



# The Ethiopian Herald

Vol LXXXI No 078 10 DECEMBER 2024 - Tahisas 1, 2017

Tuesday

Price Birr 10.00

**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

**Slingee**

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

www.siiinobank.com



**Ethiopia expanding airports to link cities, benefit farmers: ECAA**

Page 3



## Ethio- Czech ties to move into high gear

• Ink MoU on dev't initiatives, long-term loan agreements

BY ESSEYE MENGISTE

ADDIS ABABA—Ethiopia and the Czech Republic have agreed to further strengthen the long-standing bilateral relations on development partnership including economic cooperation.

The Deputy Prime Ministers of the two countries agreed yesterday to cement the historic Ethiopian-Czech relations, with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to collaborate on development initiatives and long-term loan agreements.

The Deputy Prime Minister of Czech Republic, Marian Jurečka, who is in Addis Ababa for official state visit discussed with Deputy Prime Minister Temesgen Tiruneh focusing on key bilateral issues.

See Ethio- Czech ... page 3



**Quality Village: Path to Ethiopia's export competitiveness**

Page 3

## Ethiopia's federalism: Pillar of unity, sustainable dev't

BY HAILE DEMEKE

Ethiopia, a nation rich in multicultural and multilingual diversity, has long embraced a federal system to foster unity, promote equality, and drive sustainable development. Over the past three decades, federalism has played a central role in nation-building and achieving the transformative progress seen across the country.

Over the weekend, Ethiopia celebrated 'Nations and Nationalities Day' under the theme, "National Consensus for National Unity." The celebration aimed to strengthen the unity and harmony among Ethiopia's diverse cultures, showcasing the federal system's ability to bring various nations and nationalities together.

Speaking to the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA), Deputy Speaker of the House of Federation, Zehara Humed, emphasized



that federalism is the cornerstone of Ethiopia's transformation into a democratic and inclusive society. She highlighted that federalism is vital for inclusive participation and equitable development, as it ensures that all citizens contribute to shaping the nation's future. The ongoing

reform process has moved away from a previously centralized political structure dominated by a few parties, embracing a more inclusive and democratic framework.

"Federalism is the right political framework

See Ethiopia's federalism: ... page 3

# News

## Kotebe University, EU partner to open scholarship doors

BY MESERET BEHAILU

ADDIS ABABA – Kotebe University of Education (KUE) has highlighted the multifaceted benefits of European Union (EU) scholarship opportunities for Ethiopian students, emphasizing their role in enhancing proficiency and fostering global partnerships.

The statement was made by KUE President, Berhanemeskel Tena (PhD), during the launch of the EU's scholarship program for Ethiopian students yesterday. The event, themed "Study in Europe Fair: Connecting Ethiopian Students with European Opportunities," was organized by KUE in collaboration with the EU. The two-day program concluded with various discussions aimed at connecting Ethiopian students with educational opportunities in Europe.

According to Berhanemeskel, Ethiopia's economic capacity limits its ability to send students to all countries for education.



Platforms like this provide a valuable opportunity for Ethiopian students to access free education abroad. He further noted that over 14 countries, including Germany, Portugal, Sweden, and Hungary, participated in the program through their embassies,

showcasing their scholarship opportunities.

Other countries are also expected to join in the future to offer similar programs, presenting fully and partially funded scholarships to Ethiopian students.

EU Ambassador to Ethiopia, Sofie From-Emmesberger, emphasized that the scholarship initiative reflects the strengthening cooperation between Ethiopia and the EU in education development. She noted that the program provides detailed guidance, enabling Ethiopian students to seize these scholarship opportunities. The EU has also reaffirmed its commitment to continuing its support for Ethiopia through such initiatives.

Representatives from various institutions, including Adama Science and Technology University (ASTU), Addis Ababa Science and Technology University (AASTU), Addis Ababa University, and the Oromia Development Association Boarding School, attended the scholarship fair.

It is worth noting that KUE, established as a fully-fledged university three years ago, continues to play a significant role in creating international educational opportunities for Ethiopian students.

## Ethiopia, South Africa cement ties on education, human resource dev't

BY BETELHEM BEDLU

ADDIS ABABA- Ethiopia and South Africa are collaborating on education sector, playing key role in human resource capacity development which is essential for sustaining countries growth trajectory.

The above was mentioned during the graduation ceremony of the university of Ethiopia Regional Learning Center (UNISA) recently.

In her opening remarks, the Republic of South Africa Higher Education and Training Deputy Minister Mimmy Gondwe (PhD) mentioned that the agreement between UNISA and Ethiopia is one of the flagship programs of the bilateral cooperation between the two countries.

Highlighting the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the two countries on Education that was renewed in 2013 and 2020, she noted that the collaboration of countries higher learning institution is a testament to the success of the MoU which is said to continue registering great triumphs of the required outcomes in many academic fields.

Since UNISA's establishment in Addis Ababa in 2008, this institution has been on an upward trajectory. In this respect, UNISA has produced 968 graduates, of which 454 were Doctoral degrees and 367 Masters Degrees as of December 2022, as to her.

Moreover, in 2023 the total number of graduates from UNISA Ethiopia stood at 1,037. To date, UNISA has produced another 62 postgraduates. Among these, 59 have earned PhD degrees and 3 have

earned Master's degrees. These academic achievements continue to demonstrate UNISA's positive impact on human capital development in various fields in Ethiopia and on the continent.

"The graduates of UNISA Ethiopia continue to play pivotal role in our society. Some of the graduates are professors in Ethiopia and beyond, whilst others are occupying high ranking positions in government and in the private sector, with some playing important roles in international organizations and in diplomatic missions."

She went on saying: Both of our nations continue to face high rates of unemployment, poverty, and inequality. However, the achievement of student's today gives me hope for a brighter tomorrow.

UNISA Principal and Vice Chancellor Prof. Puleng LenkaBula on her part highlighted that this year's graduation ceremony was an extraordinary one as it is taking place where South Africans are celebrating their 30years of Freedom and Democracy.

"It is the year which we mark 30years since the re-establishment of bilateral relation between the two sisterly countries under the new democratic dispensation in South Africa and 17years since the establishment of the UNISA."

She added that UNISA, over the past 17 years, has produced more than a thousand Masters and Doctoral graduates through UNISA in which most of them are making significant contribution in the development of Ethiopia in public, private academic and other sectors of the society.



## Siket Bank achieves 1.54 bln Birr profit amid 50% growth

BY ASHENAFI ANIMUT

ADDIS ABABA –Siket Bank S.C. has reported a net profit of 1.54 billion Birr and total assets amounting to 15.9 billion Birr, marking a 30% growth in the 2023/24 fiscal year, according to the bank's latest financial report.

Board Chairperson Tilahun Worku presented the report during the bank's 2<sup>nd</sup> Stakeholders Ordinary General Assembly, addressing board members, shareholders, and directors on Saturday. He highlighted the bank's strides in providing efficient microfinance and banking services since its establishment in the sector, despite its relatively recent entry.

Tilahun emphasized the bank's efforts to create value for its customers, shareholders, employees, and communities, while focusing on promoting trademarks, strengthening institutional structures, and advancing technology. These initiatives aim to boost the bank's competitiveness in the financial sector.

"Its total deposits reached 4.9 billion Birr, showing a 36% increase compared to the same period last year, with 537,428 customers," Tilahun stated. The bank also disbursed 9 billion Birr in loans, supporting key sectors such as trade, manufacturing, construction, and agriculture.



In addition to its financial achievements, Siket Bank recorded a 50% growth in net profit compared to the previous fiscal year. Leadership capacity-building training has been provided to employees to expedite the bank's growth and ensure a smooth transition.

Tilahun also announced the bank's progress in expanding digital operations, with new banking systems and data centers installed to align with Ethiopia's digital transformation goals.

As part of its corporate social responsibility, the bank allocated 10 million Birr to support various social initiatives, further cementing its commitment to community development, it was stated.

# News

## Quality Village: Path to Ethiopia's export competitiveness

BY HAILE DEMEKE

Experts commended the government's commitment to enhance export competitiveness through improving the quality of products by establishing a modern quality infrastructure at a cost of over 5.3 billion Birr.

Export is among the core engines of Ethiopia's economic growth and the nation has given due attention to the sector thereby increasing export earnings. Accordingly, the country recently inaugurated 'Quality Village,' which incorporates the Ethiopian Standards Institute, Ethiopian Conformity Assessment Enterprise, Ethiopian Metrology Institute, Ethiopian Accreditation Service, and Ethiopian Technology Authority.

While inaugurating the quality infrastructure, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) said that this critical institution is designed to catalyze the competitiveness of country's local products in global markets and enhance its participation in global value chains. "As one of our leading national institutions, it will play a vital role in strengthening our export capabilities and ensuring we remain competitive in the international arena," he added.

The Ethiopian Conformity Assessment Enterprise (ECAE) Director General MeazaAbera (Eng.) said that the nation has made remarkable progresses in improving product quality to enhance competitiveness in global markets and integrate the nation



into the international market system.

Ethiopia has established a robust quality infrastructure, positioning itself to become a leading quality center on the African continent, she stated.

Ethiopia's quality infrastructure not only enhances product competitiveness but also allows the country to capitalize on opportunities created by regional and continental economic frameworks, such as the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

Addis Ababa University School of Chemical and Bio-engineering Professor Shimelis Admasu said that restraints of adhering to standard and quality requirements are among the primary obstacles that the country's manufacturing industry has encountered in recent years.

Many products were discarded due to poor quality and failure to meet the necessary standards, and the newly established 'quality village' will greatly benefit the nation by avoiding such inadequacies, he believed.

Praising the government's initiative, Shimelis emphasized the importance of enhancing the efforts initiated by the government to fulfill the required criteria. Additionally, he pointed out the necessity of engaging international partners who possess the essential skills and expertise.

Ethiopian Construction Authority Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Mesfin Negewo (Eng.) said that the village compatible with the nation's trajectory towards achieving modern and inclusive development. It goes beyond merely ensuring product quality as it aims to position the nation among modern countries equipped with the latest advancements in the construction sector befitting international standards.

Equipped with state-of-the-art technology and enhanced capabilities, the 'quality village' positions Ethiopia to align more effectively with international standards, reducing technical barriers and enabling greater participation in global trade thereby benefiting the nation, it was stated.

## Ethiopia expanding airports to link cities, benefit farmers: ECAA

BY YESUF ENDRIS

**ADDIS ABABA-** The number of domestic airstrips and airports linking cities and towns is growing while the airport expansion enabled farmers to leverage cargo services, Ethiopian Civil Aviation Authority (ECAA) announced.

ECAA's Public Relations and Communications Director EndaleAsefa said that the increase indirect flights to and from regional cities have eased the transportation of agricultural products.

"The number of operational Airports in

regional cities and towns has now reached 23. More airports and airstrips are being constructed. Also, some further projects are designed," he said.

He also expressed that the country would upgrade the under constructed airstrips to airport level through time so that their economic significance will be improved.

"Because of transportation challenges, large number of farmers are not benefiting from their products as they deserve. The expansion of airports and airstrips is becoming a living solution," Endale stated.

While expanding airports, the authority is

now investing on airstrips construction, he said, noting that the airstrips can be immediate solution to reach countryside.

According the Director, private companies are also allowed to construct private airstrips. Direct flights from and to regional airports and airstrips is also permissible. Previously, transit to Addis Ababa had been obligatory, he recalled.

Kenya has almost 200 airstrips and they are beneficiary of having many airstrips and the government of Ethiopia is also expanding airstrips considering these potential benefits, he mentioned.

## Ethiopia's federalism: ...

to ensure inclusive involvement and foster a more united Ethiopia," Zehara stated. She stressed the need for coordinated efforts among all stakeholders to reinforce the federal system, which promotes unity among Ethiopia's diverse nations and nationalities.

Echoing this sentiment, Haileyesus Taye (PhD), Director General of the Center for Constitution and Federalism Training, noted that federalism is particularly well-suited for Ethiopia, as it addresses the demands of its ethnically diverse society. He explained that federalism excels at accommodating broader group interests while ensuring equality and

providing equal benefits under a unified framework. However, he cautioned that mismanagement of the system could pose risks to national cohesion and even lead to disintegration.

Citing examples from around the world, Haileyesus pointed out that countries like Switzerland, Belgium, Canada, and India have successfully implemented federalism, achieving growth and unity. Conversely, nations such as Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia failed due to poor governance, underscoring the importance of effective management.

Political Science and International

Relations (PSIR) researcher Misganaw Markos highlighted the opportunities federalism provides, including education in native languages and the preservation of cultural identities. The system also ensures balanced and equitable representation, enabling all ethnic groups to influence the nation's future and secure their fair share of national progress.

Ethiopia's federal system remains a progressive framework designed to balance regional and national interests, fostering equality and unity in the face of diversity. It serves as a critical tool in Ethiopia's journey toward sustainable development and prosperity.

## Ethio- Czech ties to move ...

Deputy Prime Minister Jurečka commended Ethiopia's ongoing development activities and expressed keen interest in expanding cooperation in tourism and wildlife conservation.

"We agreed to continue to strengthen cooperation between our two countries on common issues," Temesgen posted on X social media after the meeting.

During his stay in Addis, Deputy Prime Minister Jurečka with his delegation visited the Abrehot Library, Adwa Victory Memorial Museum, and Ethiopian Agricultural Works Corporation, accompanied by Foreign Affairs State Minister Ambassador Birtukan Ayano.

During the visit, Abrehot Library Director Engineer Wubayehu Mamo presented a comprehensive briefing about the library's mission, structure, and key services.

The delegation visited advanced robotics training facilities, where practical, hands-on learning experiences are provided, and Deputy Prime Minister Jurečka praised the library's resources and programs and donated a collection of books to the library.

The Czech Deputy PM visited Ethiopia for the third time, expressing his country's commitment to strengthening collaboration with the Abrehot Library and highlighting the city's transformation.

The Deputy Prime Minister highlighted the role of the newly built Abrehot Library and Adwa Victory Memorial Museum in creating a bright and educated generation.

During his visit to the Ethiopian Agricultural Works Corporation, the Deputy Prime Minister was briefed by Agriculture Minister Girma Amente on the Ethiopian agricultural transformation efforts and the agricultural policy being implemented by the government.

The ministry has achieved impressive results in wheat cultivation, assisted by the Bounty of the Basket and green legacy initiatives, and expressed Ethiopia's desire to cooperate with the government of the Czech Republic on agricultural mechanization in an effort to increase productivity, Girma said.

Ethiopian Agricultural Works Corporation is making agricultural machinery, soil fertilizers, improved seeds, agrochemicals and animal medicines accessible to the farmers for the past four decades.

The Czech Republic's Deputy Prime Minister Marian Jurečka also appreciated the development works being done by the Ethiopian government and showed the commitment of the European country to cooperate in the provision of agricultural technology, and animal development.

# Opinion

## CFA entry into force: Viable avenue for prosperity, sustainable development

BY ADDISALEM MULAT

It is worth mentioning that since the laying of the cornerstone for the construction of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD), Ethiopia has been moving forward in the right direction in the face of a broad range of challenges. However, the country set in motion reaping the fruits of attainment at the earliest possible juncture.

Since the start of the construction of the dam, Ethiopia's adversaries have been involved in a broad spectrum of smear campaigns against the country working around the clock to hoodwink the wider international community with their barefaced lies and cooked-up stories.

No matter how hard they tried, all their efforts went for nothing through the passage of time.

Albeit Ethiopia at various points in time went to the ends of the earth to acquaint the unembellished truth with the existing reality on the ground, the country's opponents have not distanced themselves from their evil deeds. In good truth, Ethiopia has made great strides to resolve the issue peacefully in relation to the dam through round table discussions on the topic of the dam.

As the downstream nations attach due importance to the colonial era agreement. Following this pact, Ethiopia which is the major source of the Nile River has not benefited from it. This being the case, Ethiopians residing in every corner of the county and overseas were feeling remorse and pity.

However, through the determination and hard work of the wider international community, Ethiopia through time turned out to be fruitful in constructing the colossal dam, which attracted the attention of the wider international community.

The Cooperative Framework Agreement (CFA) entry into force would be a foundation to determine equitable utilization over of the Nile Basin and foster member countries shared future, according to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA).

In its social media page, the ministry in the recent past stated that the principles enshrined in the CFA would manage to fix obsolete evil ideologies, comprehend equitable and rational utilization and foster mutual understanding and shared responsibility.

The ministry has also highlighted that this remarkable achievement, which has been in the making for over a decade, is a testament of member state's dedication, perseverance, and collaborative spirit is firmly believed to enhance cooperation, reasonable management and utilization of the shared water resource.

According to its statement, "Ethiopia is confident that the entry into force of this agreement will yield significant benefits



for the basin states and contribute to a more prosperous and sustainable future."

In addition to promoting equitable and sustainable management of the Nile River's resources among all riparian countries, this agreement would be a spring board towards enhancing collaboration on water sharing, energy production, and environmental protection.

To this point, Ethiopia has been putting in place principle of unbiased and reasonable utilization of the Nile River, and expressing the fact that the dam does not wreak any noteworthy harm on downstream nations.

In this day and age, the people of Ethiopia have been feeling on top of the world in view of the fact that the flagship project is going to be fully operational just around the corner. Subsequent to passing through many ups and downs as well as twists and turns, the dam at the end of the day has reached where it is in the present climate. The entire journey was not a walk in the park and as easy as falling off a log.

Even though the downstream nations routinely undermine the country's right to use the Nile River, Ethiopia has set in motion making progress in the right direction more than ever before.

In actual fact, downstream nations that have been denouncing Ethiopia for making use of the Nile River should come up with the idea of working together and taking their respective nations to new frontiers. If truth be told, the completion of the Abbay Dam is a wonderful news for the continent of Africa and beyond on the grounds that it plays a paramount role in assisting the progress of economic integration.

The Ministry of Water and Energy (MoWE) has called on Sudan and Egypt to join the Cooperative Framework Agreement (CFA) following its recent entry into force.

In a press briefing recently, Minister Habtamu Itefa (PhD-Eng.) highlighted the significance of the CFA, stating, "The ratified CFA is becoming our [riparian's] rules and regulations." He extended a direct invitation to Sudan and Egypt, reiterating

Ethiopia's commitment to cooperation.

"If you have concerns regarding the CFA, it is all-inclusive. Let us connect to discuss and utilize it together," he said. The Minister emphasized that the CFA promises mutual benefits for all countries in the Nile basin, ensuring no one is excluded.

Habtamu described the agreement as a remarkable achievement for all riparian nations advocating for justice and equitable access to water resources. He pointed out those previous agreements on the Nile favored downstream countries leaving upstream nations like Ethiopia without fair utilization rights.

Characterizing the CFA as the "backbone" of equitable water resource management, the Minister noted it marks a significant departure from past practices. "We believe there has been injustice in how the Nile has been utilized, particularly by our brothers and sisters downstream. The Cooperative Framework Agreement poses no threat to anyone; it is an inclusive agreement.

The CFA comprises 15 major principles focused on three key areas: the utilization of the Nile for development, water management practices, and information-sharing mechanisms. The first 15 articles address these principles, while the remaining 30 outline institutional and legal frameworks.

Ethiopia's vital role in the Nile system, noting that the country contributes over 85 percent of the river's water but previously had no influence over its management. With the CFA now in place, Ethiopia and other upstream nations can collaborate effectively on water utilization and development plans.

The Nile Basin Commission, an independent body aimed at supporting development in the Nile Basin would soon be established based on the CFA.

The enforcement of the Nile Basin Cooperative Framework Agreement (CFA) is poised to help riparian countries, including Ethiopia, prevent baseless accusations.

As the benefits people secure from the

colossal dam is massive, every Tom, Dick, and Harry should join hands to take the region to the next level of accomplishment.

Similarly, Ethiopia should sustain constructing a broad range of projects in various parts of the country with a focus on taking the sector to the next level of achievement.

The dam will not only progress the lives of Ethiopians but also foster regional cooperation through renewable energy thereby inspiring economic development in every corner of the country and common development of the Horn of Africa.

Speaking to the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA), Adama Science and Technology University's Water Resource Engineering Professor Mekonnen Ayana recently stated that false allegations against Ethiopia and other upstream nations will diminish with the CFA's implementation. The CFA is a multilateral agreement designed to ensure equitable use of the Nile's water rather than granting supremacy to any single nation.

If Egypt and Sudan continue to resist change, they signal their unwillingness to achieve sustainability, which could undermine their credibility in the international community," he warned. The expert suggested that both Sudan and Egypt are likely to join the soon-to-be-established Nile Basin Commission, given the benefits it offers. "The Commission will help them secure their fair share of the river's resources.

"Beyond promoting equity, the agreement plays a critical role in preserving water resources and fostering mutual benefits through joint projects, which will enhance cooperation among riparian nations," he explained. With the CFA in place, Ethiopia, often the target of unfounded accusations will be better equipped to defend itself.

The CFA's entry into force follows years of negotiations among Nile Basin countries. The principles adopted in the final framework will be vital in resolving disputes. The colonial-era agreements favored downstream nations have been legally invalidated by the new principles agreed upon by the majority of riparian states.

Moreover, the significance of the CFA extends beyond legal considerations. There are over 276 trans-boundary rivers in the world that experience far fewer conflicts than the Nile. Frameworks like the CFA are essential for fostering harmonious relations among countries.

Following years of negotiations, the CFA officially came into force on October 13, 2024, marking a significant step towards collaborative water governance and reducing conflicts among the eleven Nile Basin nations.

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

# Editorial

## Ethiopia's peace efforts yielding positive results

The Ethiopian government has all the time called on those who have inclined to armed conflict residing in the bush. Some have accepted the call for peace as a positive stride and got readied to discharge their respective responsibilities as properly as possible to come up with a stable and prosperous nation.

On account of the presence of long-lasting culture of resolving disagreements locally, Ethiopians are expected to entertain peaceful means to address any form of disparities in a civilized manner. No doubt, peace deal can revive mechanisms for resolving conflicts without violence. That is why the Oromo Liberation Army (OLA) has recently accepted the call of the federal government and willing to work with the latter to ensure peace and security in the country.

Unequivocally, the Ethiopian government is willing to conduct close talks, hold dialogues and conclude peace accord with anybody who does have queries and reservations and willing to peaceful struggle in a bid to make the state much more secure.

The entrenched culture of Ethiopians like living in harmony, developing sense of fraternity, cementing social cohesion are of paramount importance in creating a stable nation for the generations to come. Yes, everyone has to uphold the rule of law, respect human rights, abide by the rules and regulations of the nation as these elements are part and parcel of the process of ensuring lasting peace.

Obviously, a peace agreement would help address the roots of conflict and revive mechanisms for non-violent resolution of conflicts and provide the society with a reliable sigh of relief. Cognizant of the fact that successful agreement attracts durable peace, prevents conflict from restarting, integrates general public, and addresses underlying structural and societal issues, the Ethiopian government has been relentlessly working along this line.

Unequivocally, the Ethiopian Government has taken the lion's share in due course of arranging peace deal; inviting armed factions to come to the right track, too. Cognizant of the fact that nothing is more exhilarating than creating a stable nation, and harmonious way of living among fellow citizens, the government has widened its gut to receive peaceful queries.

No doubt, peace talks that seek to end armed conflicts are underway in various ways in Ethiopia following the political willingness of the government. As resolving conflicts through battlefields all the time incur both sides a lot in terms of human life, national wealth and overall wellbeing of the nation and its people, negotiations and peace deals are quite indispensable. It is with this understanding that the Ethiopian government is fond of preferring peaceful approach to employing artilleries and armaments to defeat warring parties.

Ethiopia has been developing significant expertise in the field of peace mediation over the past few years and is now practically applying via calling on fellow compatriots fighting against the government. Yes, peace is equaled by none. The government has thus rolled out several peace initiatives and the effort is bearing fruits, indeed! No one gets bankrupt out of peace deals and genuine negotiations. Of the multifaceted efforts of the government for peace, its sustained commitment to building peace has come to the forefront. Yes, since peace has a better chance when war is attacked from several sides, multiple mediation processes can facilitate the inclusion of different stakeholders, such as civil society actors. It is well recognized that peace actors should constantly search for entry points to create opportunities for building peace instead of waiting for the perfect conditions as absolute serenity can be step by step built.

In sum, the Ethiopian government has attached due emphasis to solving disparities in a peaceful manner. Since peace is a process, and it requires significant commitment and indisputable enthusiasm, taking all the aforesaid elements needs to be seriously taken as it is instrumental in tackling various disagreements straightforward. This would thus help prevent and resolve armed conflicts and would pay off at the end of the day.

# Opinion

## Companies ready for listing can now go, as ESX gets final license

BY ZEKARIAS WOLDEMARIAM

Recently the Ethiopian Capital Markets Authority has announced that it has issued license to the Ethiopian Security Exchange (ESX), which is the first actor in the nations newly coming capital market. Even though it would be farfetched to think of the market as a panacea for solving the country's socio economic problems, it can be taken as a great stride in the mix of the country's economy as the capital market can play significantly in its rapid growth.

Capital market can create a platform where those who have money can invest in potential investment areas and benefit themselves as well as the people and the nation. As a result it would be no exaggeration to argue that the idea has come at the right time as a solution for the growing need of financing for the country's economy.

The country 120 million people still needs a reliable source of funding in the amounts of trillions of birr every year to build necessary infrastructure like roads, energy, housing ... etc. One of the options is to borrow from foreign sources which is not preferable as a first choice since the country should not pay debts in foreign currency that is hardly won by the struggling economy.

Borrowing from local sources can be another option but still loan, tax and other domestic sources of the country are still adventurous level to support the exponentially growing demand for funding. Hence the country needs to expand its base of domestic funding for its mega projects that are aimed at benefitting the interests of the public.

Hence the coming of ESX to work can be considered as vital and timely as it can facilitate the platform for those who are highly in need of more domestic resources for funding and those who have the resources. Regardless of the number of financial institutions operating in the country at the moment, the launching of the ESX is likely to leverage those potential sources.

The licensing of ESX comes at a time when the country is taking series of economic reforms that significantly transform areas that were not touched in the past but are believed to benefit the rapid growth of the economy.

IT is to be recalled that the country launched the Macro Economy Reform on July this year which liberalizes the

finance sector as well as opens the door for foreign actors. Among them is the floating of the country's foreign exchange market which has never been tried for fear it could cause crisis. The model has been active for the last months and is working as a new normal.

This has left a lesson that all the other reforms that are believed to bring a better course to the country's economic growth need to be well thought and gradually applied keeping momentum with the existing trend of economic activity.

One of the new areas that are being introduced to the country's economy is the capital market. The process has been underway for the last more than five years and had a milestone phase with the official commissioning of the Ethiopian Capital Market Authority which is the regulatory institution to the actors in the sector in the country.

Now that the necessary regulatory institutions and legal frameworks are ready the country is able to see the actual functioning of its first Security Exchange market with the final issuance of license to the Ethiopian Security Exchange (ESX). Tillaun Esmael (PhD) who is head of the ESX and spoke to EH a year ago that there about 400,000 shareholders within the banking sector in the country which means more than half a billion securities or shares. He added every year between two to 3 billion Birr of securities are traded on average in the past five years. What the ESX will do is not only to bring the 3 billion already into the market, but also to create efficiency where someone should be able to buy or sell securities just with a simple phone call or text message to your broker or through a simple mobile application on your phone.

Now the exchange is launched companies especially the private sector need to work hard to utilize the opportunities both for their own benefits as well as the nation. The exchange should take the experience of countries with equal footing with Ethiopia to alleviate potential hurdles and encourage the private sector to vibrantly list their companies so that the capital market can enjoy a good start and smooth progress. Experience shows that whenever a new policy is introduced people are likely to be confused or become suspicious. Hence, the market should do its best to avoid these hurdles.



## The Ethiopian Herald

Established in 1943

Published daily except Mondays  
By The Ethiopian Press Agency

Office of the CEO

Tel. 011-126-42-22

Fax. 251-011-156-98-62

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

Advertisement and Dist.

Department

email: [etpresspromotion@gmail.com](mailto:etpresspromotion@gmail.com)

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

Telegram :- 0976084707 - press

Editor-in-Chief: Worku Belachew

email- [workubelachew@press.et](mailto: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](mailto:wakuma220@gmail.com)

Deputy Editors-in-Chief:

Alem Hailu

Elizabeth Mengistu

Zekarias Woldemariam

Desta Geberehiwot

Daniel Beyene

Website: [www.press.et](http://www.press.et)

email: [ethiopianherald@press.et](mailto:ethiopianherald@press.et)

Fb/ /Ethiopian Press Agency/

The Ethiopian Herald

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

# Business & Economy

## Quality Village : For greater competitiveness at international level

BY BACHA ZEWDIE

Quality is believed to play a crucial role in the competitiveness of a country's export products and the safety of its domestic products. Institutions such as International Organization for Standardization (ISO) have been established at the international level to ensure quality. Some countries have established quality assurance institutions.

Quality assurance standards should be based on international standards using technology and science and should be comparable to those of other countries in the world. If domestic and imported products maintain their quality and prioritize the safety of society, they will be desirable by the manufacturer, exporter, and consumer.

The investor also wants to offer quality products to the market in order not to go bankrupt. The community also prefers to obtain quality products to avoid health and various problems caused by using substandard products.

It is observed that countries are constantly improving and implementing their quality standards. Ethiopia has also been establishing institutions working on quality. Recently, a new quality village was introduced in the presence of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD).

At the same forum, Minister of Trade and Regional Integration, Kassahun Gofe (phd) stated that the quality village is located on 7.2 hectares of land and includes 20 buildings. Total construction cost was about 8.2 billion Birr.

According to Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed; the quality village is called National Quality Infrastructure at the international level, and it is not merely infrastructure but also quality infrastructure. Thousands of young professionals work in the quality village. In particular, food, clothing, construction materials such as cement, steel, glass, tin, as well as health-related equipment are repaired; their quality is also tested.

Coffee, sesame, honey, all kinds of food products exported are tested in the facility and ensured that they are of international standard. Imports are also tested in the quality village before they enter the domestic market. Clothing, food and health are very important issues for humanity. Health problems can occur due to small contamination, chemicals; so that they are tested.

"This infrastructure is a big asset in Ethiopia, and there are few countries in Africa that have such infrastructure," the Prime Minister said, adding that countries without quality infrastructure cannot ensure sustainable development.

He said that the basis of growth is export capacity. Countries need such an institution to export. It is more important than building defense, police or wide roads. When the institution is fully operational, trade will grow; and imports will be of high quality. The country will not be a place where low-quality products produced in the world market are dumped. The institution will



Quality village positions Ethiopia to align more effectively with int'l standards – PMO

make it a country that accepts the best and exports quality products.

According to the Prime Minister, the first experience was taken from South Africa, which has a quality infrastructure institution called CSR. It is a lot of hard work for Ethiopia to have a similar institution by learning from the experience of the South African institution, which has nearly 30 years of experience. Now it has become fruitful, the equipment has been imported, the professionals have been trained and it will create capabilities that can fully make Ethiopia's export trade competitive. Any foreign institutions that do similar work will be willing to use these laboratories because they know the standards of these laboratories.

He also mentioned that products that have obtained quality certificates from this place in the country will be easily accepted in the international market. Such institutions are not established in few months' period, but require three or four years; they require preparation and resources.

There are more than 20 buildings on the campus, and it is one of the institutions that have achieved results in the past few years. He also stated that it is a very important institution that occupies the first place among the national institutions that the nation built so far.

Constantine Berhatesfa (PhD), an economic consultant, served as a policy consultant at the United Nations in New York and is currently serving as a lecturer in the management of humanitarian organizations pointed out that the quality of factory products imported by Ethiopia should be properly tested before they cause health or other problems to the community.

"First of all, all the goods imported by our country, including medicines, electronic goods, food products, and clothing, should be known and evaluated," he said. Therefore, the establishment of the Quality Village is of great importance to the country's economy.

According to him, the establishment of the Quality Village, which is a response to the quality issues in the country, will be of great importance in solving the social problems associated with quality in various sectors. It

is one of the government's regulatory tasks in addition to protecting the country and the people.

He believes that the establishment of quality control centers will not only benefit the export trade, but also allow for the establishment of standards for products used by the community, thereby preventing products that could harm the community from reaching the market.

Not only will they have their own laboratories, but they will also be able to conduct research by taking samples from the market. This will be of great importance for government capacity building. At the international level, any product manufactured by factories will be given the ISO international quality certification and exported.

He recalled that there are requirements that European and other governments require from companies that export; and indicated that the requirements are related to the environment, chemical content and child labor. "Most of the goods we export are raw. If they are exported with value added, including coffee, sesame and other products, it will support the economy better," he said.

Dr. Constantine mentioned that if sesame is converted into oil and exported, its price will increase many times. It will save foreign currency by eliminating the need for imported oil. Therefore, the establishment of the quality village will create a favorable environment for this to happen.

Industrial parks are corporations that can produce goods with value added chain that can be exported. These companies, especially when operating in areas called free economic zones, are allowed to produce and export goods with international quality standards. They are also given many opportunities by the government. They have many advantages in terms of licensing. Efforts are being made to convert all industrial parks into economic zones since it is a viable way as the renowned economic zones, such as China, the United Arab Emirates, and Singapore, have developed at a high level in such a way.

Emiru Ayalew, founder and manager of a private company known as 'Emiru Ayalew

Import Export', said that quality is the source of everything. His company exports soybeans, sesame, and nuts, and imports cars and machinery, tires, industrial raw materials, and chemicals.

Emiru mentioned that the establishment of the Quality Village will make the business of both importers and exporters smoother, because when poor-quality goods are shipped; there will be a loss of customers. The buyer may cancel the sale completely and incur unnecessary expenses, and he emphasized that the establishment of the Quality Village with quality as the center is crucial for both the country and the trader.

"Previously, there were quality certificates that we used to submit for export; when we import, quality-based assessments are also made," he said, but they were not as strong and reliable. He recalled that there were institutions that claimed to ensure quality on an individual basis, and these institutions have a wider opportunity to obtain certification through simple negotiations.

He said that the establishment of the quality village has technological support, and that since it is under government control, it is not possible to import low-quality goods from abroad.

He stated that the existence of the quality village will facilitate the export of quality goods and the import of quality goods into the country, and that the use of better technology in the quality village will create better trust among foreign customers.

It creates more trust in the goods that are exported. Customers will pay better when they are sure that they will receive quality goods, and sometimes it allows them to get additional payment.

He pointed out that if the goods sold are found to be of poor quality and are received at an additional price, they can be blacklisted in the future, but if the quality village implements technology and is managed by better human resources, the quality issue will improve significantly.

The technologies will serve both the importer and the exporter. It is appropriate to assign an expert in charge of the technology in the place, he emphasized.

# In the Sphere of Diplomacy

## Backing Ethiopia's DDR initiative

BY EYUEL KIFLU

In a significant move towards restoring peace and stability, Ethiopia has commenced the Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR) program in the Tigray region. This initiative is a key component of the Pretoria Agreement, signed on November 2, 2022, between the federal government and the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) following two years of devastating conflict.

The Ethiopian government is demonstrating its commitment to fully implement the agreement, with the National Rehabilitation Commission recently launching the first phase of the DDR program. This initial phase aims to support 75,000 ex-combatants in Tigray, marking a crucial step in the broader effort to facilitate their reintegration into society.

According to the commission, the integration process will extend to over 371,000 ex-combatants identified across various regions of Ethiopia. This comprehensive approach is designed to help former fighters transition back to civilian life, fostering social cohesion and stability.

Temesgen Tilahun, Commissioner of the National Rehabilitation Commission, spoke to the media about the mission and activities of the commission. He emphasized that the primary goal is to disarm former militants and reintegrate them into the fabric of the nation, contributing to peace, democracy, and development.

"Disarmament and rehabilitation require significant attention and active participation from all stakeholders," Temesgen stated. He noted that a total of 371,971 ex-militants have been identified nationwide, highlighting the scale of the undertaking.

To support this initiative, the government has allocated 1 billion Birr, complemented by an additional 60 million USD from international partners. These funds will facilitate the disarming of 75,000 ex-combatants in Tigray during this first phase, ensuring their sustainable reintegration.

Three rehabilitation centers have been established in the Tigray region, specifically in Mekelle, Edagahamus, and Adwa, to provide support to the former fighters. Under the supervision of the African Union's Monitoring, Verification, and Compliance Mission, ex-combatants will begin handing over their weapons to the Ethiopian National Defense Force (ENDF).

Temesgen confirmed that over the next four months, the program aims to disarm and reintegrate 75,000 former militants from Tigray into society. Furthermore, the commission plans to complete the reintegration of the identified 371,971 ex-combatants over a two-year period,

ensuring their permanent settlement within their communities.

The Commissioner reiterated the government's ongoing commitment to disarming and rehabilitating ex-combatants across various states. This comprehensive approach includes providing necessary training and support to help individuals successfully rejoin society, marking a hopeful chapter in Ethiopia's journey towards lasting peace and stability.

The National Rehabilitation Commission of Ethiopia has outlined an ambitious DDR program, requiring over half a billion USD to be fully realized. This substantial financial commitment highlights the urgent need for attention and collaboration among all stakeholders involved. It is crucial that entities, both local and international, extend their support to ensure the program's successful implementation.

Countries are increasingly expressing their solidarity with Ethiopia's efforts to reintegrate former combatants. According to information released by the Ethiopian Embassy in Islamabad, Türkiye has commended Ethiopia's ongoing initiatives and pledged its continued support. This commitment was reaffirmed during a recent meeting between Jemal Beker Abdula, Ethiopia's Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to Pakistan, and Irfan Neziroglu, the newly appointed Turkish Ambassador to Pakistan.

Ambassador Jemal highlighted Ethiopia's successful national unity drive, which has been a catalyst for the official launching of the reintegration program aimed at rehabilitating 75,000 former combatants. He emphasized the significance of the Pretoria Peace Agreement, which underscores Ethiopia's dedication to resolving African issues through African-led solutions. This commitment further cements Ethiopia's status as a beacon of peace and security in the Horn of Africa.

In addition, Ambassador Jemal pointed out the Ethiopian government's proactive leadership in addressing regional challenges, including counter-terrorism efforts and internal conflicts. These initiatives not only promote stability within Ethiopia but also contribute to broader regional security.

Ambassador Irfan Neziroglu, in his remarks, praised Ethiopia's effective implementation of the Pretoria Peace Agreement and its ongoing reintegration efforts. He reiterated Türkiye's commitment to supporting Ethiopia through various bilateral and multilateral platforms, emphasizing the importance of international cooperation in achieving lasting peace and development.

In a related development, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed convened a meeting with political and security leaders from the Tigray region. During this discussion, participants

emphasized the need for collaborative efforts to address the region's challenges, focusing on peace, good governance, and development. They also deliberated on the details of the resettlement and DDR program, reinforcing their commitment to working together for the betterment of the population.

Demobilization Director at the National Rehabilitation Commission, Lieutenant colonel Gosaye Tilahun said that some 640 combatants from the training centers of Mekelle and Idaga Hamus have now reintegrated into the society.

The remaining of the 1,360 total demobilized trainees will reintegrate into the society next, he added.

"To date, the total numbers of ex-combatants who went through the process and reintegrated into the society are 640. They have gone through rehabilitation training and reintegrated to the society.

This is what we have done so far while 1,360 former combatants are still going through the process. We will continue reintegrating them into the society in the coming days starting from tomorrow," he explained.

According to him, the NRC is working on improving the admission capacity of the training centers in order to succeed the commission's plan.

"In compliance with the principles of DDR, we are prioritizing on demobilizing the wounded and women by going to where they are. Rehabilitation training has been prepared for this and they are taking it. Therefore, the difference in a former combatant before and after the rehabilitation training is visible and it is indicative that the process would allow them to become a force of development and peace," he emphasized.

For Director Gosaye, this ambitious plan requires adequate resources and financial support from partners and stakeholders.

"It (DDR) requires a huge amount of finance and cannot be covered by the commission alone; rather seeks the support of various stakeholders towards its positive impact. Thus far, we have attained the finance to cover for the training and reintegration of 75,000 former combatants.

However, it requires a huge amount of finance to continue and I urge those who are contributing to continue and others to be on board," he stated.

As Ethiopia moves forward with its DDR program, the need for robust support from the international community remains critical. The collaboration of various stakeholders will play a pivotal role in ensuring the success of this initiative, ultimately contributing to the peace and stability of the region.

**As Ethiopia moves forward with its DDR program, the need for robust support from the international community remains critical. The collaboration of various stakeholders will play a pivotal role in ensuring the success of this initiative, ultimately contributing to the peace and stability of the region**

# Law & Politics

## Living up to expectations

BY DANIEL ALEMAYEHU

Ethiopia has faced numerous challenges over the past few years, and the National Dialogue Commission (ENDC) has emerged as a beacon of hope in ensuring peace and stability. Established three years ago, the commission is tasked with addressing the nation's most pressing issues and finding sustainable solutions to foster unity and reconciliation.

Given the country's societal diversity, any initiative demands careful consideration of potential consequences. As the country grapples with multiple challenges, both the government and citizens are striving to alleviate the nation's pain and find effective solutions. Every stakeholder is contributing to overcoming the difficulties that have threatened the nation's stability.

After so many ups and down in the past few years, the country pinning hope on the Commission to ensure long-lasting peace and stability in the country as actions have indicated a good start for the commission. It has been only three years when the commission was established by law and got the burden to bring the best possible solution for the nation's prominent problems.

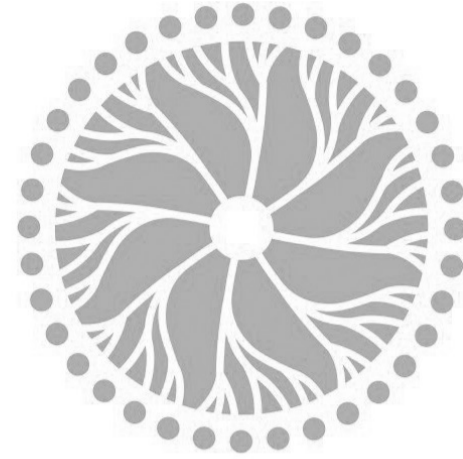
In recent years, the country has faced numerous crises that nearly unraveled its fabric, making the road to sustainable peace bumpy. To counter such existential threats, Ethiopia needed an inclusive platform to establish common ground for dialogue. The ENDC was created to fulfill this role, tasked with building a foundation for meaningful and constructive discussions.

From its inception, the ENDC has symbolized hope for Ethiopians and the international community. The commission's efforts offer a pathway to overcoming challenges once considered insurmountable. While progress is ongoing, the commission has already implemented significant activities, including data collection across the country. Starting its work in Addis Ababa, it has shown promising results, signaling the potential to achieve its ambitious objectives.

To build credibility and effectiveness, the commission has embraced principles of inclusiveness, participation, and impartiality. These principles must underpin every step of its process. Additionally, actors and institutions with differing perspectives must be integrated into the dialogue. Their voices, however diverse or contradictory, are crucial to creating a genuine sense of ownership and trust in the process. Platforms for wide-ranging participation will ensure the commission's work is supported by all sectors of society.

Furthermore, the ENDC can learn valuable lessons from other countries that have successfully implemented national dialogue processes. While contexts differ,

**The Commission represents a vital step toward resolving the nation's pressing issues. By fostering inclusivity, learning from international experiences, and addressing marginalized voices, the ENDC is charting a course for long-term stability and unity**



የኢትዮጵያ ሀገራዊ  
ምክክር ኮሚሽን

ETHIOPIAN NATIONAL  
DIALOGUE COMMISSION

experiences from nations like Tunisia—where effective communication and smaller, targeted discussions fostered global acclaim—can provide guidance for Ethiopia's unique challenges.

In an interview with the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA), ENDC Commissioner Belen Gebremedhin highlighted the commission's progress over the past three years, emphasizing its efforts to ensure inclusive and participatory dialogue. By drawing on international experiences, the ENDC aims to adapt successful practices to Ethiopia's context. Belen noted that while countries like Tunisia have achieved significant outcomes with fewer participants, Ethiopia is tailoring its approach to address its unique complexities.

The commission has prioritized building trust and fostering inclusive dialogue, including marginalized groups and previously overlooked regions such as Southern Ethiopia, Southwestern Ethiopia, and Benishangul-Gumuz. This approach strengthens societal connections and addresses historical inequities. Belen underscored the importance of involving diverse stakeholders—including political parties, teachers' associations, religious leaders, youth, women, persons with disabilities, and traditional associations—to foster a shared sense of ownership and commitment to sustainable peace.

Despite these efforts, challenges remain. Sporadic conflicts, logistical constraints, and the influence of irresponsible social media present significant obstacles. To counter these, the ENDC collaborates with various partners to ensure progress continues and peace becomes a reality.

ENDC Commissioner Ambaye Augato (PhD) outlined plans for a major dialogue in Oromia State, involving participants from over 350 districts. The event in Adama is expected to draw over 7,000 participants, including farmers, pastoralists, women, youth, and community leaders like Aba Gedas. The dialogue aims to bridge gaps and foster relationships across Oromia's diverse communities. Integrating

traditional conflict resolution methods into these dialogues strengthens the overall process and enhances democratic systems.

Solomon Ayele, Chairperson of the Ethiopian Political Parties Joint Council, stressed the importance of a multi-sectorial approach to ensure the success of the National Dialogue. He emphasized that, despite ideological differences, most political parties are united in their commitment to Ethiopia's unity. For the dialogue to succeed, political participation must remain active and inclusive.

The Council, comprising 50 political parties, has played a vital role in supporting the ENDC's efforts. Of these, 45 parties are actively engaged, with attempts to involve the remaining five. Solomon reiterated that active political involvement is essential to resolving disputes and fostering national development. The dialogue, he argued, must bridge divides, expand democratic perspectives, and address conflicts to ensure sustainable peace and development.

The Commission represents a vital step toward resolving the nation's pressing issues. By fostering inclusivity, learning from international experiences, and addressing marginalized voices, the ENDC is charting a course for long-term stability and unity. While challenges remain, the commission's achievements thus far provide hope for a peaceful and prosperous future for Ethiopia.

To sum up, in order to make the commission and its work more accurate and trustworthy, those principles must be incorporated in its every step. Even actors and other institutions that follow a completely different route from the commission must also be included in the process. Those organs are also part of the society and their voices must be heard. No one must not leave behind. It has to be open for any disparity and even unwanted ideas in order to be more credible. When there are platforms where everyone can participate, then the commission can build the essence of ownership and the process can be supported by every stakeholder.



# Society

## NNPD to Foster unity, understanding, and mutual respect

BY MENGISTEAB TESHOME

Ethiopia is home to a rich tapestry of ethnic groups, creating a vibrant mosaic of diversity. Renowned for its cultural heritage, the country comprises numerous ethnicities, each with its unique language, traditions, customs, and norms. These diverse groups coexist in harmony, and their unity in diversity has been instrumental in strengthening the nation, as Ethiopia's true strength lies in its rich diversity.

With the aim of cherishing this unity in diversity, promoting understanding, and fostering respect among its various populations, Ethiopia celebrates Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Day each year on December 8 warmly and colorfully. This celebration serves as a platform to promote a national identity that embraces all ethnicities.

This year marked the 19th celebration of Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Day, (NNPD) which took place on Sunday, December 8, 2024, across the country with a variety of events, including cultural performances.

The day not only showcases Ethiopia's rich cultural diversity but also it reinforces the nation's commitment to inclusivity and harmony. Further, it serves as a reminder that Ethiopia's strength is rooted in its unity amid diversity, paving the way for a more peaceful and prosperous future for all citizens.

Arba Minch Town hosted this year's celebration of Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Day in the presence of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD), First Lady Zinash Tayachew, high-level government officials, and invited guests. The event was held under the theme "National Consensus for Multinational Unity," emphasizing the importance of unity among Ethiopia's diverse ethnic groups and fostering a shared national identity.

Speaking on the occasion, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed described Ethiopia as a grand library. He explained, "To gain a comprehensive understanding of Ethiopia, it is essential to explore and learn about the diverse nations and nationalities within the country, just as utilizing multiple books in a library enhances one's knowledge," the Premier added.

According to him, Ethiopia is more than just a collection of individual works; it represents a multitude of perspectives and wisdom. Thus, he urged citizens to embrace their diverse backgrounds and learn from one another, enhancing their understanding of Ethiopia's multifaceted identity.

Abiy drew a parallel between Ethiopia and the ocean, highlighting the wealth of resources and cultures within the nation. He called for unity to harness these diverse assets for national development, comparing the strength of a single tree to the resilience found in the unity of a forest. Just as trees



support each other against adversity, he stressed that people of different backgrounds can find strength through collaboration.

Highlighting Ethiopia's boundless potential for wealth and wisdom, Prime Minister Abiy stressed the importance of nurturing the country by returning to peace and love, united in the spirit of togetherness. He also called for strong collaboration among all Ethiopians.

Speaker of the House of Federation Agegnehu Teshager for his part said that, The House is working to establish a healthy federal system in Ethiopia.

According to the Speaker, the celebration of this event lays the foundation for justice,

democracy, and constitutionalism, the Speaker added.

He further stated that after the reform, works have been carried out aimed at enhancing unity while by also ensuring the equality of all national and nationalities of the country.

President of the Southern Ethiopia State, Tilahun Kebede, reaffirmed the idea that Ethiopia's true beauty lies in its diversity. He referred to the Southern region as a microcosm of Ethiopia, where nature and culture coexist harmoniously. "The State is a symbol of Ethiopia," he remarked, adding that the State's cultural wealth and natural beauty make it a fertile ground for promoting cooperation, productivity, and prosperity.

Speaking at a symposium organized in connection with the celebration, the Speaker recalled for the past 18 years, the House of Federation, in collaboration with regional and city administrations organized the annual celebrations of NNP Day in various parts of Ethiopia.

The Day is intended for nations, nationalities, and peoples to promote their values, norms, and cultures, Agegnehu said.

According to him, the Nations, Nationalities and People Day forges the multi-national unity and diversity of the country, inspiring them to rally for lasting peace and fast economic growth.

The various events of nations and nationalities day also deepens the understanding of citizens on principles of the constitutional order and the federal system, Agegnehu revealed.

The speaker added that reaching national consensus based on multi-national unity and diversity is a cornerstone for nation state-building efforts.

In this cause, he stressed the need for exerting concerted endeavors on national consensus for the realization of an effective nation state-building process in the country.

The significance of NNP Day has helped to strengthen the solidarity among Ethiopia's diverse identities, focus unity over division, and raise public awareness of the Constitution and the federal structure, the speaker noted.

He added that the nations, nationalities and peoples are duty-bound to uphold the victories and outcomes of the constitution and strive for more gains.

The Speaker also urged all citizens to safeguard the peace of the nation and actively participate in the development undertakings of the country towards achieving the prosperity of the nation.

The Ethiopian Constitution, which recognizes the right to self-determination for all of Ethiopia's Nations and Nationalities, underscores the celebration's significance. The day also highlights the government's ongoing efforts to establish a functional and inclusive federal system, ensuring that every Ethiopian has an equal stake in the country's future, ENA reported.

Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples Day is an annual occasion dedicated to promoting national unity in Ethiopia by upholding the principles of equality and solidarity while preserving the national integrity of the country.

The Day is a celebration of Ethiopia's unique cultural heritage, aiming to promote unity, understanding, and respect among its diverse populations while highlighting the importance of inclusivity in national development.

# Planet Earth

## Ethiopia's leather industry running for a market come back

BY FIKADU BELAY

Some research indicates that more than 80% of single leather becomes waste during the tanning process. This is mainly as a result of the backward process of tannery employed in the country as well as the poor skill of human resource. Otherwise, according to experts it would have been possible to minimize the wastage down from 80% using modern technology and trained human power. As a result the leather industry is known to be a major cause of pollution.

The leather industry in Ethiopia has considerable potential for economic development, largely due to its substantial livestock population. However, the country has not fully harnessed this sector's capabilities.

Several obstacles impede the advancement of Ethiopia's leather industry. Many tanneries operate with outdated machinery and methods, resulting in inferior leather products that struggle to compete globally. Additionally, shortage of skilled labor worsens the situation, as existing training programs are inadequate and fail to align with the industry's growing demands.

The traditional tanning processes employed also pose significant challenges, as they involve harmful chemicals that contribute to severe pollution of water and air. The improper disposal of tannery waste endangers local communities' health and exacerbates environmental issues, such as through soil and water contamination.

To address these environmental issues, tanneries are partnering with leather research centers to create effective treatment strategies. This collaboration aims to reduce air pollution and foster sustainable practices in the industry.

The government encourages public private partnership (PPP) for effective initiatives aimed at reducing environmental harm. These efforts focus on promoting ecofriendly tanning techniques that minimize the use of hazardous chemicals, thereby decreasing pollution levels.

According to leather industry data, the by-products generated from the tanning process can be repurposed, turning potential waste into valuable resources such as leather products and organic fertilizers for soil fertility enhancement. So, for this recycling process, the government is actively supporting these efforts, recognizing the significance of sustainable practices in the leather sector.

Additionally, the Ministry of Industry has disclosed its interests to collaborate with the leather manufacturing industry



development to address the sector's bottlenecks. This collaboration aims to enhance the effectiveness of the industry by focusing on specific challenges faced at the factory and company levels. By fostering a cooperative environment, stakeholders hope to streamline operations and boost productivity.

The Leather and Leather Products Industry Research and Development Center has recently reported that Ethiopia earned approximately 8.3 million USD from exports of leather and leather products over the past four months. This revenue serves as a crucial indicator of the sector's potential, yet it also underscores the untold challenges that the industry faces as it navigates a complex global market.

Mohammed Hussein, The Center Manager's Representative, told The Ethiopian Press Agency that out of these earnings around 4.9 million USD was generated from exports by tanneries. Tanneries play a vital role in the leather supply chain, transforming raw hides into finished leather products. Additionally, 700,000 USD was earned from leather glove manufacturers, highlighting the diverse range of products in the industry, he said.

He also mentioned that Handbags also contributed to the revenue, generating 600,000 USD from exports, while value-added exports of leather by-products accounted for 1.4 million USD. Despite these figures, officials have expressed concerns that this foreign exchange income falls short of expectations, indicating room for growth and improvement.

He emphasized ongoing efforts to enhance both production efficiency and product quality. One significant issue is the reliance on exports to China, which remains the primary destination for Ethiopia's leather products. However, exports to this market had significantly declined during the COVID-19 pandemic, causing

considerable concern among industry stakeholders. Fortunately, there are signs of recovery as shipments to China are gradually resuming, providing a ray of hope for the sector.

Domestic challenges also pose significant hurdles for the leather industry. Several companies that previously held substantial export shares to the United States have ceased operations due to various internal reasons. One notable example is the Huajian Shoe Factory, which had been a major exporter of leather products to the US. Mohammed confirmed that the company has now resumed production and is actively sending samples to markets in Africa and beyond. This resurgence is a positive development, but it underscores the volatility of the industry and the need for sustained support.

A critical issue highlighted by Mohammed is the ongoing demand for cow, sheep, and other skins, which remains unmet due to the departure of leather collectors from the market. This gap in the supply chain has made it increasingly difficult for industries to obtain the raw materials they need for production. The absence of reliable suppliers can lead to production delays and increased costs, ultimately affecting the competitiveness of Ethiopian leather products on the global stage.

Moreover, the leather sector grapples with transparency issues between suppliers and buyers. The presence of numerous non-value-adding actors in the market complicates the landscape for leather producers, making it challenging to establish reliable supply chains. Rising salt prices is also a critical component in leather processing that further exacerbates the situation, adding financial strain to producers already operating on thin margins.

In response to these challenges, he also pointed to recent macroeconomic reforms aimed at revitalizing the manufacturing

industry. These reforms are intended to strengthen sectors that have been weakened, including leather production. He noted that these changes are beneficial for leather manufacturers, particularly in securing foreign currency needed for importing essential chemicals for production. This is a critical factor, as access to high-quality inputs directly influences the quality of the final products.

One of the most significant aspects of these reforms is the allowance for manufacturers to retain 50% of the foreign currency earned from exports. This policy shift enables manufacturers to manage their accounts with greater flexibility, allowing them to utilize the funds for importing necessary inputs. The new system is expected to alleviate some of the foreign exchange difficulties that have previously hindered production, offering a pathway for growth.

The challenges faced by the leather industry underscore the need for coordination among stakeholders to enhance the sector's resilience. With the right support and strategic initiatives, Ethiopia's leather industry has the potential to recover and thrive in the global market, contributing significantly to the country's economy. The involvement of various stakeholders, including government agencies, private sector players, and international partners, will be crucial in fostering an environment conducive to growth.

As the industry moves forward, officials remain optimistic that with continued efforts to tackle existing challenges and improve production capabilities, Ethiopia can reclaim its position as a key player in the global leather market. The potential for job creation, increased foreign exchange earnings, and enhanced economic stability is significant. With a renewed focus on sustainability, quality, and innovation, the Ethiopian leather industry can navigate the complexities of the global market and emerge stronger than before.