



Nebiyu Tedla

## New ambassadors' appointment marks 'historic shift': MoFA

• Ethiopia repatriates 27,057 undocumented migrants

BY YESUF ENDRIS

**ADDIS ABABA** –The recent appointment of 24 ambassadors from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) and related diplomatic institutions marks a historic shift in Ethiopia's diplomacy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) Spokesperson said.

In a biweekly press briefing held yesterday, MoFA Spokesperson Nebiyu Tedla stated that all appointees are senior members of the ministry and related diplomatic institutions thereby showcasing the government's commitment to manage diplomatic affairs with politically independent professionals.

"The appointment marks a historic shift as this is the first time the institution has appointed ambassadors exclusively from within its own ranks. It also provides opportunities to professionals at medium and higher levels in the MoFA, enhancing the quality of diplomatic and institutional work," Nebiyu emphasized.

Previously, it was common for individuals without diplomatic background to be appointed as ambassadors. The Ethiopian Herald also learnt that the Spokesperson, Nebiyu Tedla is one of the newly-appointed ambassadors.

The spokesperson also addressed the recent diplomatic developments,

See New ambassadors' ... page 3



### MoE expresses readiness to enhance private institution's research role

Page 3



Mahmoud Adam Jama

## Main Somaliland opposition party backs sea deal

• Ready to devise amicable foreign policy towards Addis

BY DESTA GEBREHIWOT

**HARGEISA**—The second largest and leading opposition party in Somaliland welcomed the recently inked Addis Ababa-

See Main Somaliland ... page 3

## DBE spotlights capital goods, lease finance for industrial dev't

BY ASHENAFI ANIMUT

**ADDIS ABABA** – Capital goods and lease financing are viable models for the developments of micro, small, medium enterprises and nations economic development, the Ethiopian Development Bank said.

The Association of Ethiopian Capital Goods Finance (AECGF) was officially launched yesterday in the presence of ministers, federal and regional representatives and other stakeholders.

Speaking at the launching ceremony, Development Bank of Ethiopia President Yohannes Ayalew (PhD) said that along

See DBE spotlights ... page 3



Yohannes Ayalew (PhD)



Melaku Alebel

Photo: Dagene Abera

Auspicious progress of agriculture sector

Page 6

Female Education as a cultural challenge in contemporary Africa

Page 7

Tech companies promoting their products at STRIDE Ethiopia Expo

Page 8

# Ethiopia prioritizes economic partnership with Saudi Arabia

• Kingdom’s business delegation to come to Addis

BY ESSEYE MENGISTE

ADDIS ABABA- Ethio-Saudi Arabia strategic partnership needs to be based on concrete trade and investment ties as economic cooperation is a solid foundation for the benefit of all, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) said.

Foreign Affairs Minister Taye-Atske Selassie (Amb.) made the above remark while conferring with Saudi Chambers Federation Chairperson Hassan bin Mujib Al-Huwaizi on the improvement of the two countries’ trade and investment ties in Riyadh.

FM Taye, who noted the historic ties between Ethiopia and Saudi Arabia, stressed that both countries need to prioritize trade and investment as key areas of partnership to constantly nurture the existing excellent bilateral relations.

He also called on the Saudi business community to maximize their involvement in Ethiopia’s wider trade and investment opportunities.

Ethiopia is currently creating a conducive business climate with extensive reforms to attract foreign investors’ involvement in the priority sectors. “Accordingly, we have extended the invitation to Saudi companies to utilize Ethiopia’s untapped business potentials.”

Hassan, on his part said that Saudi companies are interested in capitalizing Ethiopia’s



trade and investment potentials particularly desirous of taking part in agro-processing and manufacturing sectors. “Selected Saudi Arabian investors will pay a business visit to Ethiopia next August.”

Calling Saudi businesspersons’ decision to visit Ethiopia as an encouraging gesture, Ambassador Taye expressed his country’s readiness to accord a warm welcome to the guests. “The arrival of Saudi businesses to Ethiopia will give an impetus to the two countries’ bilateral relations in the economic frontier.”

The Chairperson also reiterated Ethiopia and Saudi Arabia are natural partners at bilateral, regional and multilateral levels.

Indicating the importance of trade and investment ties, Hassan suggested the need to focus on specific cooperative development projects with a view to elevating the two countries bilateral ties,

according to a statement issued by Foreign Affairs Ministry of Ethiopia.

Among the Middle East countries, Saudi Arabia is the leading investor in Ethiopia and it is the major recipient of the latter’s agricultural exports.

Besides its geographical proximity, Ethiopia’s high soil fertility and abundant water resources position it among the leading suppliers of food items to the Kingdom and being a preferred investment destination for Saudi companies.

Furthermore, extensive dialogues have been underway with Saudi Arabia, the principal Ethiopian domestic workers’ hiring country, to ensure the rights and benefits of Ethiopian domestic workers.

Saudi Arabia is among the first Arab countries to establish diplomatic relations with Ethiopia and opened its embassy in Addis Ababa in 1948.

# AFRAA calls for full implementation of SAATM

• Praises Ethiopian Airlines continental role

BY ASHENAFA ANIMUT

ADDIS ABABA - The African Aviation Association (AFRAA) has called for full implementation of Single Africa Air Transport Market (SAATM) to promote the continental aviation industry.

Approached by *The Ethiopian Herald*, Association Secretary-General Abdérahmane Berthé said that member states that have agreed to implement the project should give due emphasis for its progress and success to boost air connectivity across the continent.

Mentioning the presence of 37 member countries under the project umbrella, he emphasized that the initiative would be the potential impetus to accelerate the continent’s economic integration if it is implemented wholeheartedly.

He said adding that his institution is currently carrying out various innovative initiatives, providing advocacy programs and aviation skills for professionals to reduce operating costs, increase market

shares and facilitate partnership among the entire African airlines thereby witnessing a slight progress.

“Due to fragility of the African Airlines, regulations, restrictions and lack of willingness are also dragging setbacks for the successful implementation of the project,” he remarked.

Remarking the low-income African countries fellow citizens’ air ticket affordability that accounts for merely 10%, he recommended the need to improve market access, traffic rights, economic intra-Africa connectivity and strengthen the functionality of the common project to address this and other potential challenges.

Commending the Ethiopian Airlines, Africa’s largest and renowned carrier for its substantial continental progress and air connectivity, he stated that it is performing exemplary activities such as in training academy, expertise, flight academia, maintenance and route expansion.

Furthermore, he said it is also establishing a robust transportation infrastructure that



Abdérahmane Berthé serves millions of fellow African passengers thereby registering notable attainments and recognitions.

It was learnt that SAATM, the African Union Agenda 2063 initiative, was established with the view of creating a single unified air transport market and advancing the liberalization of civil aviation in Africa.

# WHO supports Ethiopia on One Health implementation

BY MESERET BEHAILU

ADDIS ABABA – The World Health Organization (WHO) has reiterated support for the realization of integrated human, animal and environmental health in Ethiopia.

On Thursday, Capacitating One Health in Eastern and Southern Africa (COHESA) in cooperation with Addis Ababa University had organized a half-day validation workshop on the integration of One Health (OH) in education and research aimed at creating a sustainable and healthy environment for humans and animals.

On the occasion, WHO Communicable Disease Prevention and International Health Regulation Officer in Ethiopia, Fekadu Adugna (PhD) expressed the need to establish One Health approach in integrating the health of humans, animals and the environment.

The implementation of One Health in health, agriculture and environment and other sectors is crucial to create a healthy environment for humans and animals, he noted.

WHO supports Ethiopia for the implementation of One Health through providing financial and technical assistance including trainings, guidelines and coordination works and so on, the Officer stated.

Fekadu also pledged his organization’s continues support to achieve One Health in Ethiopia in particular and Africa in general.

“Ethiopia is on the right track to ensure One Health thereby addressing a number of challenges with keeping multi-stakeholders approach,” he added.

Addis Ababa Health Science College Dean Prof. Andualem Deneke on his part said that the University is working with stakeholders to realize the multi-sectorial collaboration to reduce health challenges through providing trainings, conducting researches, delivering health services with active engagement of the public.

In spite of the national endeavor, he said, there are still limitations regarding effective leadership, competitiveness and adequate funding to ensure One Health.

Therefore, cooperative engagement is critical to address a number of challenges in that regard, he stressed.

COHESA is a project designed to strengthen the capacity of some selected 12 Eastern and Southern African countries to use a One Health approach in order to identify and deliver solutions to key health problems affecting the society by working for healthy humans, animals and the environment.

Partners underlined on integrated efforts disclosed endeavors to address health threats of humans, animals and environment through cooperative approach.

# News

## MoE expresses readiness to enhance private institution’s research role

BY BETELHEM BEDLU

**ADDIS ABABA-** The government is committed and ready to help private higher education institutions succeed in producing more problem-solving and community-based research and publications, the Ministry of Education (MoE) said.

Speaking at the 22nd International Conference on Private Higher Education in Africa MoE State Minister Kora Tushune stated that the major objectives of higher education institutions is to serve and improve communities’ livelihoods by coming up with significant research that will solve societal challenges.

Most of private higher education institutions are engaged in bringing out qualified labor force than centering on conducting researches and publications. Only four institutions are majorly focusing on carrying out studies so far, the state minister added.

“Thus, efforts are underway in engaging private higher education institutions to produce more studies and journals. Of which, capacity building as well as supervision activities have been undertaken.”

Kora further highlighted that special priority has been given to empower private higher education institutions through cooperation and integration activities so that they can produce essential studies.

The MoE is striving to ensure quality education and enhance the essentiality of research in terms of solving Ethiopia’s challenges. Similarly, it has given due emphasis to realize Agenda 2063 goal on education.

“Cognizant to this fact, the government is committed to provide adequate support to private higher education institution, he noted, stressing that MoE recognizes the immense contribution of private higher education institution in creating skilled labor force.

The theme of this year’s conference is “Re-thinking Research and Academic Assessment and Evaluation towards Quality Enhancement: New Trends and Developments.”

St. Mary’s University Founder and President Wondwosen Tamrat (Associate Prof) for his part mentioned that the conference will shed light on the outstanding issues of research, assessment, and evaluation by way of availing new knowledge, sorting out some grey areas and bridging some possible gaps.

The various presentations and panel discussions by renowned scholars drawn from different parts of the world and from Ethiopian public and private universities underline the need for addressing the multi-faceted challenges of higher education and the society at large, Wondwosen emphasized.

“The focus on research and academic assessment and evaluation and their contribution toward quality enhancement

is timely given the global and national developments around these important themes and their wider implications in terms of influencing societal growth, institutional success, and the preparation of graduates as informed global citizens and ready for the labor market,” he remarked.

Numerous participants from Africa and high level representatives from national, regional and international institutions took part as well as discussed through virtual platform on the opportunities, challenges and the way forward in higher education at both private and public sectors.

The 22nd International Conference on Private Higher Education in Africa is organized by St. Mary’s University in partnership with the African Union Commission, the Association of African Universities, and the International Network for Higher Education in Africa at UKZN, University of KwaZulu Natal in South Africa, and Organization of Southern Cooperation in Addis Ababa, it was learned.

## DBE spotlights...

with pertinent development stakeholders, the association has been creating a conducive playground with capital goods finance businesses and lease finance services to innovators, micro, small, medium enterprises and local institutions thereby registering notable outcomes across the country.

Since its establishment in 2022, The Ethiopian Capital Goods Finance Association (ECGFA) has been providing mechanizing equipment to various states such as Amhara, Tigray, Oromia, South West Ethiopia including Addis Ababa, has been playing its huge role in agro-processing, agriculture modernization, industrial expansion among many areas.

Yohannes, who is also Association’s Board Chair, has also remarked that lease financing is a viable scheme to promote job creation, institutional linkage and accelerating national economic development.

Undertaking enabling reforms and

guidelines, the DB along with the association has contributed its huge role in the growth of lease financing in all sectors, as a result, the lease financing trend increases from 5 billion Birr in 2021 to 20 billion Birr in 2023/24, he noted.

As Ethiopia is embarking on innovative startups and enterprises, he said, lease financing would be of a great significance to equip them with globally competitive equipment.

Apart from curbing collateral challenges, capital goods financing services would also help facilitate the project execution and financial and business capacities, solve various innovative business models and transform institutions, he added.

Having said development banks and lease financing are two sides of the coin, he stressed that local machinery manufacturing industries play their role on importing

equipment to curb forex glitches.

For his part, Industry Minister Melaku Alebel emphasized that this event represents a big step forward in Ethiopia’s economic reform and growth effort.

“Lease financing has a paramount significance towards decent job creation, stimulates the economy, and solves manufacturing scarcities, expediting technology transfer through scientific solutions.”

Reaffirming the government’s firm commitment to the issue, the Minister further underscored that the implementation mechanisms need to be well-organized and should consider the value chain and enhance the machinery supply to solve supply problems.

Commending the lease companies and private sectors to strengthen their capacities, Melaku said that they should also be flexible and

leverage the opportunity to back the nation’s economy meaningfully.

AECGF General Manager Asfaw Abebe underscored the need to support capital lease institutes to strengthen the local manufacturer’s capacity.

Currently, they are providing manufacturing machineries and various opportunities to manufacturing industries through capital lease financing across the country.

As the country is undergoing a significant transformation towards digital financing services, a vibrant lease financing sector would be serving as alternative financial options for MSMEs by addressing the collateral constraints.

Lack of liquidity, innovative products, collateral and information are the potential challenges in the ecosystem, he stated.

## New ambassadors’...

including the ongoing repatriation of undocumented Ethiopian migrants. “The repatriation is proceeding per schedule, with four flights per week. To date, 27,057 migrants have been repatriated, completing about 35% of the plan. Institutions working on migration are also supporting returnees to ensure their safe return home.”

The National Committee to repatriate undocumented citizens has a plan to repatriate over 70,000 Ethiopian migrants mainly from Saudi Arabia.

The government remains committed to strengthening citizen-centered diplomacy, as evidenced by these efforts, Nebiyu stressed.

In related news, he highlighted the continued participation of Ethiopians and foreign nationals of Ethiopian-origin living abroad in the Clean-Ethiopia

campaign. “Since announcement, the Ethiopian diplomatic and Diaspora communities have been actively involved in the campaign. In this regard, the MoFA plans to collect 20 million Birr and has surpassed this goal.”

To date, some 14 million Birr has been collected in cash from Ethiopian diplomatic and Diaspora members. Additionally, the Diaspora communities in the United Arab Emirates and North America have pledged to construct 15 modern restrooms, valued at over 22 million Birr. Overall, the campaign has achieved contributions worth more than 36.1 million Birr.

In another diplomatic development, the Spokesperson said that a delegation of 76 Pakistani business companies will visit Ethiopia from May 26-31, 2024 as part of the second business and trade delegation to the country.

## Main Somaliland...

Hargeisa sea access deal while calling for more work for its effectuation.

Waddani National Party which reportedly stood second in the last poll with approximately 42% of the votes also cherished the all-round ties between the neighboring peoples.

The national party which is bracing for the upcoming election also pledges to come up with a policy that heightens the bilateral cooperation between Addis and Hargeisa.

“Our party’s position is that we welcome any agreement that elevates cooperation and cultivates trust between the two brotherly peoples,” said Party Shadow Minister of Information Mahmoud Adam Jama speaking to *The Ethiopian Herald*.

“Our party is confident that Ethiopia is genuine in its relationship with Somaliland,” the spokesperson added.

The party is also optimistic that the partnership between Ethiopia and Somaliland will witness elevation under its leadership should the party win a national poll.

Adam said his party encourages the Ethiopian government to access Somaliland’s sea and

build infrastructure. Peaceful border and security are in the best interest of both sides.

Somaliland has the right to reach an agreement with any country. What matters is to make sure any agreement is beneficial to all the parties. That is what Somaliland did and continues to do, the spokesperson added.

Better known as Waddani, the party also seeks elevated ties with Ethiopia with or without power. “We welcome any agreement which enhances the two countries standing and mutual benefits,”

If the Waddani party gets elected in the next election, it plans to give a fresh boost to relations between the two neighbors in terms of economic engagement, security cooperation and people-to-people relations. Ethiopia has been by our side during Somalilanders’ turbulent years.

“The two sides have much room for cooperation with complementary interests. Somaliland can export fish while Ethiopia can utilize the sea access. Berbera can be a good area of collaboration. We hope the country will get a preferential rate in the port.”

# Opinion

## Viable weapon for overcoming hostility, discrepancy: Transitional Justice

BY MENGESHA AMARE

Of the myriads of mechanisms countries, which have passed through some sorts of conflicts, disagreements, rivalries and skirmishes, have employed to get the all rounded wounds healed, transitional justice come at the forefront. Yes, Transitional Justice (TJ) is these days regarded as an indispensable building block for national reconciliation, peace building, and full-agreement thereby coming up with sound democratic governance among societies emerging from conflicts, rivalry and divisive periods.

Yes, it is the adoption by a society in transition of some form of legislative, executive/administrative and/or judicial measures seeking not only to end violence and/or authoritarian rule but also to establish accountability and remedy for acts of violations and address the conditions that made systematic or gross human and peoples’ rights violations and atrocities possible.

True, properly applying TJ is of paramount impotence in making culprits accountable, fostering sense of fraternity, ensuring truth-telling or reparation efforts coming out of the boxes of carrying out political revenge. Besides, reforming institutions with a great attempt to satisfy victims’ legitimate expectations of justice, truth and reparation is going to be effective from the standpoint of accountability, and likely to succeed in its own terms.

There would be an absolute peace negotiation where citizens are invited to the heart of the talks and make them part of the political agenda. In so doing, it would be quite possible to have recourse to translate words and promises into practices, viable principles and dynamics.

Without a shadow of doubt, human societies try to confront past violence and divisions, to overcome them, and to prevent future ones. This is purely embraced with the diverse, changing and ever-evolving field of transitional justice.

By putting victims at the center and their dignity first, transitional justice signals the way forward for a renewed social contract in which all citizens are included and everyone’s rights are protected. Since transitional justice is an approach to systematic or massive violations of human rights that both provide redress to victims and create or enhance opportunities for the transformation of the political systems, conflicts, and other conditions that may have been at the root of the abuses can be easily overcome and such a bold move helps citizens breathe a sigh of relief.

Hence, Ethiopia is right now working hard to bring TJ into the practical arena thereby addressing a number of discrepancies, skirmishes and conflicts as properly and inclusively as possible.

A transitional justice approach, thus, recognizes that there are two goals in dealing with a legacy of systematic or massive abuse: to gain some level of justice for victims and to reinforce the possibilities for peace, democracy, and reconciliation. To achieve these two ends, transitional justice measures often combine elements of criminal, restorative, and social justice. TJ is not a special form of justice; it is rather, justice adapted to the often unique conditions of societies undergoing transformation away from a time when human rights abuse may have been a normal state of affairs.

So long as the government of Ethiopia is committed than ever before and the necessary preparations have already been carried out, putting the essence of transitional justice and taking apt measures would be easy.

Transitional justice emerged as part of a recognition that dealing with systematic or massive abuses requires a distinctive approach that is both backward- and forward-looking. Besides, transitional justice measures aim not only to dignify victims, but also to help prevent similar victim-hood in the future. The long-term goals of transitional justice measures are to promote peace, democracy, and reconciliation, with the idea that these conditions help prevent the systematic or massive violation of human rights.

The field itself has these days been is a diverse and vibrant one. As it has grown, it has found common ground with social justice movements, as well as the fields of conflict resolution, peace building, and historical memory, to name a few.

As transitional contexts have shifted from one scene to another, from conflict to post-conflict, of course, for instance, new practical challenges have forced the field to innovate and expand its boundaries. Ethnic cleansing and displacement, the reintegration of ex-combatants, reconciliation among communities, and the role of justice in peace building—these have all become important new issues for transitional justice practitioners to tackle. Its measures should be structured in a way that help maximize fraternity and amicable way and minimize conflict or contradiction, and the different measures of transitional justice should ideally be sequenced in a manner that helps preserve and enhance the constituent elements of the transition itself—democracy and peace—without which all transitional justice possibilities may diminish in scope and quality.

Legal proceedings, reparations, institutional reforms, administrative purges, remembrance, even amnesties, have been and will remain the technique and means of reconciliation as well as put in place by societies in the aftermath of a murderous armed conflict or an oppressive regime in their transitions to peace and the rule of

law. It is these approaches and experiences. That is why Ethiopia is working towards ensuring peace and security among citizens across the nation.

One can think about transitional justice in the abstract, others can observe it from near or far, and some others can get involved because it’s the future of one’s own country that is at stake or because the history of others fascinates or compels the nation in question. Yes, everyone can feel it, believes in it as well as questions it. The most important thing in his regard it TJ always deals with essential human issues as it is the juncture where the biggest political, societal and historical crises meet.

It is obvious that many experts, philosophers, individuals, governments, civil society and peace building actors forward that peace after years of violent conflict cannot be sustained without addressing the grievances and calls for justice by victims, their families and societies as a whole.

This is really an acceptable notion since, without overcoming the root causes of grudges, animosities, and rivalries, it is hard to think of a stable and peaceful life anywhere. Furthermore, transitional justice refers to the full range of processes and mechanisms associated with a society’s attempts to come to terms with a legacy of large-scale past abuses in order to ensure accountability, serve justice and receive reconciliation, and it needs to be given due attention than ever before.

Recognizing the value of incorporating transitional justice principles and mechanisms as early as possible the government of Ethiopia has been looking at mediation and reconciliation processes as an important opportunity to begin a discussion on transitional justice.

Since nations which are engaged in international peace mediation would have advocated for transitional justice in the peace processes they support and have developed respective approaches, Ethiopia is doing the same drawing important lessons from those which have recorded remarkable outcomes out of suitably employing TJ. Such a growing international appreciation for transitional justice, however, has at times been met with caution from mediation practitioners—handling it as carefully and painstakingly as possible. The other major point in this regard is fair, victim-centered trials are key to transitional justice in Ethiopia.

No doubt, transitional justice, the range of mechanisms employed to achieve redress for past human rights violations, has become a critical component of countries’ efforts to strengthen the rule of law post-conflict, as well as an integral element of the peace building agenda in countries recovering from conflict. It is a response to systematic or widespread violations of human rights. It also seeks recognition for victims and promotion of possibilities for

peace, reconciliation and democracy.

Ethiopia has to take care of in due course of employing TJ as it is not a special form of justice but justice adapted to societies transforming themselves after a period of pervasive human rights abuse and recurrent or intermittent conflicts. As transitional justice processes often need political backing as much as they need financial support, the government along with development partners and other supporters has to do its entire best for its fruition. Basically, one has to sufficiently underline the importance of coherency between development cooperation and political dialogue in support for transitional justice and reconciliation. Political dialogue and heartily reconciliation fosters the path towards peace and security.

Yes, transitional justice is context-and gender-specific, designed with an eye to long-term change, and substantially driven not by governments alone, but by victims and a wide range of civil society actors and even requires the active engagement of the general society. Interestingly, TJ can address the exclusion and related grievances that victims feel due to the harms they suffered as a result of experiencing human rights violations.

Plus to that TJ can address the exclusion and related grievances that communities and social groups experience as a result of targeted violations and structural marginalization as it is a response to systematic or widespread violations of human rights and seeks recognition for victims and promotion of possibilities for peace, reconciliation and social equality.

In a nutshell, the major transitional justice mechanisms to deal with past human rights abuses are criminal prosecutions; truth commissions; reparations and institutional reform. That is why Ethiopia is now working on such bold moves with a view to ensuring peace and security via singling out the burning causes of conflict and skirmish.

Transitional justice processes have repeatedly demonstrated that they can help address grumbles, disagreements and divisions. Specific transitional justice, and supports specific transitional justice processes across developing policy tools, guidance and strategic frameworks and approaches on transitional justice.

Here, assisting with the design, establishment and implementation of transitional justice processes and mechanisms in the country, from corner to corner, has to be well reinvigorated to help the nation come up with meaningful accord, sorority, and assimilation among/ between citizens by seeing off hostility and incongruity for good from the soil.

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

Editorial

Opinion

# A big stride towards a digital economy

As the world becomes increasingly interconnected, a robust digital economy has become a priority for many nations. For this reason, governments have been throwing their full weight behind digitalizing their economy harnessing technologies of the time. Similarly, the Ethiopian government has recognized the significance of harnessing the power of digital technologies to spur economic growth and resilience.

With the leadership’s unwavering resolve, significant strides have been made in building a digital economy in the last few years. Now, sectors are coming up with different plants to chart courses as of the digital Ethiopia ambition. The incumbent also digitized many public services through initiatives like the Ethiopian National Digital ID program. This has improved service delivery.

From the telecom to the banking industry, institutions have also expanded access to digital service delivery. The country has also made significant progress in the development of digital infrastructure. A notable change is in the telecommunication industry. The country has invested heavily in building its telecommunications network, with several major operators offering high-speed internet services to urban and rural areas. This has enabled businesses to operate more efficiently, and individuals to access information and services online.

The government has also been working to develop a skilled workforce that is equipped to take advantage of the opportunities presented by the digital economy. This includes programs promoting digital literacy, coding skills, and entrepreneurship. All in all, the government has accorded high emphasis to fostering a digital economy. The country launched a digital transformation strategy in 2025. The strategy includes five priorities: implementation of a digital ID, digital payments, e-governance, e-commerce and cyber security.

On Wednesday, STRIDE Ethiopia 2024 Expo was kicked off and a panel discussion was held at the Science Museum with Deputy Prime Minister and other high-ranking officials in attendance.

Ethiopia has attached immense attention to digital transformation to facilitate social and economic development, improve public service delivery and create more jobs, Temesegen Tiruneh said.

Speaking at the event hosted by the Ministry of Innovation and Technology Temesgen noted that several initiatives have been designed to realize digital Ethiopia 2025 and to ensure digital economy transformation.

The country has established a digital transformation council to address collaboration gaps between the private and government institutions to facilitate digital transformation and implement cost-efficient systems and others. “Furthermore, the effort requires narrowing the digital divide and literacy gaps.

There is also a call on the private sector to increase participation and investment in the digital economy. With its strong foundation in place, including e-commerce platforms, digital infrastructure, and a growing workforce with skills in demand, there is tremendous potential for growth and innovation.

However, despite the developments and opportunities, there are still several challenges that need to be addressed if the country is to realize its full potential as a digital economy. One of the key challenges is the need for more robust cyber security measures to protect against hacking and data breaches. Additionally, there is a need for more affordable and reliable internet access in rural areas, where many people are still disconnected from the online world.

# Steady economic growth amidst challenges

BY SOLOMON DIBABA

Over the course of the last six years under the reformative government, Ethiopia has managed to record consistent economic progress despite being entangled in a maze of local and international conspiracies, as well as internal and foreign political to dos. Fiscal Year 2023–2024 indicates comparable economic expansion.

The briefing made by the Minister of Planning and Development did not deal with the achievements in the mining sector in detail. This economic sector is one of the pillars of Ethiopia’s economic development that needs to be exploited in greater capacity.

The export sector still has more space to contribute to the national revenue, and although efforts are underway to diversify the sector when it comes to the role it could play in reducing foreign debt which has remained one of the challenges the country is currently facing.

Foreign Direct Investment inflow to Ethiopia has increased as the result of diplomatic activities conducted by the government and relatively attractive incentives in the investment policy of the country.

As Ethiopia is getting ready to join the WTO and to take part in the practical implementation of AfCFTA, policy implementation and meeting the standards of the free trade area require a number of swift activities that need to be accomplished over time.

Ethiopia is also expected to continue using the Lamu Port as an additional outlet to the sea, while the agreement reached with Somaliland is expected to be finalized in a couple of months, enabling the country to have extensive logistics services and maritime facilities from ports in Somaliland.

Ethiopia’s economic growth over several years has significantly contributed to national development in various ways, impacting different sectors and improving the overall well-being of its population. Here are some key contributions of Ethiopia’s economic growth to national development:

Economic growth leads to increased incomes and reduced poverty levels. More people will have access to better housing, nutrition, healthcare, and education, which will improve their quality of life.

Ongoing Investments in infrastructure such as roads, railways, and energy projects have been substantial. Projects like the Addis Ababa-Djibouti Railway and the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) are pivotal in improving transportation and energy supply, fostering economic activities, and fostering regional integration.

Continuous economic growth in Ethiopia is expected to lead to the creation of jobs in various sectors, including agriculture, manufacturing, and services. The expansion of industrial parks and the growth of the manufacturing sector have provided employment opportunities for thousands of Ethiopians.

Growth in the agricultural sector, supported by government initiatives and improved agricultural inputs, has increased food production, enhanced food security, and reduced dependence on food imports. Programs promoting modern farming techniques and irrigation have boosted productivity.

Increased government revenue from economic growth will allow for higher investments in education and healthcare. This has resulted in improved literacy rates, higher school enrollment, better healthcare facilities, and reduced child mortality rates.

Rapid economic growth has contributed to urbanization, with the development of new cities and the expansion of existing ones. This urban growth has been accompanied by housing projects aimed at reducing overcrowding and improving living conditions in urban areas.

Economic policies favoring liberalization and investment have stimulated private sector growth. This has attracted foreign direct investment (FDI), introduced new technologies, and promoted entrepreneurship, further diversifying the economy.

Economic growth in Ethiopia will facilitate an increase in exports, particularly in sectors such as coffee, textiles, and horticulture. Diversification of export products has helped reduce vulnerability to global market fluctuations and increased foreign exchange earnings.

Growth has driven the development of the financial sector, including banking, insurance, and microfinance. Improved access to financial services has supported small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and contributed to economic inclusivity.

Ethiopia’s uninterrupted economic growth will strengthen its position in regional trade and integration initiatives. Participation in regional organizations and trade agreements has enhanced market access and economic cooperation with neighboring countries.

Ethiopia’s economic growth will enable investments in sustainable development projects, including renewable energy and environmental conservation. Ethiopia’s commitment to the National Green Legacy Initiative is evident in projects like GERD and extensive reforestation efforts under the Green Legacy Initiative.

Moreover, Ethiopia’s economic progress has supported social development programs aimed at reducing inequalities and improving social cohesion. Investments in social safety nets, gender equality initiatives, and rural development programs have contributed to more inclusive growth.

Overall, Ethiopia’s economic growth so far has laid a strong foundation for continued national development, fostering a more resilient, diversified, and inclusive economy. However, to sustain this growth and address challenges such as poverty, unemployment, and regional disparities, ongoing reforms and targeted investments are essential. Ethiopia shall indeed prevail, and this is inevitable.

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

## Auspicious progress of agriculture sector

BY BACHA ZEWDIE

Being one of the country’s major economic pillars, the agriculture sector has registered remarkable progress during the past months of this fiscal year. Minister of Agriculture Girma Amente (PhD) presented the nine-month plan implementation report of his Ministry and the subordinate institutions to the Standing Committee on Agriculture Affairs of the House of Representatives. Among the issues presented by the Minister in his report were supply of fertilizer, summer irrigated wheat cultivation, ‘Yelemat Tirufat’ and green legacy.

According to his explanation, in the last nine months, 16.5 million quintals of fertilizer have arrived at the port of Djibouti; of this, 11.7 million quintals were transported to the center.

In addition, the Minister indicated that 50 million one-day-old chicks were planned to be distributed throughout the country and 57 million were distributed above plan set and the ‘Yelemat Tirufat’ program contributed to this success.

On the other hand, in the green legacy program for 2024, more than 7.3 million seedlings are prepared in 115,000 nurseries surpassing the plan set, according to Ethiopian Forestry Development. Nurturing the seedlings is over by now and preparation of transplanting areas is underway. Out of the seedlings nurtured, 3.2 billion are prepared for forestry development.

The standing committee on its part announced that while the production in the sector is maintained, the adjustment in procurement system applied to solve the problem of soil fertilizer supply witnessed in 2023 is encouraging. At the same time, Solomon Lale, Chairman of the Standing Committee said; in the last nine months, the Ministry and the subordinate institutions have carried out many effective and promising works.

The chairman mentioned that the Ministry is doubling its irrigated wheat cultivation work every year, indicating that it has achieved real results in the sector. He pointed out that there is still a lack of supply and rising prices of wheat and wheat products in urban areas. The Minister should solve the problem of mismatch between supply and demand coordinating with other relevant institutions, he stressed.

At the same time, the standing committee pointed out that in the field observation they made, they were able to observe that there are areas where no soil fertilizer has been applied beyond the purchase; For example, they mentioned that the distribution is not being carried out properly in the Amhara region, North Shewa and Gondar zones as well as in central Ethiopia and some areas. Therefore, the standing committee stressed that the Ministry of Agriculture should work on distribution.

They pointed out that the process of providing the purchased soil fertilizer in time and in sufficient quantity to the farmers and distributing it in a fair manner



Soil fertilizer ready for distribution

should be seen and the effectiveness and accessibility of the marketing system developed to avoid theft and illegality should be checked.

In addition, the standing committee said that due to various problems with the imported fertilizer, they were confirmed during the field observation that there is soil fertilizer dumped in warehouses in some unions and cooperatives; and pointed out that the Ministry should do concrete work in solving this problem and distributing it to the farmers as soon as possible.

The chairman pointed out that during the field observation, the standing committee has confirmed that there is a better rice preparation than last year in both autumn and summer irrigated wheat cultivation. He said that work should be focused on creating awareness so that the farmers can produce the best seeds sufficiently, and for the regions to prepare enough land for this.

As stated by the Chairman of the Standing Committee, the Ministry is expected to strengthen the reforms in Yelemat Tirufat, green legacy, summer irrigated wheat, vegetables and fruits and other fields. In these development fields, urgent solutions should be given by looking at gaps in soil fertilization and distribution of best seeds. Moreover, he explained that the standing committee’s field observation of Addis Ababa city and the cities of the Oromia region revealed that the urban agriculture extension package, which was started in the city, was not implemented, because of structural problems, lack of projects, lack of logistics and expertise. Therefore, in solving these problems, the Ministry should act as its next homework.

The Chairman emphasized that as encouraging results have been achieved in the cultivation of irrigated wheat, the same attention should be given to increasing the production of coffee. In order to help with this, he pointed out that there is a need to increase productivity by combining the best practices obtained from the regions and giving special attention to coffee cultivation. In order to better facilitate the trading system of coffee, which is one of the

products that earns foreign exchange, it is necessary to work closely with the relevant stakeholders to bring about a better change.

On the other hand, he pointed out that there is a need to create awareness by introducing the technologies prepared for the sector to the emerging regions to enjoy the promising work done in connection with the food crop self-sufficiency campaign and ensuring food security.

“Regarding acidic soil, encouraging initiatives have been taken by the Ministry, but there is a need to create awareness so that the states can take ownership of it,” he said. He also stated that the work being done by the Ministry to treat acidic soils should be supported by the states.

The Minister of Agriculture explained that, by fixing the procurement system for this year’s season, 20 billion Birr was saved by purchasing soil fertilizer early. In doing so, the problem of supply of soil fertilizer witnessed in the 2023 crop season is solved. In the process so far, 16.5 million quintals of soil fertilizer has arrived at the port of Djibouti and compared to the same period last year, great improvements have been seen. Of the 11.7 million quintals of soil fertilizer imported into the country, 6.5 million quintals have been distributed to the farmers.

He pointed out that they have done many effective works in the nine months to achieve the goal of the year. “We will work to ensure Ethiopia’s food security by strengthening and focusing on the work we have started on increasing production and productivity by expanding model farmers,” he said. In addition, effective works have been done in the fiscal year to produce more seeds and make the best seeds available to the farmers. He also said that they will support the agricultural mechanization centers to be completed and put into operation.

In connection with this, regarding the distribution problem raised by the standing committee, he pointed out that the drivers are trying to overcome the security problem in the Amhara region and some areas to

deliver fertilizer to the farmers despite the difficult conditions. At the same time, illegal activities are being faced during distribution and appropriate measures will be taken against those who carry out the activities.

At the same time, the work done to increase the production and productivity of coffee and tea has achieved encouraging results. In the horticulture sector, the work done to stabilize the market by increasing the production of vegetables and fruits has achieved results, he mentioned.

He further said that during the last harvest season, 17.5 million hectares of land was plowed and 506 million quintals were harvested. The Ministry will take the questions and recommendations raised by the standing committee and focus on remedial measures with the subordinate institutions, he confirmed.

By the same token, the Ministry has made possible price changes to occur, especially on vegetables and fruits, through its activities to increase production and productivity. There was a reduction in the price of chicken and eggs and they will work to increase the production and productivity of coffee and other crops by expanding the experiences on wheat and Yelemat Tirufat, he underlined.

On her part, State Minister of Agriculture, Sofia Kassa (PhD), recalled that 16.5 million quintals of fertilizer entered Djibouti during the current production season surpassing the last year’s same time performance which was 5.6 million quintals. She also stated that 11.7 million quintals of fertilizer have been transported from Djibouti to the country so far and 6.5 million quintals have been distributed as of May 13, 2024.

In this regard, she acknowledged the Standing Committee’s comment that there may be limitations associated with distribution. However, she said that she does not believe that there is any area where no fertilizer has been distributed. Even so, she explained that the Ministry will work hard to streamline the distribution.

# Art & Culture

## Female Education as a cultural challenge in contemporary Africa

BY MULUGETA GUDETA

According to available information, female education remains one of the weakest spots in the national life of most African countries. It is also the weakest link in the emancipation of women from backwardness and poverty. “The current challenges in African culture include the issue of female education, working in bars and restaurants, genital mutilation, self-dependence, the right to property and other rights that need understanding under the global cultural setup.” Women in Africa are still the victims of ignorance and illiteracy and remain marginalized, although tributes are regularly paid for their resilience and the patient acceptance of their fate.

According to other information, the place of women in African cultural settings had always remained one of marginalization and neglect although they have been playing decisive roles in the economic lives of the families. Their major role was confined to producing and reproducing children and bearing the brunt of raising them through backbreaking labor and daily suffering. This is mostly the fate of rural women whose lives have hardly improved while the responsibilities they carried within the family units have doubled and trebled.

“A proper woman in the African tradition has always been imagined within the context of the family; she is expected to accept marriage and have children because marriage is assumed to be the end goal for most African women. A proper woman puts the family interest before even her personal interest.” What is striking with the above-quoted passage is the absence or weak state of female education as legitimate and natural right women should enjoy in the context of their specific cultures. The media and “experts” on women’s issues often pay lip service to their cause and publish research findings that have hardly helped transform the destinies of the oppressed and exploited women in Africa and elsewhere in the developing world.

Education in general and women’s education in particular is generally believed to be a panacea for their chronic distress and lack of hope in society. And yet, as verbal commitments were never backed up with practical efforts, their plights remain unaddressed and their conditions hardly improved. Female education is not given the importance it deserves in the cultural setting of African societies. As was the case for centuries, African women are only expected to marry and produce children as their primary role. This was written in the 21st century but reads as if it was written many centuries ago.

That is why the most pressing cultural issue in Africa today is the education of women. This right has been recently enshrined in the constitutions and other documents about the rights of women. Still, it has mostly been either partially or fully overlooked when it comes to the practical applications of the legal provisions that provide for women’s right to get proper education.

It is not difficult to realize the importance of

**It is not difficult to realize the importance of women’s education in contemporary global or African contexts because it is increasingly considered to constitute the first and most important cultural issue that ensures the proper place women should occupy in their respective societies**

women’s education in contemporary global or African contexts because it is increasingly considered to constitute the first and most important cultural issue that ensures the proper place women should occupy in their respective societies. As many statistics on female education in Africa testify, the situation in this particular area is not cause for satisfaction at all.

According to one of the statistical figures, “23% of girls are out of primary school compared to 19% of boys due to many factors, including poverty, child marriage, the responsibility of household chores, or sheer bias against further educating them. By the time they become adolescent, the exclusion rate for girls is 36% compared to 32% for boys.

The United Nations Educational; Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), institute for Statistics published a report comparing global literacy rates between males and females. for Sub-Saharan Africa in 2016, the adult literacy rate was 72% for males and 57% for females, whereas the youth literacy rate was 79% for males and 72% for females.”

Despite the challenges of female education in Africa, the situation is not altogether bleak as the figures show. Africa has made important advances in women’s education in the post-independence period by overcoming some of the cultural biases that impeded progress in this area. “In Africa, significant progress has been made regarding female to male ratio in educational institutes. The increase in sub-Saharan Africa has been the most prominent. As noted by UNESCO, in 2020, 66% of girls completed their primary education compared to 61% of boys in the sub-Saharan region of Africa.”

The same document has shown that the traditional barriers to women’s education still held sway in societies in addition to new

challenges that emerged in the course of the last few decades. The challenges to female education in Africa are mainly climate change that, according to the same document, climate change has become a major factor contributing to the inaccessibility of quality education for women.”

The second factor is poverty and the gender gap. Poverty is mentioned as the single most formidable challenge girls face in Africa. In African families, where poverty is rampant, female education occupies the last priority, as most of them are obligated to work in the fields and in towns to earn a living for the family while early marriage pauses another formidable hurdle.

Cultural values have hardly changed in Africa in the post-independence period although the spread of education has significantly reduced their negative effects on female education as, “even literate women are likely to showcase their skills through employment due to restrictive cultural roles. These traditional values are a major obstacle to female education.”

Child marriage remains another obstacle to female education. “Fueled by gender inequality, poverty, and traditional values, child marriage is still prevalent in most regions of Africa. Niger, a country in west Africa has the highest rate of child marriage globally as 3 out of 4 girls in this region get married before they turn 18.”

The situation in Ethiopia is a bit different and much more promising if we go by the statistics on female education. The last 30 years have been particularly fruitful in promoting and reforming the national educational system that was long characterized by elitism, urban orientation, and rural neglect. Under the imperial system, female education was never given the attention it deserved. True, there were many initiatives taken to improve the state of education in the country. Education was recognized as being the engine of development at the national and individual levels. Yet, the reality on the ground was completely different and sometimes opposed to official proclamations and government rhetoric.

Education under the military government of the Derg had no doubt made important strides despite the repression that has sapped the very fabric of society and rendered education a luxury rather than a right to be enjoyed. As demoralization set in, and famine and pestilence made life worse than before, the encouraging start-up projects in education, such as the national literacy campaign and others vanished quickly for lack of resources, long-term commitment, and the absence of a feasible program and a vision that could guide it.

The EPRDF government has done better in revamping the education of the rural and urban population by introducing timely reforms and by carrying out a clear program of public education that focused on quantity rather than on quality of education that later on proved to be a long-term challenge without a clear or feasible solution. There

was so to speak a massive drive for educational expansion with thousands of new schools built from the primary to college levels.

Millions of youngsters were sent to schools that accepted them despite shortages of teaching materials. Tens of thousands of teachers at all levels were trained and dispatched to rural and urban areas. Although the educational opportunities were not gender-based or gender-oriented, female students enjoyed or shared almost equal opportunities with their male counterparts. All this was unprecedented in the history of modern Ethiopian education.

“Ethiopia has made a reform on girls’ education with net primary enrollment rate from 51% in 2003-2004 to 95% in 2016/2017. Meanwhile, 53% only had completed primary school, 25% of secondary school, and 10% attended college.” As the above figures show, female enrolment at the primary levels was higher than at secondary levels and worse at college levels. As competition for jobs had become acute, only those at the college levels could find employment while those in the secondary and primary levels were left behind. As the job market became quickly saturated those who left school for various reasons and those who could not make it past the secondary level were left without any hope of continuing their studies or finding jobs. If we look at the figures, there was indeed impressive numerical growth in enrolment for both female and male students. Yet, the long-term consequences of such a hastily implemented massive educational program had serious shortcomings that canceled the initial gains. And in this process, female students were made victims more than their male counterparts as they joined the saturated labor market that did not cater to all of them.

The Chinese used to say that women carried half of the sky to highlight their decisive roles in society without which no nation could aspire to achieve political, social, and economic freedom. This statement becomes even more eloquent when we look at the multifaceted role women play in developing societies in general and in Africa in particular.

Talks about gender equality, gender empowerment, and gender equity abound in traditional as well as social media. Conferences are regularly held in almost all countries to improve the condition and status of women in various societies. Books are being written on the status, condition, and prospects for improving women’s position in rural and urban communities and boosting their role in political, economic, and social engagements.

Yet, at the end of the day, female education always remains unsatisfactory, particularly in rural areas where opportunities and prospects for improvement remain limited. In the years and decades to come, the ongoing educational reform program is believed to address these and other problems while the struggle for quality of education will remain the real and immediate challenge.

# Science & Technology

## Tech companies promoting their products at STRIDE Ethiopia Expo

BY DARGIE KAHSAY

Alif Energy and Tewos Technologies companies, engaged in briquettes manufacturing from weed and in transport technology respectively are attending the STRIDE Ethiopia Expo 2024 at the Science Museum. ‘STRIDE Ethiopia’ Expo 2024 (Science, Technology, Research, Innovation, Digitalization, Entrepreneurship) was officially opened by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) last Saturday at the ICT Park here in Addis Ababa.

While launching the ‘STRIDE Ethiopia’ Expo 2024, PM Abiy stated the importance of collaboration to realize the development of technology and innovations. According to PM Abiy, the expo accentuates the commitment of the government to the development of technologies and innovations. As to him, Ethiopia is ambitiously working to realize its journey towards the digital age and to develop local innovational technologies.

PM Abiy acknowledges the innovational projects he observed at the ICT Park in the agriculture sector, the world-class data centers that can facilitate the construction of smart cities. Recognizing the efforts in the technology sector, PM Abiy underlines the need to accelerate technology transfer, local innovations, and inventions. To him, the world is investing most of its resources in technology and innovations as the sector is critical and a driving force for the overall development of countries.

The expo brings stakeholders from startups, ecosystem builders, corporations, government offices, academia, and development partners, according to the Ministry of Innovation and Technology (MInT). Organized under the theme Science Unlocks, Technology Connects, Innovation Drives” from May 18-26, more than 150 companies and institutions both from the government and private sectors are exhibiting their technological products in various sectors.

Ali Ahmed is the founder and CEO of Alif Energy, a local startup company to works in the renewable energy sector manufacturing briquettes. He is among the exhibitors who promote his company’s products to visitors. While visiting the exhibition, *The Ethiopian Herald* journalists asked Ali about what he was exhibiting at the expo. Ali said that his company, Alif Energy, is a startup company engaged in briquette production from weed, Agri-Products, and waste and its aim is to produce and distribute affordable and clean energy for households and industrial consumers.

Ali came from Awash Town in Afar National Regional State to attend the tech expo. Ali was awarded during the third-round grant award competition in the UNDP-GEF Rural Energy Technology Innovative Ideas organized in 2020, facilitated by the Ministry of Innovation and Technology and other institutions. He was awarded 8,000 USD for his best innovative technology idea in the energy sector. After this award, he started activities to realize his idea into a product and established Alif Energy.



STRIDE Ethiopia Expo 2024 Expo at Science Museum

According to Ali, there is an unnecessary weed that covers over 1.8 million hectares of land in Afar and Somali Regional States. The weed, named Prosopis covers over 1.8 million hectares of land which affects the livelihoods of more than two million pastoralists as it covers the grazing land. The Prosopis weed invaded the arable and grazing land and the weed has no function yet, though it covers a huge land.

The idea of Ali’s Alif Energy Company is to use this weed to produce briquettes. “So far, charcoal was produced from big plans and the traditional way of charcoal production has a serious impact on deforestation and it pollutes the air. Similarly, using charcoal for cooking has healthy problems for women and children,” Ali stated adding that the briquettes that his company started producing plans to solve the above problems. First, the input to produce briquettes is the useless weed and secondly, the manufacturing process is through modern ways.

The production process is eco-friendly, according to Ali. Similarly, the product is decarbonized which makes it suitable for cooking. Briquettes are used for heating, cooking heat, and electricity generation. Biomass briquettes have become popular in developed countries due to their accessibility and eco-friendly import. Smokeless, no sparks, eco-friendly absorb odor, shaped to enhance burning and high calorific value.

Alif Energy already started production of the briquettes with limited capacity. His vision is to become the industry leader in manufacturing quality briquettes. He set a plan of supplying four million tons of briquettes in the next 10 years.

“This is an alternative energy source for cooking that can replace charcoal. Charcoal is common in low-income households in urban areas for cooking, but it has healthy and environmental impacts,” Ali stated.

Considering its impact, especially on deforestation, the government is working to stop the production of charcoal. Hence, this demands alternative energy that can replace charcoal. In addition, the prosopis weed in Afar is expanding affecting agricultural and grazing land. “By using prossopis weed as an input, the idea is to produce a clean product that can replace charcoal for energy in urban areas,” Ali stated.

The idea was his innovation. And the manufacturing process is fully through modern way using modern machines. The product is also fully carbonized. In addition, the price of the product, according to him, is affordable for low-income families. His company started production as the pilot level and is waiting harvest machine to be installed a factory for full production. “I plan to plant 20 small briquettes manufacturing factories in the coming ten years and set a plan to produce four-million-ton product within ten years,” Ali said.

Ali stated that his product was approved and certified by the Environment Protection Authority and the Ministry of Water and Energy also evaluated and approved the quality of the product. In addition, his company agreed with the Development Bank of Ethiopia (DBE) to get manufacturing machines for his business idea which currently is in the process. Next, he plans to make it open to the public through the capital market.

Participating in the expo has helped him to promote his product and to create connections with other companies and researchers engaged in the technology and energy sectors. “I have participated at the Startup Ethiopia Exhibition, and it is the second time to participated at national exhibitions. It has a lot of benefits for startup businesses,” Ali said.

Amanuel Alemayehu is a Software

Development Expert at Tewos Technology Company. Tewos Technology was also attending the STRIDE Ethiopia Expo 2024 showcasing its products. Tewos Technologies engaged in application and software development mainly in the transport sector. At the exhibition, it exhibits ET Bolo, Tene Mekina and Yene Delivery products.

Tewos Technology specializes in digitalizing and automating manual works in in the transport sector. According to Amanuel, ET Bolo application is the major product of the company mainly developed to ease the controlling of inspected vehicles in Addis Ababa.

Amanuel stated that Addis Ababa has more than 700,000 vehicles. There are 62 certified vehicle inspection service providers in the capital. The Addis Ababa City’s Transport Bureau needs real-time data on these examined vehicles of the city. However, due to the manual system, it was tough to easily manage it. The ET Bolo application was developed to easily manage this problem.

For him, the new system has integrated the vehicle inspection service providers of the city with the city’s Transport Bureau which able the bureau to easily access the inspected vehicles of the city. The system was functional 10 months ago and so far, over 410 thousand examined vehicles have been registered in the system. The company also developed Yene Mekina Mobile Application to remind the owner to renew the services of his vehicle. In the future, Tewos Technology has a plan to develop appropriate applications to help the traffic management system.

Both exhibitors stated that their participation in the exhibition helped their companies to promote their products, to discuss with other innovators and to create business linkages.

Society



Ensuring women’s benefits through facilitating opportunities

BY MENGISTEAB TESHOME

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1948, states that everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for health and well-being, including food, clothing, housing, medical care, and necessary social services. The General Assembly resolution titled “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” also asserts that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is one of the greatest global challenges and priorities and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development. Of all the declarations and conventions, enhancing the inclusion and benefits of women is central and a matter that cannot be ignored or left unnoticed.

However, despite the numerous promising steps witnessed over the years in ensuring women’s economic benefits, significant gaps still remain in narrowing gender-based discrimination. Several women continue to face discrimination, violence, and denied access to education and health services, leading to economic disparities and gender inequality across countries of the world.

It is common to see qualified women face employment discrimination based on their gender. They are compelled to remain at home and rear children instead of realizing their full potential, and contribute positively to their country’s overall development.

A number of research works and studies conducted by scholars around the globe also indicate the scope and the magnitude of the challenge. For instance, according to General Gender Wage Gap Statistics realized by Forbes in March 2024, globally, women earn sixteen percent less than men on average. House chores which are totally considered as women’s task are not appraised, not treasured or valued. Even the representation of women in managerial positions is minimal. Globally, on average, only twenty-four percent of women hold parliamentary seats.

In terms of education, even though there are some improvements in accessing education,



girls of developing countries are still facing numerous obstacles due to traditional practices, such as forced early marriage and gender-based violence. This in turn, is affecting their educational opportunities. What is more, one in three women at least once in her lifetime encounter physical or sexual abuse. As a result of these challenges, girls estimated to be over 130 million are forced to be out of school across the globe. This reality evidently limits women’s journey to academic advancement and equal benefits.

Ethiopia, with the intention to promote gender equality and enhance the overall benefits of women in all areas, has been undertaking multidimensional activities. By adopting international, regional and national conventions, it has been endeavoring to enhance women’s equal participation in the social, economic and political developments of the country and benefiting them. The success registered so far though is encouraging, compared to the magnitude and the scope of the problems; it calls for more attention and action.

As part of this effort, recently, the Addis Ababa City Administration Women and Children Social Affairs Bureau has provided support to 1051 women drawn from all sub cities in the capital and have no income of their own.

The Bureau, by purchasing over ten million

Birr worth items, supported women to begin their own business, generate income and improve their own and family livelihood. The women also expressed their happiness and readiness to change their lives with the support they have received.

Among these beneficiaries, Degenesh Kedir, resident of Bole Sub City Woreda 5 and a mother of three, is the one. As Degenesh stated to EPA, following her recent accidental fall occurred in one of the blue days while carrying out her daily activities, she was compelled to end up in a wheelchair.

This time, even though her husband, who is a laborer, has been struggling to put bread on the table and support the family, her own and family life went from bad to worse.

Luckily, at this time when she cannot walk freely by herself and go out and work, she received a support that beamed a ray of hope for the family.

Now, using the bakery oven she received, she intends to bake bread and sell for the surrounding community where she resides thereby lessen the burden of her husband and contribute her share. She also has a dream to expand her business by saving from her income. The woman, who was once in trouble to buy bread, has now set a plan to bake bread, sell and generate her own income. Degenesh also expressed her gratitude for supporters.

The other beneficiary of the support is Meaza Aklilu. Meaza, resident of Cherkos Sub City, and a mother of four was leading her life through moving from houses to houses and carrying house chores such as cooking, laundering and ironing clothes and several similar activities. By performing these activities she has taught her children and let them get employed. And now, Meaza dreams big- to bake Injera, sell and earn income using the injera baking stove provided to her. She also aspires to expand her business, create jobs for fellow citizens, save money and to become self-reliant economically.

Maereg Kassu, a resident of Addis Ketema Sub-City, is the other beneficiary of the support. As she too has mobility problem, she prefers to receive support that takes into consideration her problem. Thus, she prefers to get an onion chopping machine that allows her to work accordingly and generate income. She too plans to save and open a small fast-food house, demonstrating that with courage and interest, one can improve their life.

“Everyone, if he has a desire and determination to work and change, will achieve his goal. He can reach a great level; no matter in what situation he was in. I too will improve my future using the onion chopper I received. I have a plan to open a small restaurant,” she said optimistically, hoping her dream to be a reality.

Addis Ababa City Administration Women and Children Social Affairs Bureau’s Women Sector Deputy Head, Netsanet Daba on her part said that the program targets to address women’s economic challenges, to increase their participation and improve their benefits. The program has been running since the past four years and so far, it has benefited over five thousand women.

Netsanet emphasized that empowering women is crucial to the health and social development of families, communities, and countries. When women lead safe, fulfilled, and productive lives, they can reach their full potential.

She also urged stakeholders to fulfill their social responsibilities to bring positive change in the lives of citizens and eradicate poverty through various approaches.

# Ethiopia’s aspiration...

Recently, the Ministry of Tourism (MoT) announced that Ethiopia has set a target of two million international visitors for this fiscal year (2024).

MoT Minister Amb. Nasise Chali told Eye on Africa that the tourism sector is top in the list of government priority. The country has a favorable policy for the private sector to expand their business and invest in the tourism sector.

The government itself has been heavily investing in tourism infrastructure like roads, airports, recreational centers, electricity, drinking water and others.

“In some areas, we are building destinations and tourist facilities. So, these things can make us competitive and help us bring new products to market in 2024.”

The U.S and Europe remained the country’s top core markets, but there are a growing interest from Asia and the Middle East as well, which is fantastic. The country is trying to penetrate new markets, she said.

“The country has seen close to 1.2 million international tourists or visitors in 2023. That is actually a better number when we compare it to the previous years,” she added.



As to Amb. Nasise, the country has unique products which are nowhere else to be found.. For instance, one can see everything in Ethiopia as it is an ancient country with a very long history and culture. And visitors can come and visit Ethiopia all year round.

Moreover, Ethiopia has unique products that make the country a competitive destination in Africa. The past four or five years, the sector has become the top priority sector for the government.

The country has been aggressively working to explore new sources of market. It has many unique assets to make a sector a competitive tourist destination. “So, we have to encourage people to come to Ethiopia because it is the cradle of

humankind and everyone’s origin is from it.” She underscored.

As Ethiopia strives to attract more tourists, the government is also committed to promoting sustainable tourism practices. Efforts are being made to preserve the country’s natural and cultural heritage, minimize the environmental impact of tourism, and support local communities.

What is more, with incentives like tax breaks and streamlined regulations, the government is making it easier than ever to pour money into the country’s growing tourism sector. The national tourism development strategy is also guiding the country towards its goal of attracting more international visitors and showcasing its rich cultural heritage.

In addition, when Mother Nature shows off, Ethiopia is front and center. With breathtaking landscapes and a commitment to sustainable tourism, this country is a playground for nature lovers and eco-conscious travelers alike.

Ethiopia’s breathtaking landscapes and rich cultural heritage have the potential to draw in hordes of eager tourists. However, though there are a lot of efforts and encouraging outcomes are registered in advancing the sector, poor infrastructure and limited accessibility remain significant hurdles. Addressing these challenges by improving roads, expanding public transportation networks, and enhancing connectivity to remote regions can unlock the country’s tourism potential.

In sum, Ethiopia’s aspiration to attract more international tourists is driven by a desire to showcase the country’s unique attractions, cultural heritage, and warm hospitality to the world. With a focus on sustainable tourism practices and government support, Ethiopia has the potential to become a top tourist destination in Africa. The tourism sector has been steadily growing, with more travelers choosing to explore its unique offerings beyond the beaten path.



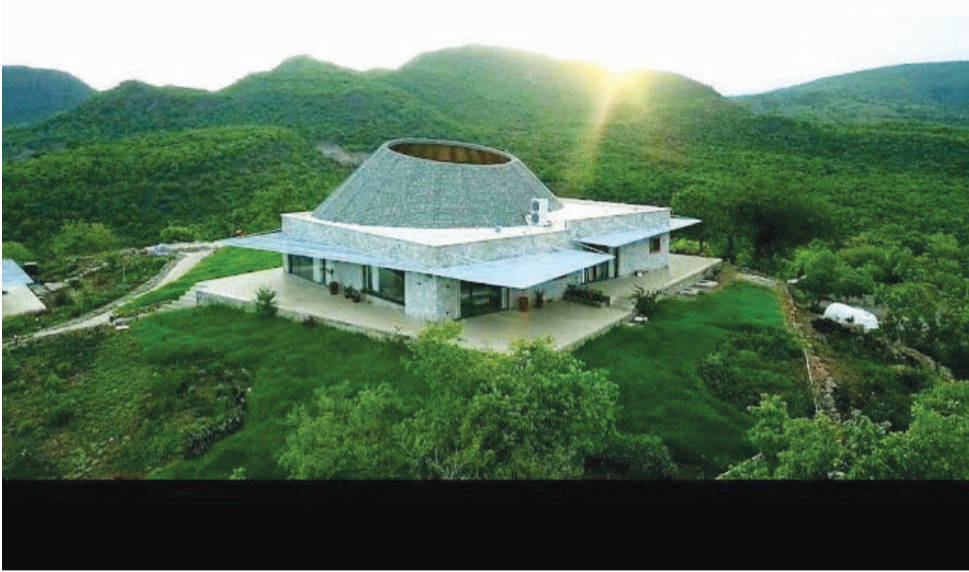
# Ethiopia’s aspiration to attract more tourists

BY TEWODROS KASSA

Ethiopia, known for its rich cultural heritage, stunning landscapes, and diverse wildlife, has been making efforts to attract more tourists to the country. In recent years, the Ethiopian government has been focusing on developing the tourism sector as a means to boost the economy and promote sustainable development. With its unique attractions and warm hospitality, Ethiopia has the potential to become a leading tourist destination in Africa.

The country offers a unique travel experience. From the ancient Rock-Hewn churches of Lalibela to the breathtaking Simien Mountains, tourists can explore a diverse range of attractions that cater to all interests. The rich history of Ethiopia, dating back to thousands of years, provides visitors with a glimpse into the country’s fascinating past.

Thus, one of the key factors that set Ethiopia apart from other African destinations is its cultural diversity. With over 80 different



Halala Kella Resort

cultural and linguistic groups speaking more than 80 languages, Ethiopia is a mosaic of cultures, traditions, and customs. Tourists can immerse themselves in the vibrant local communities and learn about the country’s unique heritage.

In this regard, the Ethiopian government has

been actively working to promote tourism and attract more visitors to the country. Initiatives such as improving infrastructure, simplifying visa procedures, and promoting the country’s attractions through marketing campaigns have helped to raise Ethiopia’s profile as a tourist destination. The government has also been investing in

training programs to enhance essential skills that hospitality workers need to have and improve the overall visitors’ experience.

To ensure sustainable tourism growth, it is crucial to engage local communities and prioritize environmental conservation. By actively involving communities in tourism initiatives, Ethiopia can create a sense of ownership and pride among residents while also preserving cultural authenticity. Additionally, implementing eco-friendly practices and conservation efforts can safeguard Ethiopia’s natural wonders for future generations to enjoy.

On the other hand, experts accentuated that in today’s digital world, a strong online presence is vital for attracting tourists. By leveraging social media platforms, creating engaging content and utilizing targeted digital marketing campaigns, Ethiopia can showcase its diverse offerings to global audience. Stunning visuals, authentic storytelling, and interactive experiences can all play a role in capturing the attention and interest of potential travelers.

See Ethiopia’s aspiration ... page 15