the Oral Customary Law of the Issa community as a World Intangible Heritage.

Indeed, the customary laws of the Issa community play an irreplaceable role in terms strengthening cohesion both within the community and beyond. A notable feature of this customary law is its emphasis on community-centric governance.

The Issa people prioritize collective decision-making, where elders and community leaders play crucial roles in interpreting and enforcing laws. Their authority stems from the respect and recognition they command within the community, making them essential figures in maintaining social order.

Conflict resolution is another fundamental aspect of Issa Customary Law. Disputes—whether related to land, livestock, or interpersonal issues—are typically settled through mediation by respected elders. This approach emphasizes reconciliation and harmony, focusing on restoring relationships rather than imposing punitive measures.

Resource management is critical in the Issa community, which relies heavily on pastoralism and agriculture. Customary laws regulate the use of land and water resources, ensuring equitable access and sustainable practices. These laws reflect a profound understanding of the local environment and the necessity for conservation, fostering a balance between human needs and ecological sustainability.

While traditionally patriarchal, the Issa community’s oral laws incorporate provisions that acknowledge women’s role, particularly in family and community matters. Women’s rights to inheritance and participation in decision-making vary, reflecting both cultural practices and evolving societal norms. This recognition contributes to a more inclusive

community dynamic.

Oral customary law serves as a vital vehicle for preserving the Issa community’s cultural identity. Stories, proverbs, and teachings passed down orally not only convey legal principles but also reinforce cultural values, ethics, and social norms. This rich oral tradition helps maintain a sense of belonging and continuity within the community.

Though rooted in tradition, the Issa community’s oral customary law is not static. It adapts to changing circumstances, including external influences and modern legal frameworks. This flexibility enables the community to navigate contemporary challenges while preserving its cultural integrity, ensuring that traditional practices remain relevant.

The oral customary law of the Issa community is a vital component of its social fabric, guiding interactions, resolving conflicts, and managing resources. As the community faces modern challenges, the resilience and adaptability of its customary law will be crucial for preserving its identity and fostering sustainable development. Understanding and respecting these traditions is essential for promoting dialogue and cooperation both within and outside the Issa community.

Since oral customary law is a cornerstone of community life, providing mechanisms for conflict resolution, cultural preservation, and social governance, efforts to preserve it should be further strengthened. Its importance lies in its ability to adapt to changing circumstances while maintaining the core values and identity of the community. Understanding and respecting these laws is essential for fostering social cohesion, promoting sustainable development, and ensuring harmonious coexistence among community members.



## Published Weekly in Collaboration with Haramaya University

### 22<sup>nd</sup> ICRC East Africa Universities essay competition selects HU law student best

BY DIRRIBA TESHOME

This year, International Committee of the Red Cross held Essay Competition for East African Universities for the 22nd round. And the 22nd International Committee of the Red Cross Essay Competition for East African Universities was announced on the website of the committee to submit the essay and a copy of the student's identification card at the ICRC Regional Delegation in Nairobi by 30<sup>th</sup> June 2024 by email (nai\_IHLmailbox@icrc.org).

The central question focused on the following as stated on the website. From the 19th to 21st Centuries, there has been a drastic transformation in the means and methods of warfare due to advancements in technology. The rules of International Humanitarian Law (IHL) have always been reactive to new advancements. Notwithstanding this, the development and use of autonomous weapons pose unique challenges in the application of IHL. It insisted the competing essays to discuss these and offer potential solutions to overcome these challenges.

And the instructions began with that the competition was open to all undergraduate students from East African universities. Essays must be typed, properly referenced, structured, and a bibliography provided. And they must not exceed 4000 words including the footnotes but

excluding the bibliography.

As well, any essay found to have been plagiarized would be disqualified from the competition. The essay and a copy of the student's identification card must be received at the ICRC Regional Delegation in Nairobi by 30<sup>th</sup> June 2024 by email (nai\_IHLmailbox@icrc.org) and late entries were not accepted.

The winner of the competition received a cash prize. There were also awards for the first and second runners-up as well as for the best essay from each participating country not represented in the top 3 winners.

Similarly, the advertisement included assessment guide. The participants were assessed on their logical arguments, the depth to which they developed their answers, structure, and, demonstrated knowledge of the subject matter. Each of the criteria were awarded points as below: Knowledge of the subject matter 40 percent, critical thinking and analysis 30 percent while structure, referencing, and evidence of research counted the other percentage to fill 100.

Understanding the question, instructions and assessment guidelines, Haramaya University's (HU) Law School fifth-year student Tajir Yoseph Mumed, has achieved a remarkable feat by winning the Best Country Paper award in the 22nd Annual Eastern African International

Humanitarian Law (IHL) Essay Competition organized by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

The competition, which attracted over 100 entries from seven countries, challenged participants to delve into the complex legal and ethical issues surrounding "autonomous weapons in international humanitarian law."

Tajir's exceptional essay, distinguished by its in-depth research, insightful analysis, and meticulous citation, captivated the judges.

This annual ICRC competition serves a crucial purpose: to foster critical thinking and research among law students. By engaging with the evolving field of IHL, particularly the contentious issue of autonomous weapons, students contribute to the global discourse on improving the regulation of these technologies.

In recognition of his outstanding achievement, Tajir received a cash prize from the ICRC headquarters in Addis Ababa. Moreover, his exceptional academic performance has earned him a prestigious appointment as an Assistant Lecturer of Law at the College of Law, Haramaya University.

On his achievement, the American Scholar, Richard Wentzel (PhD), Dean of the College of Law, commended Tajir's accomplishment, emphasizing that this award serves as a testament to the exceptional research, writing,



Tajir with ICRC Headquarters in Addis Ababa Staff

and analytical skills honed by law students at Haramaya University.

He expressed confidence that this tradition of independent thought and creative writing will continue to thrive within the college, Haramaya University Public and International Relations Directorate approached him.



## Published Weekly in Cooperation with Dambi Dollo University

### DaDU female students' library

Dambi Dollo University (DaDU), as an academic institution, prioritizes teaching and learning as one of its core objectives. To realize this vision, the university is committed to delivering high-quality education and educational services through a variety of modalities and programs.

DaDU is making significant efforts are underway on campus to empower generation, particularly focusing on ensuring that female students achieve intellectual growth. Initiatives such as a dedicated library for females are in place to provide a secure environment, enabling them to compete equally with their male counterparts.

The Executive of women's and social affairs, at the university, Tarikuwa Mekonnen, stated that the institution is committed to promoting gender equality on campus and enhancing the academic performance of female students. "To achieve this, the university ensures that incoming female students acclimate to the



Female students studying in their separate library

campus environment swiftly."

They receive counseling at various intervals to address specific challenges, support is provided to those facing fears and psychological issues, and training is offered to help them gain independence and achieve strong academic results. This initiative has led

to the establishment of a dedicated library for female students, she noted.

In summary, a dedicated library for female students at a university presents several significant benefits. Firstly, it establishes a safe and comfortable learning environment: This facility offers a setting where female

students can focus on their studies and access resources without the potential intimidation or distractions that may stem from the presence of male counterparts.

Secondly, it provides tailored resources and support: The library can deliver specialized resources and assistance designed specifically for female students, including designated study spaces, mentorship programs, and workshops aimed at enhancing career development and leadership capabilities.

Thirdly, it addresses gender disparities: This initiative is vital in reducing gender inequalities in educational access and resources, thereby promoting a more inclusive and equitable campus culture.

Lastly, it fosters academic success and personal growth: By nurturing a supportive atmosphere, the library can greatly contribute to the academic accomplishments and personal development of female students, DaDU Public and International Relations Directorate reported.



dambidolouniversity@dadu.edu.et



http://www.dadu.edu.et



https://www.facebook.com/daduempower



https://twitter.com/dambi\_dollo



https://t.me/DaDUempower



+251575552436



+251575552391



260