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The NEC awards candidacy certificates to presidential and vice-presidential aspirants



- ✓ Words of wisdom and advises were expressed at the event
- ✓ Their documents were received and processed earlier
- ✓ Taiwan pledges financial support for the elections

Continue on Page 2



President unveils the 4th Political Program of the KULMIYE Party Policy Programme



Six main key pillars are prioritized in the 4th KULMIYE Party Policy Programme

Continue on Page 2

No one can subvert the aspirations of Somaliland, says Boqor Buurmadow



Continue on Page 3

Somali region elders in Ethiopia urge for peace, call Somalis to 'refrain' involving in war as conflict rhetoric in the Horn escalates



Continue on Page 3

Somaliland tells diplomats in Hargeisa MoU with Ethiopia finalized, formal legal agreement imminent



Somaliland Ministry for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation said Dr. Essa Kayd, Minister of Foreign Affairs, addressed the international diplomatic missions in Hargeisa today, providing updates on significant regional issues.

Continue on Page 2

Police chief presides over graduation ceremony of 365 officers



Continue on Page 4

We shall never negotiate on Ethiopia's sovereignty, honor – PM Abiy



Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed has unequivocally stated that Ethiopia will never negotiate on its independence and dignity. The Prime Minister made the remark at an event organized to commemorate the Day of Sovereignty, which was celebrated,

Continue on Page 2

Energy and Minerals minister receives UAE investors



Continue on Page 4

Put the knowledge earned to good use, Central Bank chief urges employees



By M.A. Egge
In the city of Hargeisa, an event was held to inaugurate the office of exchange of financial

Continue on Page 3

Information minister receives celebrated songstress Hibo Noura



Continue on Page 4

Inside

Government closes down Egyptian Cultural Library, staffs get expulsion orders [Continue on page 4](#)

The NEC awards candidacy certificates to presidential and vice-presidential aspirants



By M.A. Egge

This week testifies to the readiness in preparations for the electioneering processes for the upcoming presidential and vice-presidential elections which will be held simultaneously with that of the political parties.

The Somaliland National Elections Commission (NEC) on Saturday awarded the candidacy certificates to the three presidential aspirants who are vying for the top executive post in the country.

The incumbent H.E. Musa Bihi Abdi who is the flag-bearer of the ruling party KULMIYE arrived at the headquarters of the elections body in the morning while quite jovial.

So too did his challengers Abdillahi Mohamed Abdillahi Irro and Feisal Ali Hussein of respectively both WADDANI and UCID political parties arrived at about the same time to receive their certificates of candidature.

All were accompanied by their running mates.

Upon the presentations words of wisdom were expressed by the Chair of the commission Mr. Musa Hassan who quipped that the air of camaraderie depicted should be also seen all throughout the elections period such that the processes may be without flows.

The Head of State on his part noted

that pledge should be made that the elections would be entered without incidences. He further cautioned that since the nation had so many foes, things that would foment or catalyze animosity should be totally shunned.

The WADDANI aspirant Abdillahi Irro said that he welcomed his fellow aspirin candidates and pointed out that he was ready for the elections hence would standby any directives from NEC.

On his part, UCID aspiring candidate Feisal Ali observed that the flagbearers should prevail upon their supporters who spew virulent words otherwise they would be seen to abetting the wrongs.

The NEC received on Thursday the candidacy documents for Presidential and Vice-Presidential candidates from the three National Parties, marking a crucial step toward the upcoming elections to be held on the 13th of November this year.

The Somaliland National Electoral Commission (NEC) had conducted a lottery draw for Political Parties and Associations to establish the order of their listings on the ballot papers for the Presidential and National Party Elections set for November 13, 2024.

This is after the final list of political

associations and parties eligible to participate in the National Party Election was availed, an announcement which was a significant milestone in the electoral process.

Meanwhile, Taiwan had revealed earlier in the week that it would eke in support in funding the elections. NEC welcomed Taiwan's Ambassador Allen Chen Lou, to their HQ.

Present was Somaliland's Ambassador to Taiwan, Mohamed Haji.

The NEC briefed them on preparations for the upcoming elections whereupon Amb. Allen pledged Taiwan's financial support for the elections.

In related news, the National Electoral Commission witnessed the administering of oath to regional and district election officials at the wrapping up of a training that they underwent.

The Chairman of the commission, Musa Hassan, urged the officials of the regions and districts of the national commission to ensure diligence in the performance of their duties.

He reminded them that the oath they undertook was a solemnity pledge whose responsibility they only bore upon their own selves.

President unveils the 4th Political Program of the KULMIYE Party Policy Programme

By M.A. Egge

The President of the Republic of Somaliland who is the presidential candidate and flag-bearer of the ruling KULMIYE party H.E. Musa Bihi Abdi participated in a large event that unveiled the 4th Policy Programme of the KULMIYE party for the years 2024 to 2029.

The policy paper has a programme that focuses its priorities on six broad pillars that would cater for; Foreign Affairs, Internal and External Security, Economy, Production, Livestock, Fisheries, Social Services, Islamic Practice, Development & Strengthening of Democracy and Environmental Management and Climate Change.

The event was also attended by the vice president and the senior leadership of the KULMIYE party, women, youth, academics and eminent personalities and guests.

The policy programme was presented and analyzed at length in the meeting, giving an elaborative pointer on the way forward for the party's programme by the heads of the committee that as charged with the task, chair Abdiweli Sufi and Farhan Adan Haybe hence interpreted the six major pillars in focus.

Members of the leadership of the KULMIYE party consisting of the chairman of party Hon. Mohamed Kahin Ahmed, the first vice-chairman of the party, Mr. Abdiaziz Mohamed Samale, the third deputy, and the candidate for the position of the third vice-president Hon. Hassan Mohamud Hassan Saad Saajin and the general secretary, Mr. Faisal Abdirahman Madar, who spoke in turns, praised the new policy program of the party as it enters the general presidential and

political party elections urging the populaces to acknowledge and fathom it.

The Ministers of Livestock development and Health the Honourables Saaed Sulub Mohamed and Hassan Mohamed Ali Gaafadi took the opportunity to strongly counter the statements of the leaders of the opposition WADDANI political party on multi-prong issues that have been aired in the recent days.

They characterized the opposition WADDANI leaders as those who lack public trust.

On his part the Vice-President H.E. Abdirahman Abdilahi Ismail (Saili'i) welcomed the party's new policy program and thanked the members who prepared it.

The Head of State H.E. Musa Bihi Abdi hailed the committee that was in charge of the task of formulating the party's policy program, and described it as one that the populaces can positively appreciate and deem as progressively tangible. He pointed out that KULMIYE programmes differed from the rest of the political parties and organizations for they are aligned to legal tenets and adheres to ethical standards.

He registered his surprise that the WADDANI presidential aspirant Abdirahman Irro would state that he was a candidate of both his political party and a political organization. He wondered whether the move by the WADANI aspirant was ethical and left the query to the institution charged with the election management and the members of public at large to interpret.

He called for the adherence of expected legal tenets and ethical standards as prescribed in the election regulations that discern such intricacies.

Somaliland tells diplomats in Hargeisa MoU with Ethiopia finalized, formal legal agreement imminent

The Ministry said Dr. Essa Kayd informed the diplomats he met with that the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Somaliland and Ethiopia "is finalized, and a formal legal agreement is imminent."

This is the second major statement about the MoU from Somaliland after its announcement in February this year that Somaliland was "on course without any wavering, and remain seized" of the implementation of the MoU, and that a technical team, a team of international legal experts and a high-level advisory group to advise and guide the process has been appointed.

Although Ethiopia has since been largely quiet about any practical progress on the MoU, in a resolution issued in January, members of both the Executive and the Central Committee of the ruling Prosperity

Party (PP) said that the party has decided to bring the MoU "to a practical agreement" while simultaneously giving attention to the principles of give and take to secure additional options to port access with other neighboring countries. The ruling party maintained the MoU was a testament to "Ethiopia's position for regional economic and cultural ties." The signing of the MoU on 01 January 2024, granting Ethiopia access to the sea in return for international recognition for Somaliland, has escalated tensions in neighboring Somalia, which argued that the MoU "violates its sovereignty and territorial integrity". Two rounds of talks facilitated by Türkiye aimed at easing tensions between Ethiopia and Somalia have concluded without an outcome. The tensions between the two neighboring countries have since



peaked momentum, leaving a trace of doubts on the likelihood of a third round of talk.

Egyptian forces in Somalia During the briefing today, Dr. Kayd also expressed the Somaliland government's deep concerns regarding the presence of Egyptian military forces in neighboring Somalia.

In July this year, Somalia's cabinet formally approved the implementation of a defense agreement with Egypt, finalizing a deal shrouded in secrecy since its signing in January 2024.

Egypt has last month sent military officers and heavy equipment to Mogadishu, Somalia as part of a

bigger deployment that media reports said could involve up to 10,000 Egyptian soldiers in Somalia. The move was met with a warning from the Ethiopian government that the transition from the African Union transition mission in Somalia (ATMIS) to a new peace support mission is "fraught with dangers" to the region.

Ethiopia also warned that it "cannot stand idle while other actors are taking measures to destabilize the region." Ethiopia is vigilantly monitoring developments in the region that could threaten its national security, according to a statement released by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Egypt's decision to deploy its forces further complicated not only regional dynamics, but also relations within Somali political actors. This week, Somali MPs from

the South West State opposed the deal between Somalia and Egypt, warning it could lead to a "dangerous situation" in the region. The MPs issued a statement calling for careful consideration of international agreements. They warned that certain agreements could "bring the 'Nile issue' to Somalia" and potentially "lead to a war in the Horn of Africa."

Dr. Kayd told the diplomatic mission today that the deployment of Egyptian forces in Somalia "is contributing to proxy conflicts in the region."

Earlier today, Dr. Kayd announced that the Somaliland government "has decided to permanently close the "Egyptian Cultural Library" in Hargeisa due to serious security concerns. All staff have been ordered to leave the country within 72 hours." AS

We shall never negotiate on Ethiopia's sovereignty, honor – PM Abiy



under the theme: "National Harmony to Ensuring Sovereignty in All Spheres".

On the occasion, the Prime Minister emphasized that the name "Ethiopia" is inextricably linked to freedom, honor, and excellence.

Ethiopia has never initiated an invasion of another country throughout its ancient history, the premier underscored.

However, he added that throughout its history, Ethiopia has courageously defended itself against foreign invaders, turning back those who have dared to threaten its sovereignty with humiliation.

"We will not be touched! However, we will humiliate anyone who dares to threaten us in order to dissuade them. We won't negotiate with anyone on Ethiopia's sovereignty and dignity."

He emphasizes that when other nation seeks peace; when they require our professional assistance; not only in Africa but also in other parts of the world, it is our tradition to make sacrifices for the peace and harmony of humanity.

Premier Abiy also emphasized that the Ministry of Defense and its personnel are not only well-versed in this practice but also deeply committed to it as a fundamental part of their lives.

The premier mentioned that Ethiopia has never engaged any conflicts with its neighboring countries in the past six years, explaining that the peace and security of these neighboring nations contribute significantly to Ethiopia's own peace, security, and successful development.

He emphasized that the people near and far are Ethiopians. We don't

need things owned by others. But if anyone seek to harm or influence us will be met with shame and returned in accordance with our traditions.

The Prime Minister stated, "We Ethiopians do not have any desire to take others' belongings and engage in conflict with any country," reiterating Ethiopia's commitment to ensuring sovereignty in all spheres.

He highlighted that Ethiopia's defense force is an army that serves not only Ethiopia but also the broader region, emphasizing that this army should not only maintain peace but also contribute to accelerating development.

The Prime Minister called upon all Ethiopians, regardless of their profession, to work diligently and contribute to the prosperity of the country, per ENA.

The thirteenth Month of Pagume, which marks Ethiopia's transitional period, has been commemorated nationally under various themes since the reforms.

Pagume 3 (September 8, 2024) is commemorated as a "Sovereignty Day", nationwide to highlight the importance of National Sovereignty in all spheres of the country which is critically vital to ensuring prosperity.

No one can subvert the aspirations of Somaliland, says Boqor Buurmadow



By M.A. Egge

Maverick traditional leader Boqor Osman aw Mohamoud popularly known as Buurmadow has stated that as far as the country's and its people' aspirations was concerned, no one would be able to subvert.

The traditional leader gave the sentiments as he triumphantly jetted back after several years into the country owing to Presidential Pardon extended him recently.

He noted in one of his speeches, as he addressed several similar receptions that toasted to his safe return, that he was not able to swiftly return to the country owing to the constitutional requirement that whoever visits Mogadishu was not to be allowed back in the country unless granted pardon by the state. He said that it was because of the legal aspect of the fact that he had no other option except seek and wait for a pardon.

He pointed out that he was thankful

that even after all the rhetoric he spewed in the media over the years including sharp words against the head of State, "the President had not even once scoffed at him"

He received an unprecedented tumultuous reception, not seen accorded in a long while to a citizen, jetting back from abroad.

He noted that, "The aspirations of the people in reasserting Somaliland's independence and sovereignty were a people's driven resolution that cannot be subverted or changed by anyone or anything at all".

He made it clear that there is nothing at all for Somalilanders in Mogadishu that can ever be worthwhile for a reunion.

On the other hand, Boqor Buurmadow prayed for the community of Somaliland and prayed that their hearts and minds may be united and a harmonious cohesion may prevail in the country.

Put the knowledge earned to good use, Central Bank chief urges employees



instruments of the Central Bank of Somaliland.

The inauguration ceremony was attended by the Minister of Financial Development, the Governor of the Central Bank and other dignitaries. The Deputy Governor of the Central Bank of Somaliland Mr. Abdirahman Mohamed Abdillahi spoke in depth about the importance of the office for the country's financial system, noting that the new exchange would greatly contribute to the development and efficiency of the financial system management in the country.

The director of the Exchange office, Mr. Abdinasir Mohamed Jama, gave

a brief and complete report on how the office works and the technical process it uses.

He also emphasized that the office will facilitate financial exchange in the country, which will enhance the coherence and efficiency of financial institutions in the country.

On the occasion, the Minister of Finance, Hon. Saad Ali Shire, also made important remarks and highlighted the important role that the office will play in the development of the economy and the payment process.

The minister underpinned the importance it would have in the process of connecting the country's

financial institutions, which will play a major role in the growth and quality of the country's financial institutions.

Dr. Edna Adan and the top leaders of the country's leading banks also spoke about the importance of the office for the growth and openness of the country's economy.

Finally, the Governor of the Central Bank of Somaliland, Dr. Ali Abdillahi Dahir, officially inaugurated this office, explaining the importance of the exchange office to the financial system of the country, the openness of the economy, and the project which would be the basis for financial development in the future.

Somali region elders in Ethiopia urge for peace, call Somalis to 'refrain' involving in war as conflict rhetoric in the Horn escalates



Elders from the Somali regional state in Ethiopia have called on Somalis to "refrain from involving themselves in a war that does not concern them" during a recent discussion on Horn of Africa affairs. The meeting, led by elder Gerad Kulmiye Gerad Mohammed, addressed current regional issues and emphasized the importance of maintaining stability.

The elders discussed Ethiopia's efforts to secure sea access, describing it as an initiative for collective growth. Gerad emphasized that "anything harmful to Ethiopia also harms the people of the Somali region," highlighting the interconnected nature of regional interests.

"The primary agenda is safeguarding the national interests of the country," Gerad stated. He cautioned that neighboring countries should avoid actions that might "drag the Horn of Africa into a

crisis." The discussion touched on the historical ties between Ethiopia and Somalia.

"Despite the border dividing the people of the Somali region and Somalia, we remain brothers and should preserve our shared history of unity," Gerad remarked.

He noted that Ethiopia has hosted over 500,000 Somali refugees, with many Somalis studying at universities in Addis Abeba and Jigjiga.

The elders expressed concern about "external forces" potentially destabilizing the region.

Gerad urged the people of Somalia to "oppose those forces," noting that they show little interest in confronting groups like al-Shabaab. Another elder, Ughaz Ali, advocated for regional dialogue, stating, "Somalia should engage in dialogue with its neighbors rather

Continue on page 4

Energy and Minerals minister receives UAE investors



By M.A. Egge

The Minister of Energy and Minerals Hon. Abdillahi Farah Abdi, while flanked by the Deputy Minister of Energy and Minerals Saeed Ahmed Jibril and the Director General of the Ministry Mohamed Osman Saeed received the Emirates Industrial Laboratory Company.

The company is UAE-owned and is interested in making investments in

the production of different minerals in Somaliland in coordination with the Ministry of Energy and Minerals to develop a Laboratory to analyze minerals.

The two sides discussed how to work together to increase production in the field of minerals and energy in the country and as an international market.

They also focused on how to

develop the mineral analysis laboratory, which plays an important role in the work and development of the sector hence agreements were made to upgrade and modernize it. Similarly in agreement was to strengthen the relationship between the two sides, as well as to promote the cooperation between the ministry and the Emirati company and how to invest in the country's minerals.

Information minister receives celebrated songstress Hibo Noura



By M.A. Egge

The Minister of Information, Culture and National Guidance Hon. Ali Hassan Mohamed (Ali Mareehaan) and the Deputy Minister Said Hassan Habane, received the celebrated artiste and vocalist Hibo Mohamed Guddoon (Hibo Noura) at the Ministry's headquarters.

The singer who visited the headquarters of the Ministry of

Information was conducted to a tour through the various sections of both the television and radio of the nation, nostalgically to her, its where she started her long career into artistic stardom several decades ago.

She was moved when she was shown the old studio and her hit songs were played.

She emotionally recalled, "I was on this exact spot where the minister and his deputy were sitting as I was

being interviewed at the start of my career while I was a 15 year old girl, and it was not as dazzling and beautiful as it is today".

"This testifies to what nationhood and good governance is", she observed.

"Somaliland is the place where I was born and I took the first step. Then I was transferred to Mogadishu. I thank the Minister of Information for having me recollect all these".

Minister Ali thanked the songstress for her visit to the ministry, and spoke about the golden role of Somali art and Radio Hargeisa.

He noted, "This Radio Hargeisa was the factory that produced celebrated artists and art, here was the voice of Somali speaking world wherever they were, and this is the same table where upon the recordings were made, where you came out of as a child, your art is archived is in the ministry together with those of your contemporaries".

Government closes down Egyptian Cultural Library, staffs get expulsion orders

State reveals legalizing MoU agreement with Ethiopia is imminent

By M.A. Egge

The government of the Republic of Somaliland has ordered the official closure of the Hargeisa Cultural Library of the Egyptian government in the capital of Somaliland, Hargeisa.

The government also announced that the memorandum of understanding deal signed between the Republic of Somaliland and the federal government of Ethiopia has been successfully finalized and that a formal legal treaty is imminent.

The revelations were made by the Foreign minister Hon. Dr. Issa Keyd

Mohamoud.

He was categorical that, "The only remaining thing on the MoU is to formally treatise the agreement".

On the government's decision to close the Egyptian Cultural Library in Hargeisa the minister stated, "Today I am announcing a decision by the government of the Republic of Somaliland in closing the Cultural Library of Egypt, which is located in Hargeisa, the capital of Somaliland". He said further, "The government of Somaliland has identified security concerns that pose a threat to the nation, so the Ministry of Foreign

Affairs and International Cooperation has decided that it is necessary to permanently close the Cultural Library of Egypt, and that the staffers are ordered to leave the country within 72 hours".

The minister said that the decision was not an easy one to make but the safety of the citizens of Somaliland as paramount.

He said, "This decision is not easy, but the safety of our citizens is an important national responsibility".

"We know that Egypt has weapons shipped to the government of Mogadishu which we believe is

Somali region elders in Ethiopia urge for peace, call Somalis to 'refrain' involving in war as conflict rhetoric in the Horn escalates

than distant countries in order to solve problems peacefully."

He warned against the influence of foreign entities that might not have the region's best interests in mind.

The meeting comes amid rising tensions in the Horn of Africa following the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding on January 1, 2024, between Ethiopia and Somaliland, which granted Ethiopia sea access in exchange for recognizing Somaliland.

Reports of Egypt sending military officers and heavy equipment to Somalia have further complicated the situation, with Somali MPs from the South West State opposing the deal between Somalia and Egypt,

warning it could lead to a "dangerous situation" in the region.

The MPs issued a statement calling for careful consideration of international agreements. They warned that certain agreements could "bring the 'Nile issue' to Somalia" and potentially "lead to a war in the Horn of Africa."

More recently, the President of Somalia's Southwest State, Lafta-Gareen, expressed opposition to the deployment of "foreign military forces," emphasizing the need for Somalia to manage its own affairs. According to media reports, Lafta-Gareen "made it clear that his region would not accept the presence of Egyptian troops." **AS**

Police chief presides over graduation ceremony of 365 officers



By M.A. Egge

The Chief Commander of the National Police Force Major General Mohamed Adan Saqadi presided over the passing out graduation parade of 365 police officers who have just completed their course at the Lihle Police Academy at Mandera.

The police chief urged the policemen to work towards the guaranteeing of peaceful security and stability of the country, and to respectfully adhere to the laws and regulations of the police force.

He stressed that they should do their best to serve the members of the public as per etiquette and protect the rights of the citizenry such that the police can be a reliable and fair force and earn public trust.

He pointed out the importance of the police to being efficient and

practicing police ethics as per expectations and work in tandem with the populaces hence strike a chord of good rapport in harnessing good relations for impeccable public services to be realized and achieved.

On the other hand, the Major General encouraged the members of the police force to be an active participant in the development and planning of security plans, to ensure that the police force establishment becomes a formidable force that can be dependable in the dispensation and execution of their onerous services to the nation.

The police graduation ceremony witnessed the attendance of senior officials including the training commandant and top sectional commanders of the police department.

harmful to the security and stability of the country, so we have decided to expel the purported librarians from the country whom we believe to be with sinister motives".

Minister Isse Keyd said that the government of the Republic of Somaliland has written an official letter to the government of Egypt, informing them of this decision.

In this regard, the ministry has informed the relevant agencies including the Immigration department and the Somaliland National Intelligence Agency to monitor the closure of the Library in a safe manner and the expulsion of the called librarians from the country. The minister however pointed out, "Much as the Government of the Republic of Somaliland is committed to continue its friendly relations with the Arab Republic of Egypt, the safety of the citizens and security concerns of the country is of great importance hence we

believe that this decision is in the interest of the country and region as a whole."

He cautioned that as far as safeguarding the stability and security of the nation was concerned the government will take any measures to maintain it at all times from any violators.

Meanwhile, the Ethiopian government on Tuesday presented its achievements in the year 2016 in the Ethiopian edition which prominently had the picture of the President of Somaliland H.E. Musa Bihi Abdi and the Prime Minister of Ethiopia Abiy Ahmed Ali during the signing of the agreement.

He had announced through his X handle that the memorandum of understanding deal signed between the Republic of Somaliland and the federal government of Ethiopia has been successfully finalized and that **Continued on page 5** imminent.

Seven political organizations make final list to enter elections

By M.A. Egge

The National Electoral Commission has received the final list of the political organizations which will compete with the three existing political parties in the forthcoming elections for the top three slots of the national official parties for a ten-year period. The national committee for the registration and verification of political associations and approval

of political parties presented seven names of political organizations which would formally enter the race in the said elections that are scheduled to be held on the 13th of November 2024.

The presidential and vice presidential elections would be simultaneously held on the same day.

1. Barwaaqo Association
2. Talo-wadaag Association

3. Rajo Association
4. Shacabka Association
5. KAAH Association
6. Hilaac Association
7. Horseed Association

The seven political organizations would thus try to unseat KULMIYE, WADDANI and UCID who are defending their officialdom to be the only three operating political parties in the country for a period of ten years as per constitution.

Finance Ministry seeks Council of Ministers' approval for salary increases ranging from 5% to 332% for 2.4 million public servants



The Ministry of Finance has submitted a proposal to the Council of Ministers requesting formal approval for a substantial salary increase for approximately 2.4 million public servants.

If approved, the adjustment would take effect on 11 September, 2024. In a letter dated 03 September, 2024, and addressed to the Prime Minister's Office, Finance Minister Ahmed Shide outlined the proposed salary increase. The adjustment would require an additional budget of 91.4 billion birr.

This proposal follows a recent announcement by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed regarding significant salary increases for public servants. The Ministry's proposal is accompanied by a comprehensive study that provides detailed justification for the proposed salary increases.

According to the letter, the national macroeconomic committee reviewed the study before it was submitted to the Council of Ministers.

The study indicates that 2.4 million government employees would benefit from the proposed salary adjustment. This includes 2.3 million federal employees, as well as members of regional police forces, the Ethiopian National Defense Force (ENDF), and the Federal Police Commission.

Citing a survey conducted by the Ethiopian Statistical Service in June 2022, the study reveals that of the 2.3 million civil servants, 1.1 million (47.94%) earn less than 6,000 birr

per month. This group is classified as living below the extreme poverty line.

Another segment, comprising 946,306 civil servants, earns between 6,000 and 10,000 birr per month and is considered to be living below the standard poverty line.

Additionally, approximately 253,297 government employees earn more than 10,000 birr monthly.

The study concludes that close to half of government workers are living in extreme poverty and are disproportionately affected by rising living costs.

To address the financial hardship faced by these civil servants, the study recommends a significant salary increase for lower-income employees, proposing a wage increase of up to 332%. This would raise the minimum monthly salary for a government employee from 1,100 birr to 4,760 birr.

On the other hand, those earning the highest monthly salary of 20,468 birr would receive a 5% raise, amounting to an increase of 1,023 birr.

Prepared jointly by the Ministry of Finance and the Civil Service Commission, the study was conducted in response to the comprehensive macroeconomic reforms initiated by the government in late July 2024.

Since 28 July, 2024, Ethiopia has transitioned from a crawling peg exchange rate system to a market-based foreign currency regime. This reform resulted in a significant depreciation of the local

currency, the birr.

Prior to the adjustment, commercial banks were trading the birr at approximately 56.55 to the dollar. By 05 September, 2024, the buying rate at the state-owned Commercial Bank of Ethiopia (CBE) had risen to 106 birr per dollar.

The depreciation of the local currency has led to a noticeable increase in prices throughout the country, particularly in Addis Abeba. This has placed additional financial strain on fixed-income earners, such as civil servants.

Prices for certain goods, especially imported items and essential domestic products like oil, sugar, and onions, have risen significantly in various markets across Addis Abeba.

According to traders in Merkato, the price of a five-liter container of cooking oil has increased from 900 to 1,200 birr since the implementation of the macroeconomic reforms. Similarly, the price of sugar has risen from 100 birr per kilogram to 116 birr.

In addition to its impact on fixed-income earners, the World Food Program (WFP) has recently expressed concern over the increasing challenges it faces in ensuring safe and timely food deliveries to Ethiopia's most vulnerable populations.

The WFP attributes these challenges to rising inflation, among other factors.

According to the United Nations

Ethiopian FM raises concerns over 'post-ATMIS arrangement', calls for AGOA restoration in talks with US envoy



Ambassador Taye Atske-Selassie, Ethiopia's Foreign Minister, expressed "concerns over the post-ATMIS arrangement" during a meeting on 13 September 2024 with U.S. Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa, Ambassador Mike Hammer, according to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The ministry reported that the meeting addressed broader peace and security issues in the Horn of Africa, with Foreign Minister Taye reiterating Ethiopia's commitment to "de-escalating tensions in the region."

Additionally, FM Taye called for the restoration of Ethiopia's status under the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), urging the U.S. to reconsider Ethiopia's eligibility for the trade benefits program, according to the ministry.

The meeting followed a press briefing earlier that day by Ambassador Hammer, where he clarified that while the U.S. government would like to see Ethiopia return to AGOA, human rights concerns remain a key obstacle.

"There is a requirement that there not be any violations of human rights by government forces," Hammer explained. "As long as abuses and atrocities continue, reintegration into AGOA will not be possible."

The two officials also discussed the current situation in the Tigray region. Ambassador Taye

confirmed the country's dedication to the "full implementation of the Pretoria Peace Agreement," the ministry stated.

Hammer, who had recently returned from a visit to Tigray, told reporters earlier that day that Tigray authorities remain committed to the Pretoria Agreement and urged them to resolve internal divisions within the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) through dialogue.

He acknowledged progress since the Pretoria Peace Agreement but stressed that more work remains: "We are not satisfied with the amount of progress, but some progress has been made." Hammer highlighted the importance of disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) of former combatants and reiterated U.S. support for the return of displaced persons.

Hammer also addressed concerns over the continued presence of Eritrean forces in Tigray, stating, "There are still concerns about the lingering presence of Eritrean forces." He reaffirmed the U.S. position that all non-ENDF forces must fully withdraw, as outlined in the Pretoria Agreement.

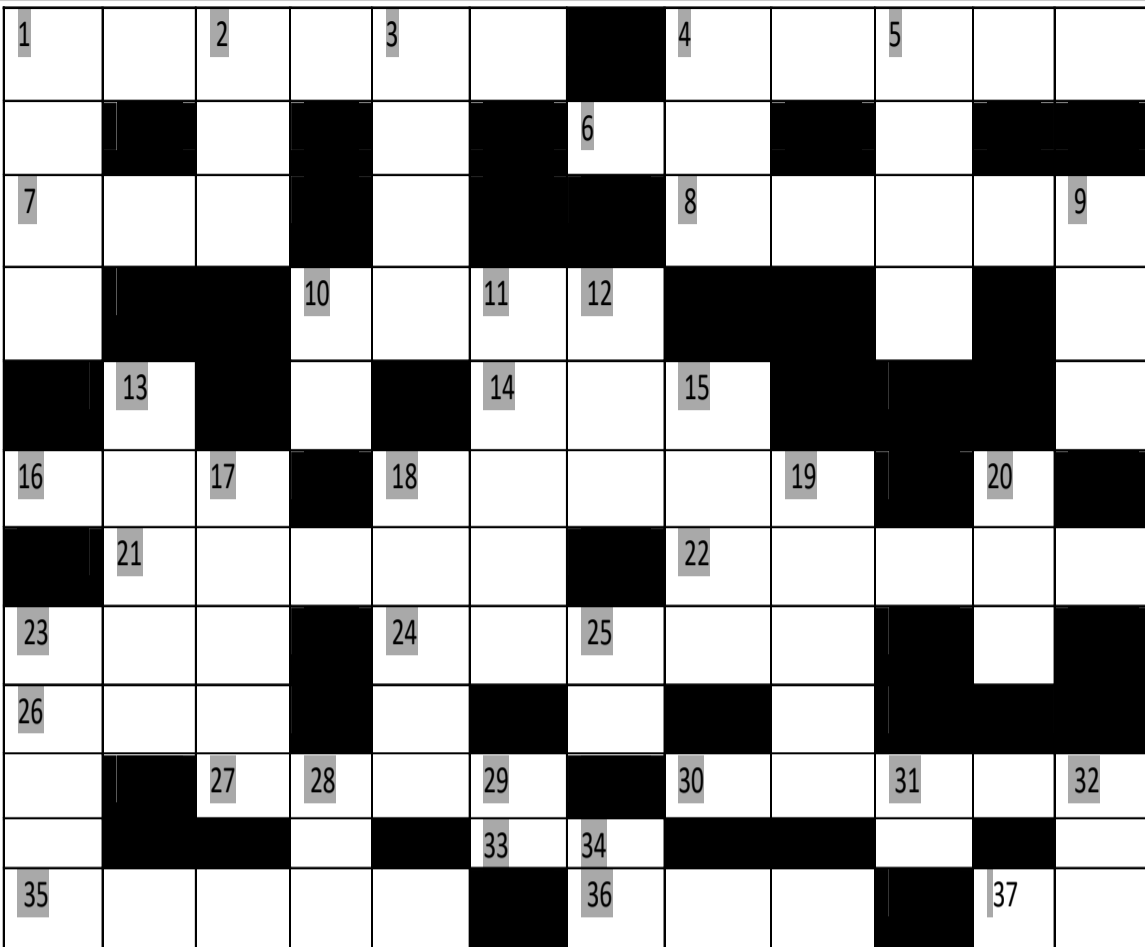
In addition to Tigray, Hammer expressed concern over violence in the Amhara and Oromia regions, emphasizing that "these conflicts do not have military solutions" and must be resolved through dialogue. **AS**

agency, the depreciation of the birr, resulting from recent macroeconomic policies, is expected to have a direct negative impact on impoverished households.

"The introduction of free-floating exchange rates and the subsequent

depreciation of the birr are anticipated to have an immediate detrimental impact on poor households," WFP forecasted. "Elevated food prices are one of the main factors contributing to acute food insecurity by restricting economic access to food." **AS**

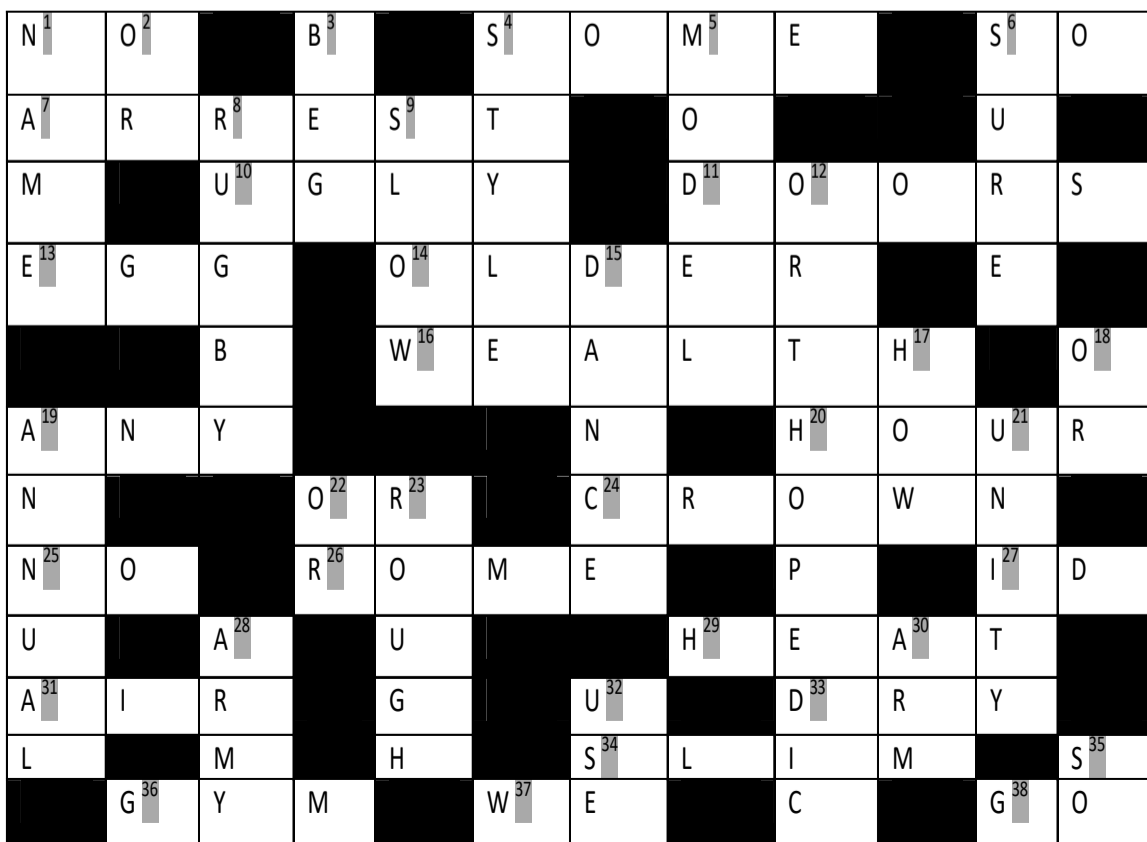
THT Puzzle



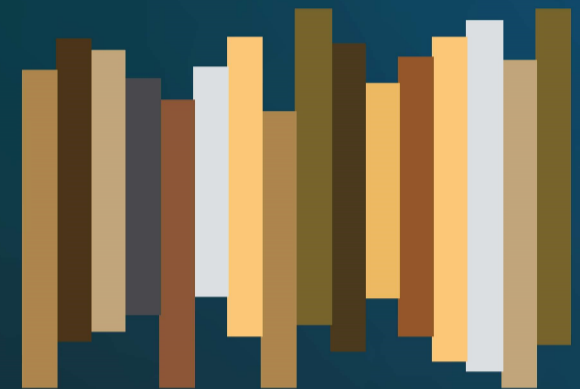
- Down**
- 1 Beginning
 - 2 Ending
 - 3 Phone call
 - 4 Have a row or strip
 - 5 Utilized
 - 9 Low down
 - 10 CUBIC CENTIMETER
 - 11 High
 - 12 an active insect
 - 13 Use
 - 15 Newscast
 - 17 Communicate
 - 18 Be asleep
 - 19 Clothing
 - 20 Several
 - 23 Property
 - 25 So
 - 28 Ending
 - 29 Toward
 - 32 Midair
 - 34 Nope

- Across**
- 1 Break
 - 4 Rounded
 - 6 Leave
 - 7 Depressed
 - 8 Swelling
 - 10 nightclub
 - 14 Fountain pen
 - 16 Donkey/ horse family
 - 18 Speediness
 - 21 fruits
 - 22 Wring
 - 23 Get older
 - 24 Remove
 - 26 Ocean
 - 27 Stored
 - 30 Problem
 - 35 Exchange
 - 36 Single
 - 37 identity

Previous Answer



Ethiopia Financial Stability Report



FINANCIAL STABILITY REPORT

APRIL 2024
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4. FINANCIAL SYSTEM INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT AND RISKS

This chapter discusses developments and risks for the stability of Ethiopia's financial system related to the infrastructure of the financial system. The infrastructure comprises currency management, the payment and settlement system, credit market infrastructure, and financial inclusion & consumer protection.

4.1 NATIONAL PAYMENT SYSTEMS DEVELOPMENT

Payment systems in Ethiopia were radically modernized in 2011 after NBE launched the Ethiopian Automated Transfer System (EATS), a modern clearing and settlement system. NBE owns and manages the payment system infrastructure. It includes the Real-Time Gross Settlement system (RTGS), which provides facilities for final settlement of payments between financial institutions; 27 and the Automated Clearing House (ACH), which provides clearing and netting services for bulk payments.28 Before 2011, all payments in the country, including bank-to-bank transfers, were made through the exchange of letters; as a result, a single interbank transfer took days to be settled.

The dependency of the financial sector on the RTGS infrastructure has increased.

Therefore, the safety and efficiency of RTGS has become critical for the stability of the financial system. The regulatory framework, which plays a very important role in this, needs to be constantly updated in line with technological and financial sector developments.

Box 2:

Payment System Regulatory Framework and Developments

The legal and regulatory framework plays a critical role in creating a safe, secure, and efficient enabling environment for inclusive payment services. The national payment system Proclamation No. 718/2011 and Proclamation No. 1282/2023, the payment system operators Directive No. ONPS/02/2020 and the payment instrument Directive No. ONPS/09/2023, among others, all constitute the current active regulatory framework to ensure the safety, security, and efficiency of the national payment system.

NBE has also taken initial steps toward enabling digital payments through the development of infrastructure, encouraging adoption of digital payments, revising regulations, and promoting innovation by launching National Digital Payments Strategy (NDPS). The vision of the NDPS is to

Continue on page 7

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The U.S. "working with partners" resolve Ethiopia-Somalia tension



Citizens reports on social media from sources with Mogadishu to Mogadishu seem to suggest that the Hassan Sheik Mohammed government is taking a more radical stance against Ethiopia and even moving in the direction of making claims of Ethiopian territory in Ogaden as part of Somalia. But the U.S. is reportedly expressing optimism that the tension will be resolved diplomatically. According to the VOA Amharic report, the United States is working with its partners (unspecified) in that direction. Richard Riley, U.S. Ambassador to Somalia, cited as saying "in the current situation his country is working in collaboration with others in search of a diplomatic solution." According to the Ambassador, the U.S. and its partners are approaching the Federal government in Somalia and the government in Addis Ababa. The Ambassador also made a reference to the Turkish initiated talks between Ethiopia and

Somalia. "The next one will be started in a few days," he said. Asked if the situation could lead the two countries (Ethiopia and Somalia) to war, the Ambassador said "no." He added "let alone war, no one accepts the chance for the outbreak of any conflict. That is why the international community and all are relentlessly working to resolve the issue. The effort of the United States is to find a solution for the situation between Ethiopia and Somalia." From the VOA Amharic report, it seems that the United States wants the resolution of the tension between the two countries quickly. "The absolutely necessary issue is this. It should happen quickly and now," Ambassador Richard H. Riley is quoted as saying. Last month, Somalia signed a defense pact with Egypt, which is deploying 10,000 troops in Somalia. There were reports in

social media this week that Ethiopian forces controlled some airports in Somalia but the Ethiopian government has not confirmed or denied it. Somalia and Ethiopia have a history of conflict and hostility. The recent one developed in January 2024 when Ethiopia and Somaliland signed a memorandum of understanding. The arrangement was for Ethiopia to get access to 20 kilometers of coastal land for maritime and commercial purposes on a fifty year rental basis. In return, Ethiopia is to recognize Somaliland – a breakaway region that existed as a de facto state for over 33 years – as an independent state. The finalization of the arrangement was meant to be completed within one month after the MoU agreement. It took longer than that. Somaliland authorities this week announced the agreement is finalized but it is not made public.

Ethiopia Financial Stability Report

build a secure, competitive, efficient, innovative, and responsible payment ecosystem to support a cash-lite and financially inclusive economy.

4.1.1 Payment Systems Performance

A. Ethiopian Automated Transfer System Source: NBE Database
At end-June 2023, 32 financial institutions had participated in EATS, of which two were MFIs. No major system interruption on EATS was reported in the year. The system processed more than Birr 3.9 million transactions (up by 35.2 percent from the previous year) with a value of more than Birr 4.8 trillion (an annual increase of 28.7 percent).

Table 12: EATS Performance, 2019-2023 (number and value of transactions)

DESCRIPTION	JUNE 2019	JUNE 2020	JUNE 2021	JUNE 2022	JUNE 2023
RTGS transactions					
Total number	211,460	720,666	1,734,409	2,739,763	3,901,069
Total value (billion Birr)	764.3	1814.1	2,598.2	3,754.8	4,863.2
Cheque transactions					
Total number	681,054	886,456	461,257	414,869	355,566
Total value (billion Birr)	35.4	54.0	48.9	52.1	43.9

Source: NBE Database

B. Digital Financial Services (DFSs)

Following a recent NBE directive, domestic non-bank payment service providers are allowed to issue electronic money instruments and/or obtain a payment systems operator license to provide payment and remittance services. Table 13 shows the development of DFS access points since 2019.

ATMs: The number of ATMs throughout the country grew by 13.9 percent from the previous year to 7,858 at end-June 2023.

Mobile Money Agents: The number of mobile money agents increased by almost half (48.5 percent) from the previous year and reached over 233 thousand at end-June 2023. The increase is mainly attributed to the entry of Telebirr in the market.

POS: The number of POS terminals deployed within financial institutions and at merchant locations increased slightly from the previous year by 2.2 percent to 12,016 at end-June 2023. Going forward, they are expected to expand further at a faster rate through the concerted effort of the private sector and the relevant authorities.

Debit Cards: The number of debit cards rose from the previous year by 25.1 percent to 38.4 million at end-June 2023 – a three and half fold increase in just four years.

Mobile Banking: Currently, mobile banking is considered to be the most convenient and accessible digital payment channel. Consequently, the number of registered accounts increased from the previous year by two-thirds (67.5 percent) to 27.3 million at end-June 2023.

The number of **mobile money/wallet** users increased by 58.7 percent from the previous year to 68.7 million at end-June 2023. The rapid growth was largely attributed to the introduction of Telebirr mobile money services by Ethio-telecom.

Internet banking is still relatively in its infancy with 6.8 million users at end-June 2023 but is growing rapidly.

Digital payments are growing at an exponential rate (Table 14). At end-June 2023, payments worth more than Birr 4.7 trillion were processed digitally, almost three times the value of the previous year. This growth is the result of successful implementation of the National Digital Payment Strategy and NBE's reform activities.

Table 14: Transactions processed through DFS, 2019-2023 (number of transactions and value in billion Birr)

Fiscal Year	ATM		POS		Mobile Banking		Internet Banking	
	Volume	Value	Volume	Value	Volume	Value	Volume	Value
Jun-19	99,529,312	87.4	2,259,754	5.3	4,697,907	29.7	256,135	15.0
Jun-20	153,191,706	142.1	1,358,651	4.8	11,623,265	68.4	525,284	22.5
Jun-21	225,603,984	236.1	2,951,802	7.4	39,560,999	326.2	2,411,331	26.6
Jun-22	171,068,129	197.5	2,330,255	62.2	88,012,896	1,163.6	1,094,038	129.6
Jun-23	356,384,957	478.3	6,601,796	40.8	474,917,286	3,442.6	5,804,292	358.1

Fiscal Year	Internet Banking		Agent Banking		Mobile Money Subscribers		Aggregate	
	Volume	Value	Volume	Value	Volume	Value	Volume	Value
Jun-19	256,135	15.0	2,275,304	0.9	2,309,618	1.1	111,328,030	139.54
Jun-20	525,284	22.5	4,241,547	1.4	4,241,512	3.0	175,181,965	242.20
Jun-21	2,411,331	26.6	22,999,839	8.9	7,246,442	5.9	300,774,397	611.18
Jun-22	1,094,038	129.6	34,392,909	23.0	48,502,862	24.4	345,410,089	1,600.24
Jun-23	5,804,292	358.1	101,948,951	76.5	298,826,380	380.3	1,244,483,662	4,776.77

Source: NBE Database.