Gov’t cancels 2.6 bln birr wheat contract

By Dawit Endeshaw

The government has canceled a 2.6 billion-birr contract awarded to Pakistan-based Shakeel & Company for the supply of 400,000 metric tons of wheat. The cancellation came following the company’s failure to provide a performance guarantee and proceed to supply the wheat. According to the initial agreement, Shakeel is supposed to start supplying the bulk by December 2017 and finish by January 2018. However, since the bidding process took longer than expected, the Public Procurement and Property Disposal Service, handling the procurement on behalf of the Ethiopian Trading Business Corporation, extended the final delivery date to February 2018. The award to Shakeel was given on December 20, 2017. Following the award, the company was supposed to come up with a performance guarantee worth USD 10 million from a bank in Pakistan or elsewhere. In this regard, the Commercial Bank of Ethiopia (CBE) was given a mandate to facilitate and ensure the guarantee. However, CBE could not secure the performance guarantee from Shakeel. The Reporter has learnt. For CBE to do that, Shakeel’s bank has to have a long-standing relationship, sources close to the matter disclosed to The Reporter. However, CBE told Shakeel’s

New wine in old wineskin?

By Brook Abdu

For the first time since the beginning of the 1980s, back when the African Union (AU) was still the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the 30th African Union Heads of State and Government Summit is to kick off in Addis Ababa on Sunday in the absence of an animated figure and outspoken “comrade” Robert Gabriel Mugabe with three new faces expected to grace the summit in his place. Mugabe, who had donated a million dollars to the AU in a move to push the African countries finance the continental body and to untangle it from foreign influence, said that he brought the money from the proceeds of the sale of 300 cattle in Zimbabwe. “When I returned to Zimbabwe and informed my party and people of this pledge, they said to me, ‘Ah... Comrade Mugabe, Comrade President, this is a very innovative idea for a very noble cause and we would like to be part of it’,” Mugabe narrated at the time.

Controversy engulfs tantalum mine in Oromia

By Yohannes Anberbir

Officials of the Guji Zone in the Oromia Regional State has denied plans of transferring the Kenticha Tantalum Mine to youth associations saying that it was “merely an idea to entertain rather than an actionable plan” and that it had no intention of depriving the federal Mining, Petroleum and Biofuel Corporation of its mining concession and processing facility. However, according to the head of the zonal administration, Tilahun Warda, the youth residing in the surrounding of the Tantalum Mine are posing series question as to their benefits from the natural resource and said that as long as the Corporation is willing to address this demand, there will be no problem. “The demand from the youth

Controversy engulfs... page 10
Settling issues without resorting to killing!

Last Sunday, scores were killed in the northern Ethiopian city of Woldiya in skirmishes that arose during the Epiphany festivities. Their death adds to the tally of hundreds if not thousands of citizens who have died in conflicts across different parts of Ethiopia in the past couple of years. It’s unfathomable why the sanctity of human life is held in low regard and why we as a nation are unable to resolve problems without slaying anyone. Security forces should demonstrate prudence whenever they try to quell peaceful expression of dissent. Resorting to violence is not only unnecessary, but also engenders political instability and exacts a heavy toll on the economy. It’s precisely the failure of the government to safeguard the security of citizens and the occasional involvement of some law enforcement personnel in extrajudicial killings that is to blame for the political crisis Ethiopia has been reeling from for some time now.

In a press briefing they gave a fortnight ago at the end of the 17-day long meeting of the Executive Committee, of the ruling Ethiopian Peoples’ Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), the chairpersons of its four-member organizations took full responsibility for the crisis and announced a raft of measures they said were intended to foster national consensus and the rule of law. Among which, releasing the leaders and members of opposition political parties as well as shuttering the infamous Makelawi police investigation center in Addis Ababa where prisoners were subjected to torture. Though many had viewed the statement as well as shuttering the infamous Makelawi police investigation center in Addis Ababa where prisoners were subjected to torture. Though many had viewed the statement with skepticism, some had hoped that it was the harbinger of better things to come. Sadly though, the Woldiya incident has put the optimism in the shed and destroyed any political capital the government may have had.

The government shoulders ultimate responsibility for any disregard of duty, which jeopardizes national security. It’s particularly incumbent on the executive branch to exercise strict oversight of the security and law enforcement apparatus so that lives are not unnecessarily lost when they respond to protests, even if they are deemed to be unlawful. And if they are, it ought to bring to justice those who are guilty of acting outside of the scope of their authority. The leadership and security personnel of the Oromia and Ethiopia-Somali regional governments who were implicated in the clashes among the border areas of the two regions that led to the death and injury of thousands and the displacement of hundreds of thousands in 2016, have to face the music. Not a single citizen should die at the hand of security forces when the public peacefully demands its rights or voices its resentment. Nothing justifies a violent response in such circumstances.

Although the “deep renewal” the EPRDF embarked on following the outbreak of unrest at the end of 2015 should have paved the way for a nationwide dialogue aimed at forging national consensus. The events since then have had the opposite effect. The unprecedented level of death, maiming and displacement that has taken place throughout the country makes a mockery of the renewal exercise. The protest that saw the youth of Woldiya clash with security forces should not have led to the loss of so many lives. What is the harm in tolerating politically charged songs during religious festivities? Had the security personnel deployed to the scene thought through the consequences of firing on a crowd before pulling the trigger, the needless death of defenseless people could have been entirely avoided. How can the people have trust in and reconcile with the government when the police and the army kill unarmed individuals staging peaceful protests? How can the government do an effective job of delivering the basic services expected of it in the backdrop of incidents that in no way help to enhance its credibility? All stakeholders need to deliberate seriously on this matter.

Citizens are bound to feel disenfranchised when the government fails to respond promptly to their demands. The unrest rocking Ethiopia for over two years now is directly attributable to the widespread discontent that had been simmering for decades due to the government’s propensity to ignore the litany of grievances the public has vocally expressed. To make matters worse the actions taken in response to conflicts was by and large disproportionate to the threat they posed. The bloodshed in Woldiya is a shocking episode which belies the joint declaration of the chairpersons of the EPRDF’s member parties that such incidents would not be allowed to recur. Why can’t Ethiopia escape from this cycle of violence? Why does it keep on making the same mistake over and over again? How can its survival be assured if stability cannot be restored immediately? We are in troubling times indeed.

A historic nation like Ethiopia and its proud people do not deserve to suffer the devastation and grief they are enduring. There should be no doubting that democracy, the rule of law and equality are existential questions for a country confronted with a slew of grave challenges. If Ethiopia is to become a mature democracy it is imperative that a sense of belongingness is instilled in its people. Naturally this can succeed when they recommit themselves to a shared vision embracing diversity while promoting unity. They have never let their differences take them apart and actually have demonstrated a strong solidarity for centuries because of their deep love of country. It’s appalling then that a country which is home to a people who can do wonders if they are governed properly, become their graveyard. It’s vital that we extricate ourselves from this quagmire within the shortest possible time. That is why the importance of resolving differences without resorting to killing can never be overstated.
Negotiations over anti-terror law put on hold

By Neamin Ashenafi

Some 15 national opposition political parties, negotiating with the ruling Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) on widening the political space in the country and amending the legal procedures that govern election and political activities, have put their negotiation over the Anti-Terrorism Proclamation No. 652/2009 on hold demanding a clear-cut position from the ruling party.

In response, ruling party representative Shiferaw Shigute proposed continuing with the remaining agenda items, saying, “since many of the ideas proposed by opposition parties require legal interpretation, let’s for now work on other items on the agenda.”

However, opposition parties, especially the 11 that have forged unity for the purpose of this negotiation, stated that since many of their proposals were rejected by the ruling party, it is very difficult to continue with the remaining agenda items without first thrashing out differences over the anti-terrorism proclamation.

In this regard, the parties proposed to postpone ongoing negotiations on the anti-terror proclamation until the issue of legal interpretation is resolved.

Following this, leaders of the negotiating parties announced that the negotiations would resume when the EPRDF made its position on the anti-terror law known to the forum.

In a related development, the Ethiopian Ra’ey Party has announced its withdrawal from the ongoing political parties’ negotiation forum. The party announced its decision on Wednesday when the controversial anti-terror proclamation was on the agenda.

Party secretary Melaku Messele argued that the anti-terror proclamation violated basic human and democratic rights of citizens and contravened constitutional provisions and, therefore, the party demanded the proclamation be discarded altogether.

So far, the ruling party and opposition parties have agreed to amend the existing Revised Political Parties’ Registration Proclamation No. 573/2008 and the Amended Electoral Law of Ethiopia Proclamation No. 522/2007. The negotiating parties have also agreed to change the electoral arrangement of the country to a mixed electoral system from the current winner-take-all system.
The Republic of Somaliland is a sovereign nation in the Horn of Africa, and had its third presidential election held on 13th of November 2017, observed by international community and verified to be a free and fair election, the first of its kind, which Africa should be proud off.

Somaliland re-emerged as a sovereign country in the Sub-region of the Horn of Africa, sharing borders with Somalia to the East, the Republic of Djibouti to the West, Ethiopia to the south, and the Gulf of Aden in the North. Somaliland encompasses the territory of former British Somaliland protectorate whose borders were established by international treaties entered into between 1888 and 1897.

Somaliland has a population of about 4.5 million people, and a land area of 137,600 km, and an 850 km coastline along the Gulf of Aden.

Somaliland attained its independence from the United Kingdom on 26th of June 1960, becoming the 17th African country to achieve freedom from European colonial powers.

Somaliland has sustained its independence for 27 years. It has overcome a legacy of conflict and civil war, rebuilt its devastated infrastructure, and shattered economy, maintained peace and stability within its international demarcated borders, and established a malty party democratic system.

The Republic of Somaliland is a democratic country with a multi-party system. It holds regular elections and has implemented multiple peaceful transfers of power. Its constitution was overwhelmingly rectified in a popular vote in 2001. Somaliland held successive elections of municipal level, parliamentary, and three presidential elections in 2003, 2010, and 2017.

Somaliland plays an active role in the fight against terrorism and extremism, piracy in the Horn of Africa and collaborates closely with the other countries in the region, and the wider international community on security matters.

Somaliland deserves recognition under the International Law and would not be establishing a bad precedence of any kind. Somaliland, wants to preserve its borders before independence of 26 June 1960, and fully respect the colonial borders in accordance of article 49(b) of AU Constitutive Act. This desire is consistent with the fundamental rights to self-determination laid out in common article 1 of the international covenant on civil and political rights (ICCPR), and the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and cultural Rights (ICESCR).

Somaliland fulfills all legal criteria for statehood under the Customary International Law enshrined under the Montevideo Convention. It has a permanent population, a defined territory, an organized government administration, and the capacity to enter a treaty with other states. It has all accords of a nation.

The Somaliland recognition will not be in conflict with AU charter and its principles, as was confirmed by the AU mission to Somaliland in 2005 that Somaliland status as convergent country should not be linked to the notion of opening a Pandora Box in Africa.

Somaliland initiated a dialogue with Somalia in June 2012. These talks evidence Somaliland’s desire to solve its difference with Somalia by peaceful means. Somaliland hopes that IGAD& AU members will support this process, which has a potential to bring about a lasting peace and stability for the region and the continent at large.
African nations yet to harmonize position on Trump’s statement

By Kaleyesus Bekele

The African Union is yet to draw a common stance on the derogatory statement recently made by President of the United States, Donald Trump.

Addressing the 32nd Ordinary Session of the Executive Council of the African Union (AU) on Thursday Chairperson Moussa Faki Mahamat said that at the time of the convening of the meeting Africa has not yet finished digesting the statements and pronouncements made by the president of the United States which has deeply shocked through the messages of despise, hatred and the desire to marginalize and exclude Africa. “The statements on Jerusalem and the reduction of the contribution to peacekeeping operations budget in the world is a serious crisis and the continent cannot keep quiet about this,” Mahamat said.

President Donald Trump, who is known for making controversial remarks, recently used the word “shithole” to describe African countries, Haiti and El Salvador, while discussing immigration issues with US lawmakers. Trump’s remarks have instigated ferrous reactions from US lawmakers. Trump’s remarks have instigated ferrous reactions from US lawmakers. Trump’s remarks have instigated ferrous reactions from US lawmakers. Trump’s remarks have instigated ferrous reactions from US lawmakers. Trump’s remarks have instigated ferrous reactions from US lawmakers. Trump’s remarks have instigated ferrous reactions from US lawmakers. Trump’s remarks have instigated ferrous reactions from US lawmakers. Trump’s remarks have instigated ferrous reactions from US lawmakers. Trump’s remarks have instigated ferrous reactions from US lawmakers. Trump’s remarks have instigated ferrous reactions from US lawmakers. Trump’s remarks have instigated ferrous reactions from US lawmakers. Trump’s remarks have instigated ferrous reactions from US lawmakers. Trump’s remarks have instigated ferrous reactions from US lawmakers. Trump’s remarks have instigated ferrous reactions from US lawmakers. Trump’s remarks have instigated ferrous reactions from US lawmakers. Trump’s remarks have instigated ferrous reactions from US lawmakers. Trump’s remarks have instigated ferrous reactions from US lawmakers. Trump’s remarks have instigated ferrous reactions from US lawmakers. Trump’s remarks have instigated ferrous reactions from US lawmakers. Trump’s remarks have instigated ferrous reactions from US lawmakers. Trump’s remarks have instigated ferrous reactions from US lawmakers. Trump’s remarks have instigated ferrous reactions from US lawmakers. Trump’s remarks have instigated ferrous reactions from US lawmakers. Trump’s remarks have instigated ferrous reactions from US lawmakers. Trump’s remarks have instigated ferrous reactions from US lawmakers. Trump’s remarks have instigated ferrous reactions from US lawmakers. Trump’s remarks have instigated ferrous reactions from US lawmakers. Trump’s remarks have instigated ferrous reactions from US lawmakers.

The 30th African Union Summit is being held under the theme, “Winning the fight against corruption: A sustainable path to Africa’s transformation”. Reforming the AU and the fight against corruption are the main items that are going to be addressed during the summit.

At the opening session of the Executive Council, Mahamat said that, African countries are concerned about corruption that deprives Africa of a huge sum of money every year. Quoting a report produced by former South African president Thabo Mbeki’s high-level panel on illicit financial flows (IFFs) Mahamat said, corruption accompanied by illicit financial flows deprives Africa more than USD 50 billion each year. “If this can be averted and invested in development we may not need external assistance,” the chairperson said.

Mahamat said that the fight against corruption should be waged globally like the fight against terrorism. “It can be won through our collective action.” Vera Songwe, United Nations Under-Secretary-General and executive secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), stated that corruption held Africa back for too long. “The injustice of corruption, brought to life inside our institutions, is more powerful than any injustice we could face,” Songwe said.

“For a continent that desperately requires substantial financial resources to meet its extensive development needs, including in filling its huge infrastructure gap such a significant amount of financial resources leakage through IFF and various forms of corrupt activities is definitely something that needs to be fought with every energy that can be mustered,” she added.

The AU is striving to declare its financial independence. Led by President Paul Kagame of Rwanda, the AU reform unit is drafting a program that would enable the commission to be self-sufficient in terms of meeting its financial needs by levying 0.2 percent tax on eligible import items.

The AU anticipates covering 100 percent of its operational budget, 75 percent of the programs and 25 percent of the peacekeeping mission operations by 2020.

“Without its independence Africa is nothing. With independence it can be everything,” Mahamat said.

The AU Executive Council meeting that ended yesterday brought together foreign ministers of the 55 African Union Member States and senior AU officials. The Assembly of the AU Heads of State and Government is scheduled to take place on January 28-29, 2018.
Minister grilled for not lifting overseas employment ban

By Yonas Abiye

Presenting his office’s half-year performance report Thursday, Minister of Labor and Social Affairs Abdulfetah Abdulahi was questioned by MPs about the failure to restore overseas employment following the expiration of its ban, which was originally intended to last six months.

The travel ban was imposed in 2016 following the mass deportation of tens of thousands of “undocumented” Ethiopian maids by Gulf countries, mainly from Saudi Arabia. In addition to the forced deportations, the plight of migrants who have been abused by human traffickers had prompted the government to impose the temporary travel ban until the introduction of a new legal framework that would bring a “lasting solution” to the problem.

Following the travel sanction, the House in 2016 approved two proclamations against human trafficking as well as on overseas employment with a view to ensuring the well-being of citizens and preventing illegal migrants and human traffickers.

However, many MPs at Thursday’s session questioned the minister why it took this long to enforce the new rules.

One MP questioned the wisdom of keeping citizens idle even though the sanction should have been lifted a year ago, while another one warned that the longer the sanction remained in place, the higher the risk of putting job-seekers against human traffickers.

“For how long will we say it is awaiting a decision by the Council of Ministers,” the MP asked.

Abdulahi also explained that the ministry had already prepared draft agreements with three employee-receiving countries, including the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Bahrain and Lebanon. The draft document had also been sent to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for comment.

“However, we are still awaiting the government’s decision to lift the ban and to sign agreements with these countries and to begin issuing licenses to agents as well,” he told MPs.

He also indicated that he expects an agreement would be signed with Lebanon soon while another agreement would also be reached with Saudi Arabia.

He also said that 21 erstwhile-licensed employment agencies have also been barred from facilitating travel abroad. Meanwhile, of a total of 129 new and 178 existing agents who applied for licenses, only six have qualified to get licenses based on the new proclamation.

However, the House urged the ministry to speed up the implementation of the proclamation despite the factors the minister mentioned.

The government has been working towards a stricter legislation and creating job opportunities to curb illegal migration through which countless Ethiopians had lost their lives or undergone untold physical and psychological trauma.

It is to be recalled that the government had taken various measures to limit the suffering of citizens, including the setting up of a national council and a task force to educate them.

The government has also been criticized since the measures had not been able to address the problem sufficiently. According to experts, the lack of employment opportunities is a major factor fuelling emigration from Ethiopia and neighboring countries.

UN commissioner condemns Woldiya tragedy

By Dawit Endeshaw

Just days after the killings of six civilians including a 13-year-old teenager in Woldiya town, North Wello Zone, Amhara Regional State, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, chaireed by Prince Zein bin Ra’ad Zeid al-Hussein expressed its concerns over what claims to be use of force by security forces against unarmed civilians.

“We are extremely concerned by the use of force by security officials against worshippers celebrating the Ethiopian Orthodox festival of Epiphany this weekend that left at least seven people dead and a number injured,” the statement issued by the commissioner read.

It is to be recalled that the city Woldiya, with the exception of recent small clashes between football fans, was mostly peaceful in the past two years. The city particularly, and in general the North Wello Zone remain unaffected by the frequent attacks by the Islamic group, Al-Shabaab.

“The government will provide all basic services to these children, as the necessity in rehabilitating these children is indeed critical to their long-term physiological and mental well-being,” the ministry said in a statement.

The security forces rescued 35 kidnapped male children from an Al-Shabaab indoctrination camp in southern Somalia after receiving credible information on the location of the camp and the activities that were going on for a while.

“As soon as the information was verified Somali National Security Forces began their operation, which was very successful,” the ministry said.

The militants claimed during the rescue operation that government forces backed from terrorists groups on January 19.

The security forces tried to stop people from chanting anti-government songs and allegedly opened fire on them,” according the statement from the commissioner.

“This incident is all the more regrettable, as it comes just two weeks after Ethiopia’s ruling coalition, the Ethiopian Peoples’ Revolutionary Democratic Front, officially announced its intention to undertake reforms,” it added.

The commissioner finally urged for independent, impartial and effective investigation. In addition, it also asked for those responsible for any violations to be held accountable.

It also demanded that the Ethiopian government should take possible legal as well as policy reforms in order to support the law enforcement bodies to act in line with international standards.

Somalia confirms rescue of 35 children from Al-Shabaab

The Somali government confirmed Wednesday its security forces rescued 35 children who had been taken as recruits by Al-Shabaab.

The Ministry of Information said the government is looking after the unaccompanied children who are now receiving full protection and rights after being rescued from terrorists groups on January 19.

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The militants claimed during the rescue operation that government forces backed from drones stormed the school in Middle Shabelle region, killing four children and a teacher.

Ethiopian, Norwegian Foreign Ministers discuss development cooperation

Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia, Workneh Gebeyehu (PhD), held talks with his Norwegian counterpart, Ine Marie Eriksen Søreide, at his office today.

Workneh said that Ethiopia and Norway are countries with long-standing and stable multifaceted relations.

During their deliberations, the two Foreign Ministers also discussed national, regional and international issues of common interest.

Their discussion mainly focused on development process in Ethiopia and ways of facilitating Norwegian technical and academic assistance in a number of sectors, such as education, health, migration, peace and security.

Norwegian Minister for Foreign Affairs for her part commended Ethiopia’s unrelenting efforts to bring about peace and order among the conflicting parties in South Sudan through bilateral and multilateral arrangements such as the IGAD and the Troika, to which Norway belongs.

The two sides have also deliberated at length on Ethio-Norwegian development cooperation as well as ways of further facilitating the wider and deeper participation of Norwegian businesses in Ethiopia, especially in the creation of jobs for the youth.
By Dawit Endeshaw

Twenty one local steel bar producers have been charged by the Trade Competition and Consumer Protection Authority for allegedly jacking up rebar prices following devaluation of the birr in October. The Reporter has learnt.

The Authority sued producers and importers in separate files for violating Article 7 of the Trade Competition and Consumer Protection Proclamation.

In this regard, a total of 14 local rebar, corrugated sheet and steel tube and pipe producers are sued for colluding in order to fix prices in the wake of the 15 percent devaluation of the birr by the National Bank of Ethiopia (NBE).

Of the aforementioned 14 steel producers, three manufacture reinforcement bars, namely East Steel PLC, Habesha Steel Mills PLC and Saint Nail PLC. On the other hand, the six are involved in manufacturing corrugated sheets. Among the producers of corrugated sheets included in the charge file, companies such as Ethiopian Steel Profile, Ethiopian Steel PLC, Kombolcha Steel Products Industry PLC (KOSPI), a subsidiary of MIBROC Technology Group and Bazeto PLC are the most notable.

In addition, five producers of steel tubes and pipes, among them known brands like Walla Steel Industry PLC and Mame Steel PLC, are also among the group facing legal battle.

The Authority has also listed seven rebar importers in a separate file. These importers include Dag Trading PLC, Aberua PLC, Berhe Hago PLC, Marka Trading, Beranea Yeshene and Hailelesiassie Amahye PLC.

These producers and importers, according to the charges, are guilty of fixed selling prices on the same day the devaluation was announced.

The Trade Competition and Consumer Protection Proclamation prohibits such price fixing arrangements between any market actors in Ethiopia.

“An agreement between or concerted practice by business persons or a decision by association of business persons in a horizontal relationship shall be prohibited if it involves, directly or indirectly, fixing a purchase or selling price or any other trading condition, collusive tendering or dividing markets by allocating customers, suppliers territories or specific types of goods or services,” reads part of the proclamation.

The Authority also sued the seven importers under the same provision.

“We have tried our best to pressure these producers and importers to stop fixing and increasing prices of steel tubes and pipes, reinforcement bars just few days after the devaluation,” communications director with the Authority told The Reporter, a week ago.

However, they turned a deaf ear to our reminder, and carried on with their illegal practice, and that is why we decided to bring the case before court, he said.

It is to be recalled that according to assessments made by the Authority just one week after the devaluation, the price of reinforcement bars, both locally-made and imported, has shown up to a 200 percent hike.

The rise was more significant on imported ones.

The Authority in the suit also asked the Administrative Tribunal to pass a cease-and-desist order against the defendants.

Moreover, it called for the revocation of defendants’ business licenses until they adjusted prices to the acceptable level.

In addition, the Authority demanded that a ten percent penalty fee be assessed on defendants’ annual sales.

The defendants will submit their response to the Tribunal on February 20, 2018.

In related news the Authority is also investigating more business entities involved in the production and importation of metal and metal related products also suspected of fixing prices.

IGAD to continue support to S. Sudan peace process

Ethiopia’s state minister for Foreign Affairs Hirut Zemene (PhD) and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) special envoy for South Sudan, Ismail Wais (Amb.) briefed members of the IGAD Partners Forum (IPF) on Thursday.

The briefing is part of the continuous engagement with stakeholders of the High-Level Revitalization Forum (HLRF) on South Sudan.

Co-Chairs of the meeting Hirut and Wais gave particular emphasis on two major issues, according to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

They have, primarily, pointed out that despite violations, the signing of Cessation of Hostilities, Protection of Civilians, and Humanitarian Access in Addis Ababa on December 21st was pivotal to ensure stability in the country.

Co-Chairs noted violators would be singled out and be accountable.

The Co-Chairs praised the AU Commission, the IGAD Partners Forum, the High-Level Co-Facilitators of the HLRF, the AU High-Level ad-hoc Committee, JMEC, the UN, the Troika and the international community, who have tirelessly worked to ensure the signing of the Agreement ahead of the expected time.

Ethiopian commences horticulture transport from Bahir Dar to Belgium

In order to reach the world market for horticulture, Ethiopian Airlines on Thursday began direct flights to Belgium from Bahir Dar, Amhara Regional State.

The airlines will have three direct flights a week to Belgium, thus enabling investors to supply fresh horticulture produce to the global markets. Yihenew Alem, promotion and public relation head of Amhara regional state investment commission, said.

Tuna Flora, Ethio Agri-CEFT and Koga Veg. Agricultural Development PLCs exported 45 tons of horticulture produces for the first time yesterday to the European market directly from Bahir Dar via Ethiopian Airlines.

The commence of the flights would also have a significant contribution to attract more investment to the regional state as well as to the country, it was noted.

The regional state has granted 1,300 hectares of land for 16 horticulture investors and six of them have entered into production phase, according to Yihenew.

It also readied additional 800 hectares of land for investors who are keen to engage in the horticulture sector.
AU launches African single air transport market

By Kaleyesus Bekele

After decades of negotiations and stalemate, finally, African countries are set to launch the African single air transport market at the African Union Heads of State and Government Summit that will take place tomorrow at the union’s headquarters in Addis Ababa.

After years of marathon negotiations and arduous legal paperwork the African Union Commission will launch the first AU Agenda 2063 flagship project, the Single African Air Transport Market (SAATM) as a historic event at the African Union Summit, nearly two decades after the adoption of the 1999 Yamoussoukro Decision. An exhibition billed “Flying the AU Agenda 2063 for an integrated, peaceful and prosperous Africa” will be unveiled to mark the launch, as well as ribbon cutting at the inauguration of the commemorative plaque.

The Declaration on the establishment of a Single African Air Transport Market, as a flagship project of the AU Agenda 2063, was adopted by the African Union (AU) Assembly in January 2015. Immediately thereafter, eleven AU Member States declared their commitment to establish a Single African Air Transport Market through full implementation of the Yamoussoukro Decision of 1999 that provides for full liberalization of market access between African States, free exercise of rights, elimination of restrictions on ownership and full liberalization of frequencies, fares and capacities.

The number of signatory countries has increased to 23 since then. Ten more countries have expressed interest to join the league.

The development of air transport industry in Africa is restricted by bilateral air service agreements. African airlines have limited market access in African countries. Some African countries deny traffic rights to home grown airlines and yet grant permits to non-African carriers which is thwarting the growth of the continent’s airline industry.

Ethiopian Airlines in collaboration with the African Union, African Airlines Association and the African Civil Aviation commission (AFDAC) has been advocating for the full implementation of the Yamoussoukro Decision. At a press conference held on Tuesday, Minister of Transport Ahmed Shide said that, being the flagship project of the AU Agenda 2063 Agenda for the establishment of an African Single Air Transport Market will ensure the way for other flagship projects such as free trade area, and other continents which stands at 60 percent is very low. So we need to integrate among our selves, We need to trade and invest. And the most critical economic enabling to spur economic development by boosting trade and tourism among African nations. Aviation in Africa supports eight million jobs and 80 billion dollars in GDP.

The Ethiopian government has established a national committee led by the Ethiopian Civil Aviation Authority on the establishment of the African single air transport market.

Ethiopian Airlines Group CEO Tewolde Gebremariam, said that January 28, 2018 will be a historical day on which aviation leaders will witness the AU declare the full implementation of the Yamoussoukro Declaration. “This is obviously a huge milestone for the continent.”

Tewolde said that, the AU and its predecessor have been working very hard for the economic integration of Africa but despite all the efforts inter-Africa trade is only 15 percent of the total trade volume. “Compared to other continents like the European Union which stands at 60 percent is very low. So we need to integrate among our selves. We need to trade and invest. And the most critical economic enabler to facilitate foreign currency in order to get raw materials used to make rebar, mainly billets. In addition to this, they also asked the Agency to cover future costs incurred for test results of its rebars, according to Abdakadir Redwan, deputy general manager of the Agency. These two preconditions are unacceptable, he said. Given these demands from Steely, the Agency will decide on the fate of the bid as of this week, The Reporter has learnt. On the other hand, Abyssinia is expected to deliver the products in the coming few months. This bid was a part of a large purchase by the Agency which was floated for only local producers almost six months ago. The Agency floated a tender to purchase 50,084 tons of reinforcement bars from local producers. During the bidding process, which was floated twice, some of the local producers were almost on the verge of winning the supply yet still failed to agree on terms. The bid was for the supply of 10mm, 12mm, 14mm, 16mm, 20mm, and 24mm reinforcement bars. The amount in tones for each grade size is 12,519, 6,692, 6,994, 9,306, 5,882, and 8,689, respectively.

During that time, it was only Steely which managed to reach into the final stages. During the initial stage of the bid in October 2017, the company listed 1.23 billion birr for the overall supply. Following this, the Agency accepted the respective offers by Steely, except for the one given for 20mm, and 24mm reinforcement bars, attributing the rejection to expensive prices quoted in comparison to the market prices instead. Later, the Agency decided to rebid the tenders for the two sizes. By that time, the company gave 24,773.1 birr and 24, 773.1 birr for one ton of 20mm, and 242mm bars, respectively. However, the offers for the remaining diameters were also interrupted by Birr’s currency devaluation which complicated the process even further.

So far, except the contract awarded to Abyssinia, none of the bid from the aforementioned suppliers were able to proceed to a final stage. Established in 2011, Abyssinia is a private joint venture which produces and supplies reinforcement bars in the country.

Abyssinia inks multimillion birr deal

By Dawit Endeshaw

After almost six months of delay, the Addis Ababa Public Procurement and Property Disposal Agency finally signed a contract agreement worth 172 million birr with a local steel producer, Abyssinia Integrated Steel.

It is to be recalled that the latest separate rebidding, for 20mm and 24mm rebar, four local companies along with Abyssinia showed an interest including Guna Trading House (representing Habesh Steel Mills PLC), Steely, and C&E Brothers.

From this, only Abyssinia and Steely made it to the financial stages and later won the supply. In this respect, Abyssinia gave a winning total price of 171.1 million birr and Steely listed 365.0 million birr for the 5,882, and 8,689, tons of 20mm and 24mm rebar, respectively. By the time, Abyssinia accepted the award while Steely came up with preconditions before signing the contract.

In this respect, Abyssinia signed a contract with the Agency to supply the rebar. The Reporter has learnt. In this regard, Steely demanded the Agency to facilitate foreign currency in order to get raw materials used to make rebar, mainly billets. In addition to this, they also asked the Agency to cover future costs incurred for test results of its rebars, according to Abdakadir Redwan, deputy general manager of the Agency. These two preconditions are unacceptable, he said. Given these demands from Steely, the Agency will decide on the fate of the bid as of this week. The Reporter has learnt. On the other hand, Abyssinia is expected to deliver the products in the coming few months. This bid was a part of a large purchase by the Agency which was floated for only local producers almost six months ago. The Agency floated a tender to purchase 50,084 tons of reinforcement bars from local producers. During the bidding process, which was floated twice, some of the local producers were almost on the verge of winning the supply yet still failed to agree on terms. The bid was for the supply of 10mm, 12mm, 14mm, 16mm, 20mm, and 24mm reinforcement bars. The amount in tones for each grade size is 12,519, 6,692, 6,994, 9,306, 5,882, and 8,689, respectively.

During that time, it was only Steely which managed to reach into the final stages. During the initial stage of the bid in October 2017, the company listed 1.23 billion birr for the overall supply. Following this, the Agency accepted the respective offers by Steely, except for the one given for 20mm, and 24mm reinforcement bars, attributing the rejection to expensive prices quoted in comparison to the market prices instead. Following this, the Agency accepted the respective offers by Steely, except for the one given for 20mm, and 24mm reinforcement bars, attributing the rejection to expensive prices quoted in comparison to the market prices instead. By that time, the company gave 24,773.1 birr and 24, 773.1 birr for one ton of 20mm, and 242mm bars, respectively. However, the offers for the remaining diameters were also interrupted by Birr’s currency devaluation which complicated the process even further. So far, except the contract awarded to Abyssinia, none of the bid from the aforementioned suppliers were able to proceed to a final stage.

Established in 2011, Abyssinia is a private joint venture which produces and supplies reinforcement bars in the country.
Chinese business manager requests termination of charges, travel ban

By Tamiru Tsige

Chinese business manager charged along with CCS COMSERVICE Solutions PLC for evading taxes amounting to four million birr, has partially settled the payment, Dai said; and that he should be held responsible for something that is being settled amicably. It was also stated in the complaint letter that CCM’s general manager at the time, Song Chang, Yung Dai, the acting general manager, of the company since September 3, 2012 and Du Yu, the current general manager of CCM COMSERVICES, were all included in the charge. The case hinges upon the discovery of phony receipts during desk audit conducted on the company, according to the letter. Mentioning that the receipts in question were collected before he assumed the acting managerial position in the company, Dai argued that he “should not be accountable for what has already been done before he was given the responsibility.” Although Dai has already left the company and is now working for the China-based An Hui Antai Technology Ltd Co., he was prohibited from leaving the country and said that he is unable to communicate with his company as well as his family. Although the former general manager of the company, Song Chang, was charged along with Dai, his charges were terminated as he has already left the country. He was the company’s general manager until September 2, 2012. Hence, the acting general manager requested the Attorney General for his charges to be terminated as he should not be held accountable for the receipts, power of attorney documents, as well as appellant letters that were issued during his tenure and he should be given the freedom to work in the country. The complaint also includes that, if his request for termination of the charges is not to be accepted, his bail payment of 400,000 should be enough to get him released or he will make additional payments to at least visit his home country. In addition to his complaint, Dai has also submitted his rebuttal to the court looking into his case mentioning that the process is against the legal procedure and details of the charges were not told to him by the prosecutors and the charges were misguided and confusing.

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representatives in Ethiopia that it could not assure the guarantee under such circumstances.  

Shakeel has also brought a check from its bank in Pakistan as a guarantee and tried to submit it to the corporation, sources close to the company said.  

However, this attempt has also failed because CBE did not accept it, added company sources.  

“We brought the check because the contract agreement allows doing so,” an official from Shakeel said.  

They rejected the check contrary to the contract agreement, said the source.  

This back-and-forth finally led the corporation reporting the problems the Service was given a mandate to float the tender and award it to a bidder offering the least price. In this regard, along with Shakeel, a handful of international suppliers such as Promising International, Hakain Agro, ADM International and Amproga AG, competed in the bid.  

However, Shakeel, new to the Ethiopian market, fared better than the aforementioned companies with long experience operating in Ethiopia.  

It has managed to give an average least offer of 2.01 billion birr for four lots whereas the second least offer came from Promising with an average price of USD 246.67, per ton or a total offer of 2.657 billion birr.  

At the time, the total offer from Shakeel was 700 million birr lower than another purchase made a month previously, and having equivalent quantity.  

The Service then awarded the bid to Shakeel and transferred contract administration to the corporation.

Unfortunately, Shakeel failed to supply the bulk on time.  

“We have learned from the corporation that Shakeel failed to proceed,” said Michael, general director of the Service.  

“I received a letter from the corporation that the contract which was given to Shakeel has been canceled,” he said.  

Following contract cancellation, the company will be barred from taking part in any future bidding activity in Ethiopia and it will also forfeit its USD 15,000 bid bond, according to Yigezu.  

Sources close to Shakeel, on the other hand, told The Reporter that they were not formally informed of contract cancellation.  

The Reporter has also learnt from sources that Shakeel was asking a 15-day extension until their bank in Pakistan established a formal relationship with CBE.

Regarding the extension, neither the Service nor the corporation gave us a response, claimed the source.  

Following the cancellation, the Service will ask the second and third bidders to supply the wheat. In this regard, it was Promising and Bunge SA that gave a total offer of 2.607 billion and 2.711 billion birr, respectively.  

“If these two companies could not supply the wheat, we will re-issue the bid.” said Yigezu.  

He also speculated that given the delay in the procurement process, there might happen a shortage of wheat locally, and the corporation new heads of state might be forced to consider other ways to borrow the grain from the Strategic Food Reserve Agency.

Since the wheat is supposed to be distributed to more than 5,000 bakeries and 300 flour-mills.

**New wine in old ...**

Although self-reliance is one of agenda topics for the AU Heads of States and Government Summit in Addis Ababa from January 28 to 30, 2018, Mugabe is not among the dignitaries, for the AU Government Summit in Addis Ababa.

According to the AU’s agenda topics for discussions in summit.

Self-financing of the AU was what Mugabe has been campaigning for during his time as the chair of the AU from 2015 to 2016.

But, in an unexpected intervention from Mugabe in his latter transition in Zimbabwe, Mugabe was forced to step down after 17 years of tenure, bringing his deputy, Emerson Mnangagwa to the helm.  

Mnangagwa, who is said to be more revolutionary than his predecessor, is the new face of Zimbabwe and he heads the AU and its heads of state meeting the starts tomorrow.

The last independence fighter among the gathering zone, the vibe in the summit is not the same as it was a year or two before,” Tilahun told The Reporter in phone interview, and the corporation will face no problems as long as it cooperates with the zonal administration and the youth to address these demands. “The plan to add value to the tantalum products instead of just selling the raw extract, for example, is a good move by the government as it will create more jobs to the youth,” Tilahun added.

However, Tilahun cautioned that the zonal administration will be forced to consider other ways to cater to the demands if the Corporation fails to address the demands of the youth.

Nevertheless, the zonal head did not deny the closure of the Kenticha Tantalu Mine. But, he attributed the cause to its impacts on the environment; and the fact that it was executed by the order of the region’s environmental protection authority.

Hassan Youus (PhD), head of the region’s Forest, Environmental Protection and Climatic Change Authority, on his part, told The Reporter that the Plant was not closed but was ordered to suspend operations because of the threat posed by the plant that the Corporation built to hold water for the use in the mining process. The plant is full of water and it is becoming a threat to the people around it, he said.

The dam was reported to have killed people and animals, previously.

“Tilahun has been saying that it has no financial capacity to avert the risk and that led to the decision to suspend the plant. However, it has nothing to do with the region’s plans to create jobs for the youth,” Hassan argued further.

Nevertheless, a couple of days ago, both officials went on record on the regional broadcaster, the Oromia Broadcasting Network (OBN), about the closure of the Mine and plans to partially transfer the concession to the youth.

The Corporation’s Communications Head, Bulti Wudajo, on his part, commented that the Mine has halted production having mid-Novevember and the government had decided to provide a budget for the improvement of the said hazardous dam that created fear among the residents.

He also told The Reporter that the dam has not been as full as indicated by the zonal authorities and the closure of the Mine is not related to the dam but to “a previous plan to transfer it to the youth”.  

Bulti also said that considering the issue of job creation, the Corporation has budgeted some three million birr annually, beginning from this year having secured the go-ahead from its board.

This job creation alternative offered by the Corporation was totally rejected by the zonal administration, according to the Communications Head.

Efforts by the Ministry of Mining, Petroleum and Natural Resources to bring reconciliation to situation have born no fruit thus far, Bulti told The Reporter.

He also said, the request made by the Corporation to the regional government for further discussion is yet to be accepted.

On top of that, a recent decision passed by the Ministry of Public Enterprises (MoPE) to partially privatize the Kenticha Tantalu Mine and the bid it has floated to that effect was reported to have created confusion among officials of the region and the Corporation.

Although the bidding process is scheduled to be complete by April, the Corporation still expresses its concern regarding the possible complications that might arise in face of the intended transfer.

However, Wondafrash Asea, Communications Head of the Ministry of Public Enterprises, don’t believe that there will be any problem to the bidding process.

Transfer to regional authorities can take effect if and only if the federal government gives its go-ahead, according to Wondafrash.

“As the Corporation is licensed by the Ministry of Mining, Petroleum and Natural Resources and as it is a legally recognized body to extract and process the mineral in the area, it is impossible to revoke its holdings,” he added.

**Controversy engulfs ...**

The wheat is supposed to be distributed to more than 5,000 bakeries and 300 flour-mills.

**Gov’t cancels wheat ...**

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Invitation to prospective business partners for joint venture engagement to mine the Kenticha lithium – tantalum pegmatite deposit and to add values to its concentrates

Bid Notice NO. 002JV/2018

1. The Ministry of Public Enterprises (MoPE) pursuant to the powers and duties vested in it by Article 6 of Proclamation No. 916/2015, hereby declares the opening of the Kenticha lithium – tantalum pegmatite deposit for mining and then add values to its concentrates in respect of which it is inviting proposal for a Joint Venture (JV).

2. The Ministry of Public Enterprises invites capable domestic/foreign companies to develop/upgrade/expand the Kenticha lithium – tantalum pegmatite deposit for mining and add values by concluding Joint Venture (JV) contracts with the Ministry:

3. Business partners must be legally established companies having operated in similar sectors.

4. Business partners must have technical know-how, managerial capability, access to global markets, financial soundness, etc.

5. The bidders should provide the full name of the company, contact person, postal address, telephone (mobile) number and fax no., e-mail, ownership structure of the company, audited financial statements for the past three years, company profile/credentials including capital, turn over, market, man power, etc.

6. Interested bidders either individually or as a consortium should submit their proposal together with company profiles.

7. Bidders can obtain documents during working hours up on payment of non-refundable Birr 300.00 (Three Hundred Birr) or the equivalent in US dollars.

8. The bid documents will be available in the Ministry of Public Enterprises, in-front of former Imperial Hotel (currently Amora Building), Ministry of Public Enterprises Block 3 Building, second floor, Room No. 204 Starting from January 23, 2018.

9. Bidders shall submit bid bond in accordance with the Instructions to Bidders as stated in the Bid document.

10. Bids should be submitted before dead line in envelops on or before April 16, 2018 at 3:00 P.M local time in 2nd floor room No 204.

11. The bids shall be open on April 16, 2018 2018 at 3:15 P.M local time in 2nd floor room No 202/Meeting Hall.

12. Bids submitted after the dead line will not be accepted.

13. The Ministry reserves the right to accept or reject.

14. BIDS shall be submitted as follows:

By Samuel Getachew

As Ethiopia’s coffee export grows to the tune of over USD one billion, according to the Ethiopian Coffee and Tea Development and Marketing Authority, Ethiopian coffees have once again dominated the Good Food Awards this year as the world’s best coffee. All the coffees named as such hail from Ethiopia.

The Award based in the United States has had a love affair with a number of Ethiopian coffee brands awarding it more than 50 awards since 2010. The nation’s important sources of foreign exchange, Ethiopia continues to invest in the production of its coffee and invite foreign investors.

From Hambela, Banko Goliti, Tikur Anbessa, Gedeb, Limu Dabesa, Bishan Fugu and almost a dozen others were announced the recipients of the award.

Known as the home of coffee, Ethiopian coffee has been gaining popularity, competing with those from Columbia, Vietnam and Brazil and sold at cafes around the world, notably at Starbucks locations in the United States and Europe.

“The basic qualification to compete is all the entries are to be made without GM ingredients, using good animal husbandry and without the use of artificial ingredients, hormones, synthetic pesticides, herbicides, fertilizer and most importantly, crafted in the US,” according to the organizers.

“For quality for entry, roasters and coffee farmers must emphasize fairness and transparency from seed to cup.”

For Ethiopia, coffee production is a source of needed foreign exchange and accounts three percent of the world’s coffee market. Coffee is about 30 percent of its export earnings according to the National Bank of Ethiopia. The country is known as the producer of some of the best Arabica coffee, including noted brands such as Harar, Sidamo and Yirgachefe.

Based in the United States, the competition aims to showcase the best food producers and farmers and recognizes “the food we all want to eat: tasty, authentic and responsibly produced”.

MINISTRY OF PUBLIC ENTERPRISES

Invitation to prospective business partners for joint venture engagement to mine the Kenticha lithium - tantalum pegmatite deposit and to add values to its concentrates

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professionals like Doland Kaberuka — the erstwhile president African Development Bank — had already come up with list of proposals to reform the structure and the working procedure of the AU. The so called “reform agenda” has been on the table since the transformation of the OAU to the AU in 2002. Among other things, one of the major issues that prompted reform back then was the disappointment in the fact that this big continent of over one billion people was unable to cover the budgetary requirement of its 50-year old continental block, thereby lacking strong mechanisms and tools to implement its decisions. However, after two decades of mulling over this issue, to the dismay of many Africans, the AU still remains dependent on external sources for its budget depriving it of much needed independence to set its own course.

Nonetheless, AU member states remain severely crippled to implement their decision and take preventive and interventionist measures to control some crisis situations consuming the continent at large.
Consequently, the continental block and its bi-annual summit are severely criticized by fellow Africans for it doesn’t address the major and some of the most critical challenges the continent is facing. In fact, most critics argue that these ceremonial summits are rather spent on discussing simpler and softer issues which doesn’t require political commitment or the will of top statesmen.

The AU, as its predecessor OAU, has been blamed for being disconnected from the African people and the real issues in the continent which is ensuring peace and security, human rights and fighting corruption. As it is increasingly shying away from critical matters and some of the leaders even accused of fostering the challenges, the continental block and its bi-annual summit is sometimes belittled as “The Dictator’s Club”.

In this regard, many commentators on African matters have argued that the organization itself and its bi-annual Heads of States and Governments Summit is a place where politicians go to meet and greet before going back to their problem riddled corners of the continent.

For one, despite its aim of promoting democracy and good governance, the AU has shown to be lacking force when observing elections; stayed silent when there are clear signs of rigged elections, commenters say.

According to many scholars the major hurdle that hinders the African leaders to address the critical issues in the continent is that it does not have a room to incorporate the voices of the people.

AU yet to find... page 38
Enterprising social agenda

Since 2015, Farah Ramza Golant has held the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) position at Girl Effect, a creative social enterprise launched by Nike Foundation, United Nations Foundation and other multiple partners 12 years ago. Girl Effect aims to create programs to empower adolescent girls living in poverty, working through multimedia, safe spaces, mobile and interactive technology. Having a global portfolio of 48 million people in 60 countries, Girl Effect is also active in Ethiopia since 2013 by establishing Yegna, a brand through which five girls try to disrupt the cycle of poverty and empower girls in Ethiopia. Yegna is an all-woman (five) Ethiopian acting and pop group with the stated aim of reaching out to empower the young women of Ethiopia. Golant, who has 28 years of business experience in the creative industries, joined Girl Effect to impact lives for the better. She served as CEO of All3media, leading the strategic sale of the company for its private equity owners,Permira, for enterprise value of USD 930 million.

Among others, her role in the former British Prime Minister David Cameron’s Business Advisory Group, from 2013 to 2015, and as business ambassador for the Creative Industries of Britain are the most notable ones. She also served on the advisory board of the Cambridge Judge Business School and the Aldo Group. In 2011, she was awarded a Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (CBE) and was named as Business Woman of the year in 2010 Asian Women of Achievement Awards. As part of her portfolio, she was in town to deal with some strategic partners.

Birhanu Fikade of The Reporter caught up with Golant to learn more about the fate of Yegna which saw it funding from DFID cut after intense negative campaign in UK press. Excerpts:

The Reporter: Let’s talk about Yegna. Since 2013, the program has remained very active in advocating about girls’ empowerment and has been contributed to mainstreaming girls’ issues such as awareness about early marriage and the like. What can be said about its current existence and its role?

Farha Ramzan Golant: Yegna is now five years old and it was created in Ethiopia for Ethiopians by Ethiopians from Ethiopians. With 70 percent of the country’s population under the age of 30, the rise of media, mobile, popular programing, television and radio programs are taking a special place among the Ethiopian youth. Yegna is a brand that could speak their language and identify with their reality giving them the tools to express themselves. It was born before my time as a CEO. Yegna was started in Addis but eventually went out to the Amhara Regional State. It’s an innovation and there is a genuine investment that we have made in Ethiopia knowing that there is a rising youth and with that an on-going transformation and challenge. The youth wants to participate in the story of the rising and modern Ethiopia.

Hence, Yegna was born and nurtured. Through that journey we had great partners but then Yegna has come to the end of its first cycle. It is very rooted in the power of music and in the power of television, radio drama and in the power of talk shows, platforms which encourage interaction. Over five years, we have learnt a lot. We grew and when the cycle end, it became clear that Yegna had critical mass. It’s an asset. Hence, there is now enough capacity and critical mass for us to invest in. In the second stage, we want to make Yegna national. We have already reached just under 10 million people in Addis and Amhara. That ten percent penetration of out of the 100 million population is a remarkable achievement and we want to take it to the national level. We are looking for likeminded partners to come in. During the second cycle, we want to take Yegna further to reach more girls and boys; we want families to listen to the show together so that parents and children discuss about the issues.

Before we go into the details, may I ask how you monitor the activities of Yegna since they air their programs in local language? How do you see the impacts of the programs?

I had 28 years of experience in the private sector. I come from media, mobile, television and the first thing you want to measure in these sectors is of course the level of awareness, your engagement WITH audience and the participation levels. We do national representative surveys. We also do field monitoring activities using very sophisticated tools. Hence, one part of that monitoring has got to do with the evaluation of how many people are aware. We also look into how many people are listening, how many of them are coming to the clubs, and how many people are actually talking about it in schools.

We call the whole package an audience participation level. Once we have measured that, we will go to the impact indicators. We measure four things in general. Have we shifted knowledge? Have we filled the knowledge gap? These are some of the things we concentrate on. Change in the attitudes is the second measurement. Then we track and model changes in...
behavior. We invest a lot of money in that. We don't do that alone and we have many development partners. We have the likes of Global Alliance for Vaccines (GAVI). They even measure people who know Yegna, understand Yegna and the participation level at schools. Hence, the measurement is very strong. So, far it gives us confidence to say that the intervention has become a program that is unlocking rising youth generation.

You are telling me a very interesting story but, unfortunately, DFID has decided, especially, in the funding to Yegna last year. Clearly your enthusiasms were not shared by DFID. What went wrong?

I couldn't speak for DFID. But, I am happy to have on the record the absolute truth. DFID was an early stage partner. They came in and invested along side us. It was an innovation; it was something that we needed to know, back then. What I am prepared to say is that as DFID went through in its own cycle and on its own prioritization, the leadership's priorities appeared to have shifted. They felt they had played their part; and they had.

In fact, as the relationship was concluding, it gave us the window to reinvent ourselves. Thus, from that negativity, we were able to see what Yegna was now; what has it become and where does it go next. As in our book, I can say in absolute confidence that Yegna has got stronger, bigger and it's here for the long term; yet we also seek partners who are interested in media, mobile and who are interested in the audience. It was a terrific relationship we had with DFID and it concluded.

DFID stated that it has invested around five million pounds in Yegna and what they have said was that they are no more interested to invest. You have been in the circles of the former Prime Minister David Cameron and you must have known what has transpired. Did they, all of the sudden, withdraw resources from Yegna?

What can I say to you except I can't speak for DFID? I can only speak for Girl Effect and our belief in the asset. I can say to you that the data is there for anyone to examine. DFID themselves did a project completion report and published an "A" rating for Yegna by their own system and process. What more can I say except that they looked at the opportunities and I have no idea how they make their decision? It's not my job. I think the ratings speak for themselves.

The philosophy that is guiding Yegna is also a bit different. I think. There are five girls whom some people refer to as the "Spice Girls of Ethiopia". They have been the voice and the face of your programs. How did select this model and become convinced that the girls would spread the intended message to the need audience and represent the brand across the country?

We leveraged a lot of global expertise. We have the experience of multiple markets where we have done something similar. We have a youth brand in Rwanda. We have another in Malawi. We have in Ethiopia and we have a very strong work in Nigeria. We work in South Africa, Indonesia and in Philippines. The first thing we did when we went to work in Yegna was that we included our global muscle behind us. Don't get me wrong, it is very local and very rooted in Ethiopian culture, but it also firmly draws from our global muscle from Girl Effect.

The program is 25 years old with a lot of experience in the field. It works with 150 partners in 60 countries way before my time. Originally, Girl Effect was founded by Nike Foundation and other multiple partners. They wanted to do something disruptive and different. That is what gave us the confidence to come to this idea. It was a version of the idea we have in Rwanda before Ethiopia. It works on how to liberate girls, how you give them instruments and how to use drama and talk shows to that end. We have done some work in Rwanda. Then in Ethiopia, the idea was reborn literally with the five girls. We did enormous research. We came into the country and we listened and learned and many insights have been uncovered. But, one of the key drivers of girls who felt the limits that needed to be lifted was the sense of the power of friendship and the harmful effects of isolation. Friends can create so much support. You learn from each other. You share each other's stories. You create support networks for each other. That was very deep. Of course, there are issues in education and safety but it just kept coming back to the power of friendship. The group created here does something that is really uniquely Ethiopian though music. In the lyrics of one of the songs (Aber) it created the voice of Ethiopian and African girls about migration. We know that they create music. Each girl conforms to a well-known understanding. Each girl is a role model and typology. One is slightly city oriented. One is very rural and one is very hipster. Hence, the drama brings very strong characters together and they make music.

In the drama they create situations which make the audience identify with story and feel like they are understood; it makes audience say that this is "my story and that's my reality". The identification of issues is incredibly strong. Through time, we have refined the idea and the power of music went far and beyond Addis Ababa and Amhara region. The idea is based around friendship, Solidarity and sharing resources in order to rise.

Tell me how involving the girls make a difference in peoples' lives, especially what benefits do we target to boys and girls and do you think everybody is convinced with the idea?

I would never be arrogant enough to say that everybody is convinced. But, I would say that we have observed a very high engagement. Everywhere we go, not only our audience but others as well gives us feedbacks; but you can see the power of it because it feels like it is tapping into something that is very relevant. This brand as it talks to the audiences, it's relevant. It's entertaining, educational and gives you a sense of solidarity. Most brands in the world, would cut off their arms to have that kind of power. It's not actually my job to convince people because this is an Ethiopian phenomenon. Whether they convinced or not this phenomenon is growing. Whether you say "I really believe in this thing" or not it's growing and there is engagement. Another way to look at it would be to in terms of attracting a handful of other partners. For instance, I was with Ethiopian Airlines and the fact that Yegna was uniquely invited to the first all women operated journey from Addis to Bangkok to perform on that event shows you that it is a brand that speaks to the empowerment of girls. Does it convince people? Well Ethiopian Airlines wanted it to be part of their brand. Sometimes the brand is judged by the company you keep.

For instance, the last January, the African Union Commission invited Yegna to perform not only to represent Ethiopia as a national asset but to represent the voice of African girls. Hence, if you are looking for indicators of magnetic appeal, a professional private sector player such as the Ethiopian Airlines or the African Union or big global development player, GAVI, have invested and said we have got something special happening. Yegna is creating traction with the youth. I guess these people are convinced.

How do you compare the works of Yegna with peers in Rwanda or else? Are they performing well and to your expectations?

Globally, my job is strategically look at the whole area where our investment capital is going, to empower the owners of Yegna, Girl Effect Ethiopia, to give them strategic guidance but they are free to make their brand. What I see across the portfolio is that we have a template that works; but how it is expressed in each country has to be very different. Yegna is very foundational with music. Where as in Rwanda yes, they do have music but the thing very important there is magazine. It is like we have a little playbook and people can draw from that playbook what works.

Hence, it's very hard to make apples and oranges sort of comparisons. At the global scale, I look at how much capital we are allocating, how much is the cost per each and what is the deep impact we are seeing. We create a global playbook and brand. Yegna is very unique and there is a special role in our portfolio which is going to scale rapidly. We are also working in India and in the
Goethe-Institute Addis Ababa, that hosts arts and culture related events, was crowded with numerous people earlier this week. An event like no other was about to commence and many were eagerly waiting.

There were swivel chairs on every corner each with a virtual reality headset on them. One can choose from a list of short movies and bask in the world of virtual reality—which is one of the most fascinating technologies in the world today.

Samsung virtual reality (VR) gear was dedicated to movies selected from Kenya, Senegal and Ghana.

For most of the audience it was their very first time to experience cinema in the virtual dimension. Some of them were clinging on to the swivel chair in disbelief of the real-like virtual world. There were few people who kept taking off the headset every now and then since what they saw through the glasses was too close the reality around them. They could see the characters in the movies exactly as they were at the scene of the film.

The audience, who can see the 360-degree set of the movie, has the privilege to perceive the entire environment of the movie just by rotating the chair or moving their head. It was a remarkable experience for many, as they wanted to see more movies after trying one or two.

The exhibition “New Dimensions—Virtual Reality Africa” brought forth four African movies: “The Other Dakar” from Senegal, “Spirit Robot” from Ghana and “Let This be a Warning” and “Nairobi Berries” from Kenya. The movies were displayed at Goethe-Institute Addis Ababa and iceaddis for four days.

The computer technology virtual reality uses virtual reality headsets or multi-projected environments. These physical environments or props are designed to generate realistic images, sounds and other sensations that simulate viewer’s physical presence in a virtual or imaginary environment. A person using virtual reality equipment can look around this imaginary world.

The technology has evolved to a point that with high quality VR users are able
to move around and interact with virtual features.

The virtual reality effect is created by virtual reality headsets consisting of a head-mounted display with a small screen in front of the eyes. The effect can also be created through specially designed rooms with multiple large screens.

These days, virtual reality is applied to almost every sector including medicine, engineering, architecture, heritage preservation, marketing and video gaming. It has also been one aspect of the arts sector with its effect that is similar to the real world. Films produced for VR allow the audience to view a 360-degree environment in every scene.

Virtual reality has entered the sporting world and there has been some efforts to transmit matches in VR. It is also a part of kid’s entertainment as some companies has been installing it onto roller coasters.

VR is now a part of surgery training and a 360-degree video is recorded during operations. In regards to education, primary schooling, space, pilot and military trainings are now being given using VR.

In terms of visual arts, there are various exhibitions and festivals dedicated to VR based artistic pieces. Artists are suing the VR medium as an optional method to express their ideas and it is attracting a number of audience. Music videos and concerts are now being presented using VR. It is believed VR has created an intense experience to the arts.

According to the organizers, “New Dimensions—Virtual Reality Africa” exhibition is intended to showcase vibrant, diverse and ever-changing cultural landscape of contemporary Africa.

“Spirit Robot” is a nine-minute documentary by Ghanaian science fiction author and founder of the Afrocyberpunk website Jonathan Dotse. In the movie he explored the Chale Wote Street Art Festival in Accra. The festival has been described as a driving factor of art renaissance in the city’s public spaces.

“Nairobi Berries” is a poetic city symphony about Nairobi by the Kenyan photographer Ng’endo Mukii. The synopsis reads “In the empty spaces we cannot claim as our own, in forests full of smoke and beneath still waters, two women and a man wrangle. Each must hollow out the other’s core for fruits promised but only ever borne in dreams. For this is Nairobi, the city we call home.”

“The Other Dakar” is a short film by Senegalese fashion designer Selly Raby Kane. It depicts a little girl who is chosen to discover the invisible Dakar.

The Kenyan artistic crew The Nest Collective created “Let This be a Warning”, a seven-minute movie that explores a future in which a group of Africans have left earth to create a colony on a distant planet. In the film they respond with disquiet to the arrival of an uninvited and unwelcome guest.

After watching few minutes of the movie, viewers understand they are the “uninvited and unwelcome guest” since the story revolves around them being the focus. All the characters speak keeping the emphasis on the viewer, who feels as if everything is happening for real.

According to the organizers, the Goethe-Institute and Cape Town based non-profit organization Electric South aim to provide support and mentorship to African storytellers and...
In view of the revival of national unity

The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia's Constitution of 1995 envisions present-day Ethiopia as a grand political community to be founded on the 'rule of law', 'capable of ensuring lasting peace', 'guaranteeing democratic order' as well as 'promoting the rapid socio-economic development' of its inhabitants. Admittedly, there is no such thing as nation-building word by word in the entire text of the constitution, writes Merhatsidk Mekonnen Abayneh.

In a country which is, by far, not short of national, regional and international conferences, another glorious symposium of its kind was hosted on the 16 and 17 of January 2018 in the town of Bishoftu, Oromia Regional State. According to the concept note accompanying to the table at the time, the main pre-occupation of this one was to discuss nation-building as a buzz concept first and gradually develop a model that would perhaps suit Ethiopia on an inflated impression of what the terms 'nation' and 'nation-building' themselves constitute from the standpoint of our current domestic predicament.

With the presence of a few senior government officials noticeable, invitees to the symposium were largely drawn from the spectrum of the society such as the academia, opposition political parties, civic and religious groupings, the media and foreign embassies based in Addis as well as the Ethiopian People’s Revolutionary Party (EPRDF) war veterans and other prominent personalities far and wide. Definitely, the academic community from the Addis Ababa University appears to have dominated the attendance and badly drafted new law.

Out of the 58 years the code was suspended and, in some cases; this outdated code against this and any other feedbacks seem to me that it has ended up without even producing an agreeable formula of what the terms 'nation' and 'nation-building' themselves constitute from the standpoint of our current domestic predicament.

With that tremendous intellectual resource, it was originally anticipated that this high-level conference would conceptualize nation-building in the contemporary era, critically scrutinize into its essential ingredients and subsequently come up with a meaningful instrumentality capable of lifting the country out of its abysmal state of affairs feared to accelerate or hasten its political collapse. Nevertheless, it seems to me that it has ended up without even producing an agreeable formula of what the terms 'nation' and 'nation-building' themselves constitute from the standpoint of our current domestic predicament.

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In view of the revival ... page 30

Revising the Ethiopian Commercial Code

At the recently held second East Africa Peace and Security Summit, I had the chance to present a paper on the current state of share companies in Ethiopia and the risks and opportunities associated with it. My presentation and another presentation by the consultant-turned-investor Zemedeneh Nigatu triggered interests and a wide range of discussions in the media.

The topic is quite wide and it was very difficult to present this complex subject in a short presentation. Ethiopian share companies are marred with have political, economic and legal issues that need to be addressed.

The argument regarding political and economic issues can be presented in another commentary but the legal issue is important and there is a consensus for review of the Ethiopian Commercial Code.

The Ethiopian Commercial Code is 58 years old and there are some reports that the commercial code is being revised. I did not manage to get a copy of the revised draft so I could not comment on it but the revision of the code has to be done with sole purpose of enabling businesses to flourish and creating prosperity, and should not be revised with control in mind.

In this commentary I have tried to highlight some of the issues that need to be updated in the Ethiopian Commercial Code and the team that is tasked to revise the code capital. May it useful to check the revised code against this and any other feedbacks from stakeholders before passing the law. Special care must be given during reviewing the code and, in some cases; this outdated commercial code could serve better than a badly drafted new law.

Out of the 58 years the code was suspended between 1975 and 1991 during a blanket day imposed in whatever manner.

The commercial code of Ethiopia was drafted in 1960 long before many of the financial innovations and technologies. By the virtue of its age it has many limitations to govern the 21st century commercial transactions through the real and virtual world.

This commercial code has 255 pages, six main titles, and 1,182 articles and many thousand sub articles. It appears that the document was prepared meticulously in 1960 to create a solid foundation for conducting modern business and it has proved to be effective in the last 58 years. In the preface, Emperor Haile-Selassie I sums the vision and the objective of the commercial code perfectly. From the benefit of the hindsight we can see how foresighted the lawyers, advisors and legislative bodies were in drafting and setting a clear objective of the code in enabling businesses; not controlling them.

In the preface the Emperor wrote in the preface:

“The commercial life of Ethiopia has expanded, increasing numbers of Ethiopian and foreign companies have been formed and registered, and more complex methods of conducting modern business and it has proved to be effective in the last 58 years. In the preface, Emperor Haile-Selassie I sums the vision and the objective of the commercial code perfectly. From the benefit of the hindsight we can see how foresighted the lawyers, advisors and legislative bodies were in drafting and setting a clear objective of the code in enabling businesses; not controlling them.

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Every 15 minutes an elephant is killed for its ivory but the problem also includes live animals being captured and smuggled out of countries. The export of big cats, such as lions and cheetahs, is a particular problem in and out of Ethiopia. Traffickers will use increasingly sophisticated methods to smuggle them overland to war-torn Somalia. They will then be shipped across the Red Sea to Yemen where they are taken to several countries, including the United Arab Emirates. Tragically around 80 percent will not survive the perilous journey. Many will fall victim to a condition known as capture myopathy, which is when the body shuts down because of extreme stress.

The export of lions and cheetahs, is a particular problem in and out of Ethiopia. Zelealem Tefera (PhD) country representative of the Born Free Foundation Ethiopia said: “Illegal wildlife trafficking has to stop. The trade for live animals, particular cheetah cubs and lions from East Africa to the Middle East and the Arab Gulf, is a very serious threat to their survival. “Wild animals have feelings, like most of us. Some are social animals and live and hunt in groups, so keeping them isolated sees them develop a variety of emotional and behavioral disorders. “Wild animals also have a role to play in our ecosystem and removing them interferes with the course of nature and has a serious consequence for the stability of the environment. Wild animals belong in the wild.” The Reporter, January 27, 2018 Vol. XXII No. 1116
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#DrinkPositive
Creative artist takes street art into the forest

Hailing from Moscow, artist Evgeny Ches has honed a craft that lies outside of the traditional graffiti genre. Working primarily outdoors, Ches practices ‘cellograffiti’ – the art of painting on plastic wrap rather than solid walls. Images emerge on semi-transparent surfaces, seemingly materializing from thin air and shifting perspective as viewers change their vantage point.

Recently, Ches has created a series of ‘cellograffiti’ installations in the forest, working with humble materials like plastic lining and spray paint. The artist first carefully wraps a few adjacent trees with the transparent sheets, creating a surface on which to spray. Fantastical images — including dinosaurs, polar bears and other woodland creatures — emerge from the middle of the forest abyss. In addition to his series of animals, ches has also completed typographic compositions in the forest, juxtaposed against the otherwise serene and natural background.

He uses these unorthodox canvases to bring his own urban art style into nature. “The contrast seems very interesting to me when street art moves to [the] natural environment,” Ches mentions in a video documenting the process.

Since they are such unnatural exhibits, some might be concerned about their effects on the environment, but Ches says that he removes everything once the project is complete, leaving the scene just as he found it. On the right are some of his works.

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Facebook invents new unit of time called a flick

A Facebook engineer has invented a new unit of time called a flick.
The flick has been designed to help developers keep video effects in sync, according to a description on the code-sharing site GitHub.

A flick, derived from "frame-tick", is 1/705,600,000 of a second - the next unit of time after a nanosecond.

A researcher at Oxford University said the flick wouldn’t have much general impact but may help create better virtual reality experiences.

Flicks are defined in the programming language C++, which is used to generate visual effects for film, television and other media.

Flicks give programmers a way to measure the time between media frames without using fractions.

Matt Hammond, lead research engineer at BBC Research and Development, said this can reduce errors such as stutters in graphics.

“When the numbers used are not integers, errors can gradually creep into computer calculations. These errors can build up over time, eventually causing inaccuracies that become noticeable,” he said.

Flick’s creator, Christopher Horvath, publicly shared his idea on Facebook in early 2017, according to the GitHub description. He then made modifications to the new measurement based on feedback from comments.

A flick is not the first unit of time designed by a major corporation. Swatch introduced Internet Time in 1998, which divides the day into 1,000 “beats”. The measurement - equal to one minute and 26.4 seconds - was designed to eliminate the need for time zones. It has not caught on globally.

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#Cellograffiti
Android now tells you the speed of WiFi networks before you join them

Technology giant, Google yesterday announced that Oreo, the latest version of the Android mobile operating system will now display the speed of nearby open Wi-Fi networks.

The new feature to Oreo will enable people to decide which Wi-Fi network is worth connecting to. People will be updated on Wi-Fi speed in the Wi-Fi settings menu. The menu will display one of four labels: very fast, fast, ok or slow.

According to Google, Wi-Fi speed that is referred to as “very fast” enables you to stream “very high quality videos” whereas “fast” WiFi allows you to stream “most videos”. The intermediate speed which is categorized as “ok” WiFi speed enable basic web browsing, social media and access to video streaming service, Spotify.

However, this new feature only applies to public networks. Private Wi-Fi networks that require passwords do not display any speed data as Google is unable to test them.

They do however indicate signal strength. Although the new feature will provide more information to Wi-Fi users, Google says that network administrators can still maintain some privacy.

According to Google, network administrators can opt out of Android’s Wi-Fi Assistant showing speed information by using a “canary URL”. Apart from the latest Android version announced last month, we take a look at Google’s other additions to their brand that was announced at the end of last year and at the International Consumer Electronics Show this year.

Instagram now supports GIFs in Stories

After months of rumors and limited rollouts, Instagram is officially adding GIF support to its Stories feature. Starting Tuesday, users can now plaster dancing cats and flying cheeseburgers over your photos and videos. The options are endless with hundreds of thousands of moving stickers to choose from thanks to GIPHY integration. Instagram is also announcing an upcoming feature that will let users upload photos and videos of any size to Stories, so users will no longer be forced to awkwardly crop them in that 9:16 (portrait) format.

To access the GIF stickers, tap the add sticker button at the top of Stories as usual. From there, select the new GIF option, and a library of GIFs will appear. Drag the one you want onto your photo or video. There are options to browse trending GIFs on GIPHY or search its entire library.

Instagram is also adding support for photos and videos of any size ratio to be uploaded to Stories. Once enabled, you’ll be able to pinch the uploaded image or video to share it in its original ratio, so you don’t have to explain to your friends why they’ve been abruptly cropped from your story. Instagram says the extra room surrounding the image will be filled with a custom color gradient that matches it.

The GIF stickers are available on version 29 of the app on both iOS and Android.

On January 25, 1971, a military coup led by Idi Amin deposed President Milton Obote. Amin then ruled as president until 1979 when he was ousted by Tanzanian soldiers and Ugandan nationalists.

Emperor Haile Selassie I with other African leaders, like Mwalimu Julius Nyerere of Tanzania. The Emperor encouraged the leaders towards the formation of Organization of African Unity (OAU) today known as African Union (AU).
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**REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST**

**Provision of Inland Transport Services in Somali Region**

1. **Profile**

The World Food Programme (WFP) is the food aid branch of the United Nations, and the world's largest humanitarian organization addressing hunger worldwide. WFP works to assist people who are unable to obtain or produce enough food for themselves and their families.

The main operating areas for WFP in Ethiopia will include Somali Region FDPs, Refugees Camps, covering targeted beneficiaries under KEEP, TDF/BSF, PSNP, REFUGEE and other programs in the County.

2. **Description of Requirements**

The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) in Ethiopia seeks Expressions of Interest (EOI) from qualified national transport companies for the provision of inland road transport services from origins to destinations in Somali Region.

The cargo to be transported will consist of cereals, pulses, edible oils, blended foods, sugar and other food commodities as well as non-food items, as necessary.

The cargo is to be uplifted mainly from Jijiga, Hartishiek, Kebridhar and Gode in addition, and other food commodities as well as non-food items, as necessary.

3. **Required services**

3.1 Provide inland road transport services for the movement of food commodities and non-food items from the aforementioned origins and when available, during the implementation of a transport agreement, WFP will share with the selected company (ies) a 6-month overview of the expected food movements on the specified routes.

Having this overview will allow transport companies to better plan their capacities and resources accordingly.

4. **Required Documents**

4.1 Company’s confirmation in writing of their interest to join WFP database for the requested services, clearly stipulating the preferred area origins.

4.2 Trade registration and business license

4.3 Renewed license from Federal Transport Authorities

4.4 List of owned trucks certified by government Transport Authorities

4.5 VAT Registration certificate and Tax Payers registration

4.6 Company has updated profile information, including contact details (e-mail address, website, address/physical location, telephone, fax number, E-mail address and contact details of representatives in Somali Region are mandatory.

4.7 Information regarding the company’s financial status (Financial Statement, Balance sheets or Audit reports accompanied by a letter of sound accounts transactions from the company’s Bank).

4.8 Previous contracts with NGO’s/INGOs and others (Recommendation letter from three (3) major clients)

Non-provision of the required information may result in exclusion of the company from further consideration.

5. **Important Notice**

In responding, the EOI must be clearly labelled with the desired commodities for the requested services, clearly stipulating the preferred area origins.

WFP reserves the right to change or cancel the requirements at any time during the EOI. WFP also reserves the right to disregard companies from further consideration if the company is not deemed to conform to the above conditions. Thus submitting a reply to this EOI does not automatically guarantee that company expressing interest will be considered for receipt of the solicitation if and when issued.

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<td>WFP Logistics Unit</td>
<td>98765432</td>
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</table>

Inland logisticscontracting@wfp.org

www.thereporterethiopia.com
Completion of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam is a must

It is given that the Blue Nile, otherwise known as Abay River, is one of the major tributaries of the rivers flowing into Sudan and Egypt. The Blue Nile is known to be the longest river in Africa and starts its journey from Lake Tana in Ethiopia. It flows from the highlands of Ethiopia collecting on its way smaller tributaries and carrying with it the most fertile soil, washed during the rainy season, from Ethiopia to Egypt. Blue Nile merges with White Nile, which hails from Lake Victoria, in Uganda and continues its journey to Egypt and beyond. It is a common knowledge that while the White Nile starts in other parts of East Africa, the Blue Nile pours out of the Ethiopian highlands. Therefore, it is safe to say that the Blue Nile is nature’s gift to Ethiopia and according to the principals of national sovereignty, Ethiopia has the right to use her natural resources.

The principle of national sovereignty over its resources – such as gold, silver, oil and large bodies of water – emphasizes that a nation that has sovereignty over such resources has the right to deny other nations access to or the use of its resources. Due to the influence of colonial powers, such principle has been repeatedly overlooked in the Ethiopian case. It is commonplace, that water not only plays an important role in the national and international economy, but also plays a key and a very significant role in sustaining human and animal life. Water is used in agriculture to produce food, and to supply electric power which is used to keep hospitals, hotels, motels, and public transportation system running and used to light homes, cities, as well as for cooking and washing. Driven by their selfish interest, three European powers of the day, namely Britain, France and Italy conspired to deny Ethiopia her sovereign rights over the use of river Blue Nile of Egypt. Thus the above-mentioned colonial powers laid the foundation for the continued conflict between Ethiopia and Egypt over the use of Abay River to this day. To repeat, Abay or Blue Nile is nature’s gift to Ethiopia and Ethiopia has every right to use her natural resources. To that end, Ethiopians must defend their sovereign right by any means necessary.

A brief look at the history of the Horn of Africa and the politics of the Blue Nile may help shade some light on the source of the continued problem between the two nations over the Abay River. Prior to the appearance of colonial powers in the Horn of Africa, Egypt and Ethiopia were in a board agreement on the use of the Abay River without binding treaties. For thousands of years Egypt used the Blue Nile to produce foods, to construct dams, and to support building a modern industry, while Ethiopians experienced famine due to lack of water to cultivate the land, and remain less industrialized for lack supply of electric power. The absence of a legally binding treaty between Egypt and Ethiopia, recognized and respected by the international community, combined with the European interference in pursuit of their own self-interest, has been and continues to be the major cause for the persistence of tension between the two countries to this day.

Describing the relationship between Ethiopia and Egypt the late Richard Pankhurst (Prof) wrote: “Contacts between the two countries also owed much to a frequent exchange of embassies, primed largely by Egyptian fears that the rulers of Ethiopia might interfere with the flow of the Nile.”

“Ethiopia was deeply affected by Egypt’s modernization and expansion into Sudan, which, in the nineteenth century, almost...brought the two countries into deadly military conflict,” he added. Thus, mostly with the British backing, Egypt continued to rattle her saber and flex her military muscle whenever Ethiopia expressed using Abay River to build a dam designed to improving the living conditions of her ever-growing population and providing them with sustained food security. It should be mentioned that the needs of the ever increasing population for food-security necessitates the completion of and the utilization of the dam. As an old saying goes “you cannot avoid going to bed for fear of nightmare” or Ethiopians would say: “HDMF TJO ABAY KI RAMAAM”. In my opinion, fear of military conflict between the two countries over the Nile from completing the Grand Ethiopian

Completion of the Grand... page 35

VIEWPOINT +

A year of successes in global health

In the field of human development, the year that just ended was better than many predicted it would be. A decade after the Great Regression began, economic recovery continued in 2017, and progress was made on issues like poverty, education, and global warming. But perhaps the most significant achievements of the last 12 months were in global health. I count 18 unique number on a list, most donations were not deterred by the conflicts and military conflict between the two countries over the Nile.

A year of successes... page 30
AU Summit must salvage what remains of my country South Sudan

My country is the youngest sibling of the established nations of East Africa. Its birth, like all births, was a joyous time. Yet South Sudan has been brought up so far in a broken home, with our leaders constantly battling for control. Our neighbors ask interminently to keep the noise down but in reality, constantly sneak in the back door to piller what they can for themselves. Every day of fighting taking them closer to the point of no return when South Sudan becomes a truly broken home for my people. The humanitarian crisis disproportionately affects the most vulnerable in society: women, children and the elderly. Rape against women and girls is being used as a weapon of war. The violence is increasingly happening along ethnic lines.

On the last Friday before Christmas, a cessation of hostilities agreement was signed in Addis Ababa in an effort to finally quell the fighting that has caused the multiple, overlapping crises of war, hunger and economic ruin. But the violence continues, not just between force aligned with the ‘big men’ who were among those at the table in Addis, but also new rebel groups that are emerging, somehow expecting reward for their ongoing domestic abuse.

Every conversation on South Sudan needs to involve the broader population, not just the ‘big men’. No backroom agreement to share power among elites will deliver a sustainable peace. That is why civil society representatives from South Sudan were in the negotiations, but they must not only be in the room - we must be listened to.

We must be listened to when we say no more impunity for atrocities. We must be listened to when we say violations of the cessation of hostilities agreement must be met with consequences. We must be listened to when the fate of our country is being shaped. And it is not just our own leaders who must listen; it is the world of the whole region.

South Sudan’s neighbors, especially Kenya and Uganda, have provided safe havens for my country’s leaders and warlords to stash the spoils of their abuse. As documented by the UN and others, any number of war millionaires is permitted to accumulate lives of luxury in Nairobi and Kampala off the backs of the torture and humiliation of their countrymen and women back home and in the refugee camps outside the country. In the region, the actions of just a few individuals are being allowed to tarnish whole financial systems in the region and perpetuate the violence against South Sudanese.

This week (22nd – 27th January) the African Union meets for the annual summit and appropriately, under the theme, winning the Fight against Corruption: A Sustainable Path to Africa’s Transformation. This is an opportunity to end the wholesale plunder of South Sudan, as well as the laundering of that money through Kenya and Uganda and to the wider world.

At the most basic level, political and diplomatic pressure must be ramped up on the warring parties by their regional counterparts, including the Presidents of Kenya, Uganda and Ethiopia. The AU promised in September 2017 that it would consider sanctions on those who continue to deny peace and security to the people of South Sudan. If peace talks resume in February, the AU should make it clear: if they do not bring results, then the region must live up to its own words.

Finally, those responsible for atrocities must be held accountable. Justice is a prerequisite for peace. President Kiir and former first Vice President Machar signed up to a hybrid international and national court in the past, only to evade and block the pursuit of justice at every turn. To his immense credit, AU Chairperson Moussa Faki has continued to champion the establishment of this court. That would be a worthy cause for celebration at next week’s summit.

Every moment of delay accelerates the costs. The war in South Sudan has...
As a first-generation Ethiopian-American, I have always wondered about the inequality of wealth between countries and the wealth between the individuals who inhabit those countries. I have wondered how certain countries became poor or rich with the disproportionate levels of wealth and poverty within their borders. In my studies, I have learned that there are many reasons for the disproportionate wealth accumulation. The one that caught my attention since it is one of my interests was education—specifically STEM education for women.

STEM or “Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics” is one of the least-selected career paths for women. According to the National Girls Collaborative Project, women comprise only 29 percent of the workforce in science and engineering making it a male-dominated field. This is in line with how STEM is socially perceived as a male-dominated discipline. One reason for this perception is the stereotype that men are better at approaching STEM-related topics. Women are not good at math. A woman can cause this effect and as a result, we rarely notice, Mathematics is needed for everything you do—from calculating how much your end of day groceries costs or how much you need for everything you do— from accumulating. The one that caught my attention since it is one of my interests was education—specifically STEM education for women.

The American Association of University Women, a non-profit organization that advances equity for women and girls, explained that a stereotype threat and implicit bias play two major roles in how women achieve. It is common knowledge that women are less likely to enter STEM fields. More and more passionate women who are interested in bringing change to the world are entering STEM. By having women prove themselves and breaking gender stereotypes, women are inspiring others to make the change. “If you work hard enough, I think there can be equality,” Shaina Freeland, St. Charles North High School engineering student, said.

What can STEM do to end the inequality? Women are being pushed out of the field because they do not understand what they are capable of. More and more passionate women who are interested in bringing change to the world are entering STEM. By having women prove themselves and breaking gender stereotypes, women are inspiring others to make the change. “If you work hard enough, I think there can be equality,” Shaina Freeland, St. Charles North High School engineering student, said.

Matthew Kirby, guidance counselor at St. Charles North High School explained that young girls need women mentors “who show interest in math and/or science. That way, they can learn how to move forward in these fields and the misconceptions and hurdles to face.”

With more women entering the workforce and educating themselves more than ever, we need to provide successful women role models showing girls that they can excel in the same fields as “the boys.” We need more women to create opportunities for other women to get ahead in life by being role models for the future generations.

Partnering with the AU

Inge Baumgarten (PhD) is the director of GIZ at the African Union office in the capital. Having arrived to the country late last year, the passionate advocate of education and health reflects with Samuel Getachew of The Reporter on her own career, on the many activities of GIZ in Ethiopia and across the continent and on the reasons why the new Pan African University and on areas of peace and security are worthy investment to make from the perspective of the Government of Germany. Excerpts:

The Reporter: Prior to your appointment here in Addis, you have been involved in the areas of health and education sector for almost three decades. Tell me about your journey?

Inge Baumgarten (PhD): If you allow me to use a picture: I guess the seed was planted while I was studying hard to pursue an academic career. I started as a public health professional to improve health services for children, young people and women in rural areas in Nepal. As a social scientist, I am particularly interested in understanding obstacles and challenges that hinder progress. It quickly became clear to me that social development (access to health, education, safe water) is linked to economic development. It needs many people around the globe to work towards these priorities. We also work together with our “sister” organization KfW Development Bank (also on behalf of the German government), which provides financial cooperation to the various AU programmes. We make sure that our contribution to the AU vision of an integrated, peaceful and prosperous Africa is based on the spirit of partnership, will be effective, and makes a difference.

We support various flagship programmes of the AU Agenda 2063, such as the Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA), the Pan-African Infrastructure Programmes (PAIP), or the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP). We are proud that this year’s 30th AU summit will also table the first ever report on the implementation status of the CAADP, presented by H.E. Ethiopian Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn in his capacity as Champion of this pan-African programme.

Land policies and land rights are important for citizens and especially also for women in Africa. We also work with AU institutions to implement the AU agenda on land policy. Together, we build the capacities of the mandates institutions such as the Land Policy Initiative and NELEP. To give you one concrete example: We support building up academic excellence. The so-called African Network of Excellence on Land Governance (NELGA) currently assists 50 countries in improving land management and land policies. The Institute for Land Administration (ILA) at University of Bahir Dar to offer a PhD course on land policy.
In general, as GIZ offer a smart and tailor-made, at times innovative, mix of support based on the specific requirements and needs of our counterparts: capacity building, direct financial support, technical expertise. It is fair to say that we have been able to build a mutually trusting, longstanding and reliable cooperation with the AUC and NEPAD. As the new Director of the GIZ office to the African Union, I look forward to deepening and further expanding our collaboration and partnership.

One of the areas GIZ is involved in is in the establishment of a Pan African University. How can that positively affect Ethiopian students?

In the countries of Sub-Sahara Africa, only approximately six percent of young people are enrolled in higher education while the global average is 28 percent. To change this for better, also the quality of higher education and the relevance for employment and entrepreneurship need to be addressed. As GIZ, we offer support in this regard in many African countries and in Ethiopia.

Let me give you an example, as part of our mandate for the German government, we are working with the African Union to establish the Pan African University (PAU) with institutes in Algeria, Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa. Our support currently focuses on the Institute for Water, Energy and Climate Change in Algeria. At the PAU students from all over the continent develop technical, analytical and problem-solving skills in sectors that are of high relevance for the AU development Agenda 2063. Applications from Ethiopian students for these programs are very welcome. I believe this will not only build academic excellence, but also serve the pan-African spirit of integration and intercultural learning.

One of the major areas where GIZ plays a technical role is peace and security with the African Union. Despite much effort, peace and security, have there not been better results on both sides within the continent? GIZ works together with the Institute for Peace and Security Studies (IPSS) in Addis Ababa and conducts annual assessments of the impact of interventions of the AU and regional organizations in the area of peace and security. Results of these assessments show that AU and regional organizations intervene in about 50% of violent conflicts in Africa through diplomacy, mediation and peace support operations.

More than 80 percent of these interventions are evaluated as successful or partly successful. Another tangible result of our contribution to peace and security is the GIZ support to the African Union Border Program. Together with the AU, we are cooperating with more than 20 countries on the continent to ensure that border regions are peaceful areas that foster cross-border cooperation and development. These are also areas of peace and security.

Let’s talk about the youth of Africa. Migration is still a major issue across the European continent and Germany is no exception. GIZ has been working in the forefront of this issue for various reasons. Areas of practical education, the textile industry and the industrial parks of Ethiopia and others have received generous German support. From the perspective of GIZ, why are these areas worthy of European support?

Africa is the youngest continent on the globe. Having a young population is a tremendous asset for any nation. (In my home country Germany, on the other hand, we are faced with an ageing population). If a young workforce (both young men and young women) can find productive and decent jobs, their outlook on the future will be positive. Worldwide innovation and productivity in the economies are directly linked to skilled and creative people, and opportunities to do business. Therefore, it makes a lot of sense to invest in young people, their education, skills and employment. As we do with our programs, to create better future prospects for Africa’s youth.

We are all aware of terrible pictures of despair of young African women and men crossing dangerous water or deserts in search of opportunities and a better life. If a young population does not see future perspectives, does not believe in institutions, and doesn’t have an opportunity to acquire skills and make a living out of them, it is a major challenge. Migration, and especially irregular migration comes with risk factors. Therefore, the protection of migrants and regular, safe pathways for migration are in the interests of us all. With the AU, we also work to design labour and migration policies that offer regular pathways for mobility and bear a high potential for development.

What is the end game for GIZ in Africa?

As GIZ, we strive for sustainable development. We offer tailor-made solutions to complex challenges. As a partner to the AU we would like to see the AU vision of an integrated, peaceful and prosperous Africa, driven by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force on the global arena becomes a reality and a reality that can be felt by all citizens, young and old alike, on the African continent.
Scholarships by Ethiopians for Ethiopians

A story of a computer science student at Addis Ababa University presented on the TV show ‘Ehuden be EBS’ on Ephany day got me thinking a lot about scholarship opportunities, particularly to the most disadvantaged sections of our society. Although this boy has an excellent academic performance, he and his closest friends fear that such performance may not have a long way to go because of his poor financial situation. The boy grew up in an orphanage and therefore does not have any family support. He receives a monthly stipend of 120 birr from Addis Ababa University, an amount which is barely enough to cover monthly supplies and the mandatory copies of school materials. Coupled with his very limited financial means, the boy faces the additional challenge of conducting the most trivial daily life activities such as washing his clothes and dressing up autonomously because he was born without both of his arms. In spite of all these challenges, the boy remains quite optimistic about his future as a computer scientist, a job which as we know requires the use of both arms and hands. They say that if there is a will, there is a way. He demonstrated his will quite well by using his legs as a replacement for his arms.

I believe these kinds of TV shows are and should be wake up calls for those of us who claim ourselves to be country-loving people. If we really believe in what kind of scientist the recipient of such sponsorship can turn out to be, the boy in the story of EBS probably needs no more than 400 or 500 birr more per month to be able to comfortably afford making copies of school materials and a person who can wash his clothes for him. If you really think about it, one wealthy (or modestly wealthy) individual can easily afford to provide such financial support to one needy student. How many wealthy (or modestly wealthy) persons do we have in this country?

I myself am a recipient of a scholarship that enabled me to undertake my masters and PhD studies in Europe. I can never be more grateful for those foreign institutions that helped me turn my life around and be able to lead a modest life. This got me thinking, are there any well-established non-for-profit institutions in Ethiopia established for the main purpose of providing scholarships to support locally (without having to send students abroad) needy but very promising students. What kind of financial support can turn out to be? The boy in the story of EBS probably needs no more than 400 or 500 birr more per month to be able to comfortably afford making copies of school materials and a person who can wash his clothes for him. If you really think about it, one wealthy (or modestly wealthy) individual can easily afford to provide such financial support to one needy student. How many wealthy (or modestly wealthy) persons do we have in this country?

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of transacting business have been developed in recent years. Revisiting which a modern Code regulating the constitution and activities of all business organizations could give to the further growth of business. We directed the Oromia Code Commission created by US to prepare a modern Commercial Code which would serve for the present development and potential foundation for the further refinement of laws treating these subjects.

The commercial code had all the elements of a modern commercial code of the 1960s, which is useful even today. Some of the examples are:

The commercial code has articles about how share companies can be formed, rules about shareholders’ meetings, proxy, chairman, directors, rights, conflicts of interest (very limited to voting only), minutes, quorum, effect of resolution, rights to inspect documents etc. However, it does not protect shareholders interest due to lack of legal provision for disclosure of conflict of interest or make non-disclosure of undeserved benefits a criminal offense. It also gives details about debentures and premium bonds, but the bonds can only be issued by the government. It also has articles about what needs to be done in the event of bankruptcy of the Debtor Company etc., but has no similar provision like the US Bankruptcy Law and equivalent Insolvency Act, which provide steps to protect the interest of shareholders, debtors, employees etc.

“Chapter 11” Bankruptcy Law of the US, for example, provides protection for companies when they face financial problems and how federal bankruptcy court appoints an administrator to balance the interest of shareholders, debtors, employees and others. The limitation of the Ethiopian Commercial code was indeed tested when Access Real Estate faced financial problems. The absence of the law forced political appointees to get involved to resolve the issue, and it cost the government and shareholders a lot of money. Meetings were held under the stewardship of Mekuria Haile, the erstwhile minister of Urban Development and Transport. There were meetings with officials from the Ministry of Trade, but it seems that no one has clues as to how to resolve the problem in the absence of clear provisions. Meetings and meetings are unnecessary if the law was amended to incorporate the modern bankruptcy protection and procedure to appoint bankruptcy administrators. Companies either make profit or incur losses. General Motors, Northern Rock Bank, AIG and many huge companies were in trouble during the credit crunch. They filed Chapter 11 to find a way of resolving their problems and come back with better financial health.

Chapter 6, Article 462, gives guidelines about accounts of companies and how it should be managed, nevertheless since the 1980s a number of accounting standards are introduced and it does not require or prescribe any accounting or reporting standards. Creative accounting and accountant frauds are common in the US passed a law known as Sarbanes-Oxley Act, in 2002, in response to major common. For example, the US passed a law known as Sarbanes-Oxley Act, in 2002, in response to major accounting frauds. Nevertheless, the law does not protect shareholders interest due to lack of legal provision for disclosure of conflict of interest or make non-disclosure of undeserved benefits a criminal offense. It also gives details about debentures and premium bonds, but the bonds can only be issued by the government. It also has articles about what needs to be done in the event of bankruptcy of the Debtor Company etc., but has no similar provision like the US Bankruptcy Law and equivalent Insolvency Act, which provide steps to protect the interest of shareholders, debtors, employees etc.

Chapter Seven addresses how the amendment to the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) or Articles of Association (AoA) can be achieved. Nevertheless, it has a cumbersome signing process by all shareholders at the document authentication authority. For example, the US passed a law known as Sarbanes-Oxley Act, in 2002, in response to major accounting frauds. Nevertheless, the law does not protect shareholders interest due to lack of legal provision for disclosure of conflict of interest or make non-disclosure of undeserved benefits a criminal offense. It also gives details about debentures and premium bonds, but the bonds can only be issued by the government. It also has articles about what needs to be done in the event of bankruptcy of the Debtor Company etc., but has no similar provision like the US Bankruptcy Law and equivalent Insolvency Act, which provide steps to protect the interest of shareholders, debtors, employees etc.

A question of priority?

As the African Union Summit takes place this week, there are important developments related to the organization, as well as the continent that are in the air. The first one, is the issue of the budget of the African Union. The chairperson announced that for the 2018 budget, 59 percent will be covered by partners and the remaining amount will be raised from African governments. Although the contribution of the partners has decreased from a near 70 percent during the 2017 budget and the amount covered by member states is increasing, the numbers still indicate that the majority of the activities of the organization are funded by non-African parties. One can only imagine the impact this has on the agenda setting and implementation of projects by the organization. Perhaps one should feel comfort in the increase of contribution by African governments as one eagerly awaits the implementation of the solutions made by President Paul Kagame’s Reform Committee.

The second and very interesting development relates to the African airspace. After year of negotiations and discussion, the Single African Air Travel Market is expected to be launched by the African Union later this month. This market is expected to have a huge impact on intra-Africa travel by making African airspace easier, cheaper for African airlines thereby making African travel more affordable for us all.

This is most likely linked to the recent increase in interest to revive national airlines by different African governments. Accordingly, Ethiopian Airlines has been in discussions in these air travel revival and has a predominant minority stake in most of them. So far the airline has bought a 45 percent stake in Zambian Airlines, runs Malawan airlines, partners with ASKY airlines which it operates out of Togo and last but not least it is currently in discussion with Nigeria’s Arik Airlines and Ghana so as to assist in reviving their national airlines.

I find this to be a very interesting approach to it all, as it Interlinking Ethiopia Airlines’ success to the success of the revived national African airlines. If there was ever an example of inter-African dependence, this is it. The example one that demonstrates how on how our governments can invest in each other so as to get a practical understanding on how we can further inter-African economies and learn from each other’s experiences. By investing in these airlines and supporting them, Ethiopian Airlines is bringing over 70 years of experience to them and building a more sustainable business.

Let me mention an opinion that I read online which really stroked a nerve. The person expressed that every year whenever the summit happens, it feels as though African leaders and heads of state are seeking some sort of approval to better Africa. It feels as though they are asking for permission to change things, rather than simply doing it. Although I did not know how to express, I had that thought in the back of my mind each time I heard an African heads state or meeting delegate on bettering the lives of their people and the fate of their country and continent.

As a wise women once told me, everything you do is a priority and everything you do not do, but want to, is not a priority. Following this logic, if bettering our countries is a priority to us and our heads of state, it would be happening. If it is not, it only means that it is not high up on the priority list. We clearly see what the priority is for Ethiopian Airlines, what is then the priority for our heads of state?
The African Union’s 32nd Executive Council’s meeting, comprising AU member states’ foreign ministers, was officially opened on Thursday. Chairperson Moussa Faki Mahamat during the opening session called on member states to strengthen efforts towards the pan African bloc’s financial independence. The annual meeting of African heads of state at the African Union begins tomorrow. The summit is being held under the theme: ‘Winning the Fight Against Corruption: A Sustainable Path to Africa’s Transformation.’ The current A.U. president Alpha Conde of Guinea is expected to hand over the mantle to Rwanda’s Paul Kagame – in what is a yearly rotation of the presidency.
EXTERNAL VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority

Following the approval of the GEF 6 Global Wildlife Program child project entitled “Enhanced Management and Enforcement of Ethiopia’s Protected Areas Estate” (EMEPAE) this year, the Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority (EWCA) has finalized preparations to implement this project for the coming six years. The project management unit (PMU) that will be based at EWCA’s Head Quarter require to hire a full time Project Manager.

Therefore, The Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority is seeking to hire a Project Manager for the Enhanced Management and Enforcement of Ethiopia’s Protected Area Estate project

1. General Information:

   Position title: .................................................. Project Manager (Full time)
   Duty Station: .................................................. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
   Salary: ............................................................ Negotiable
   Required Number: ............................................ One (1)
   Duration of Employment: ................................. 5 years

2. Duties and Responsibilities:

   ▪ Manage the overall project in the project management unit
   ▪ Coordinate the development and implementation of project activities with the objectives of the project;
   ▪ Mobilize all project inputs in accordance with the UNDP procedures;
   ▪ Coordinate the recruitment and selection of project personnel and contractors as needed, especially with a view to the large infrastructure investments made by this project;
   ▪ Ensure that gender is mainstreamed into operational plans, as well as markers are reported on as part of regular reporting;
   ▪ In coordination with the CTA, provide technical support and oversight to project activities. It is expected that the Project Manager will distribute his/her time equally among the three components (as reflected in the Project Budget);
   ▪ Prepare and revise project work and financial plans, as required by the Project Board, EWCA and UNDP;
   ▪ Liaise with UNDP, BWCA, relevant government agencies, and all project partners, including donor organizations and NGOs, to coordinate all project activities;
   ▪ Facilitate administrative backstopping and provide technical backstopping to sub-contractors and activities supported by the project;
   ▪ Oversee and ensure timely submission – and ensure adequate quality – of the Inception Report, Combined Project Implementation Review/ Annual Project Report (CPIR/APR), Technical reports, quarterly financial reports, and other reports as may be required by UNDP, GEF, EWCA and other oversight agencies;
   ▪ Disseminate project reports and respond to queries from concerned stakeholders;

3. Qualifications

   ▪ A university degree (MSc/MPhil or PhD) in Wildlife Management, Conservation or Protected Areas Management, Ecology
   ▪ At least 10 years of experience in protected areas management;
   ▪ At least 3 years of managing conservation projects;
   ▪ Ability to effectively coordinate a large, multi-stakeholder project;
   ▪ Strong computer skills, in particular mastery of all applications of MS Office package and internet search;
   ▪ Excellent communication in written English skills; knowledge of Amharic would be a significant advantage.

4. Sex: Male or Female. Women are encouraged to apply.

5. How to Apply:

   Interested applicants who fulfill the above requirements can submit their application letter, with CV and non-returnable copies of relevant documents in person to the following address within 10 working days of the date of the announcement. By contact number 0118787778/0930329330.

   Please note that:
   ▪ The applicant must submit two pages of interest of expression.
   ▪ Only short listed candidates will be called for examination.

   Address:
   Human Resource Development and Administration Directorate, Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority,
   5th Floor Office Number A-908, Yobeck Commercial Center Building, located near Sengetera Traffic Light, Tezema Aba Kemow Street
   Telephone: 0115154606
   P. O. Box 386 Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

www.thereporterethiopia.com
**Crossword puzzle**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Across</th>
<th>Down</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>51. French for “Black”</td>
<td>5. Mixture of rain and snow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50. Yokels</td>
<td>4. Effort</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49. Snow house</td>
<td>3. Bronzes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48. Stays behind</td>
<td>2. Double-reed woodwind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47. Series of connected ideas</td>
<td>1. Bends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39. A 19th century art movement</td>
<td>30. Rugby formation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38. At one time (archaic)</td>
<td>19. Sea eagle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37. Slender</td>
<td>18. Black Sea republic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36. Largest continent</td>
<td>17. Region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35. Golden</td>
<td>16. Agitated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34. Small African antelope</td>
<td>15. Agitated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33. Foreword</td>
<td>14. Slender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32. A 19th century art movement</td>
<td>13. Slender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31. Pipe</td>
<td>12. Remove the pins from</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30. Footnote note</td>
<td>10. The outer area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. Voters</td>
<td>9. Rational</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. Harvest</td>
<td>7. The far east</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. Rugby formation</td>
<td>5. Mixture of rain and snow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. Belief</td>
<td>4. Effort</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. Fastening</td>
<td>3. Bronzes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Footnote note</td>
<td>2. Double-reed woodwind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Move unnecessarily</td>
<td>29. Voters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Fully developed</td>
<td>18. Black Sea republic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Weep</td>
<td>17. Region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Link</td>
<td>16. Sea eagle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Sea eagle</td>
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<td>3. Bronzes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**US Box office**

1. Jumanji: Welcome to the Jungle
2. 12 Strong
3. Den of Thieves
4. The Post
5. The Greatest Showman
6. Paddington 2
7. The Commuter
8. Star Wars: Episode VIII - The Last Jedi
9. Ingrid Goes West
10. Forever My Girl

**Your Zodiacs**

**Aries**
This week starts well with your ruling planet Mars in your second Saturn. This enables you to make changes in a good way. You will be popular with acquaintances; however, loved ones could feel left out and insecure. You will accomplish the most in your work environment this week. Travel will be most exciting and pleasant.

**Cancer**
You will be able to achieve a secret goal by working silently toward it over the week. This week starts out with your ruling planet Venus conjunct with Mercury and Pluto, indicating that you can use the power of loving communication to effect positive transformation in your relationships. Don’t forget that exhaustion combined with overextensions could result in minor health problems. You will have to control your temper and deal with the situation rationally.

**Leo**
This week starts with your planetary ruler, Mercury being coupled with Venus and Pluto in your sign. This is a good time to make changes in partnerships and to go into transforming partnerships. You will feel that valuable knowledge can be gained if you are willing to listen. Travel will be very important. Others will come to you for help and explanations; avoid giving them a quick fix.

**Capricorn**
Your ruler, Saturn, is in your opposite sign of Cancer as this week begins. You need not fear that responsibilities are becoming too much of a hassle and you may choose to delegate some responsibilities. To ask yourself whether you are happy with your current relationship would also be a very wise idea. Chronic health problems are likely to surface if you are keeping your problems locked up inside.

**Aquarius**
You may feel that you like you have entered a new dimension or the beginning of a new era. Small sweeping changes could leave you breathless but undecided. Avoid sharing too many secrets with your friends and coworkers right now. No one owns your last interests in mind. There are very few people you can put your trust in. Don’t forget to solicit the aid of family members and consider the feelings of your mate.

**Scorpio**
This week can bring some interesting challenges. For the new moon, you will certainly be a delight in family matters and even some interesting challenges. You are in the center of attention, and it looks like that is exactly where you want to be. On the other hand, friends may not understand your point of view. Don’t hesitate to talk to them about these problems.

**Sagittarius**
With Mars, Venus, Mercury and Pluto in your sign this week, you will be able to make some sweeping and dramatic changes in your life. It is the end of one cycle and the beginning of another. It is certainly the right time to tell someone how you really feel about him or her. You could visit friends or relatives you haven’t seen in a while. Try to take care of your cool, and make your point known. It would be a good idea to be involved in sports groups or hobbies that are currently unknown.

**Cancer**
You should try to find a new manner of creating stability in your inner world. Perhaps a new helper in a new career could become your legacy. One of the more experienced colleagues may be able to help you get the job. You will get a chance to meet new romantic partners if your partner is involved in overseas or travel.

**Libra**
Now it is the right time to let love bloom. You will experience major growth and changes in all your relationships. Someone you work with could be looking for a more personal relationship. But before you begin a new romance, be sure you are able to avoid the negative consequences. Remember that self-improvement can bring amazing results.

**Leo**
Travel will be most enticing and pleasurable.

**Capricorn**
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Renaissance Dam (GERD).

To understand the intractable problem facing Ethiopia in completing the GERD—a dam that must be completed at any cost—is to examine various treaties, protocols, as well as exchange of communications between British, French, Italian and Egyptian leaders. It is those treaties that laid the foundation for the continuation of conflict between the two countries concerning the use of Blue Nile to this day. It must be noted, however, that all treaties entered between Addis Ababa and the three colonial powers, not only violated Ethiopian sovereignty but also left Ethiopia out of the equation. Ethiopia has been and continue to be pushed aside, while other allowed to use her natural resources. Let us examine some of treaties critically and imagine their lasting socio-economic impact on Ethiopians.

The April 15, 1891, Anglo-Italian Protocol warned Italy not to irrigate Atbara River for fearing that the irrigation might modify or reduce its flow to Blue Nile. While the May 15, 1925 treaty between Great Britain and Ethiopia stated that, “Emperor Menelik II, to engage himself towards” the British government concerning any river connected with Blue Nile. “Menelik was not to construct or allow any construction across the Abay River, Lake Tana, or Sobat River, which would arrest the flow of their waters except in agreement with British government as well as with the Government of Sudan.” Because of the ambiguity and the difference of the meanings between the English and the Amharic version of the treaty, and because the British historical concern for Egyptian welfare but not for Ethiopians, as well as, the limitation it imposed on the country, the Ethiopian government never ratified the treaty.

Article 4 of the Tripartite Treaty between Britain-France-Italy, dated December 13, 1906, clearly states: “To safeguard... the interests of Great Britain and Egypt in the Nile Basin, more especially as regards the regulation of the waters of that river and its tributaries... without prejudice to Italian interests.” This treaty intended largely to clearly deny Ethiopia its sovereign right over the use of Abay River. Furthermore, the Interchange of notes between Britain and Italy concerning Lake Tana went on to say: “Italy recognizes the prior title of the rights of Egypt and the Sudan... not to construct on the head waters of the Blue Nile and the White Nile and their tributaries and effluents any work which might sensibly modify their flow into the main river.” Once again, the Ethiopian government not only opposed the spirit of such exchange between Italy and Britain but also notified both parties of Ethiopia’s objection calling for the Abay River “to be laid before the League of Nations.”

When “an explanation was required from the British and the Italian governments by the League of Nations, both denied, challenging Ethiopia’s sovereignty over Lake Tana.” In violation of long held principles of national sovereignty over its natural resources, treaties cited above and other treaties not to construct or allow any construction across the Abay, Lake Tana, or Sobat River, which would arrest the flow of their waters except in agreement with British government as well as with the Government of Sudan. Because of the ambiguity and the difference of the meanings between the English and the Amharic version of the treaty, and because the British historical concern for Egyptian welfare but not for Ethiopians, as well as, the limitation it imposed on the country, the Ethiopian government never ratified the treaty.

Ed.’s Note: Alem Asres (PhD), formerly the Ethiopian Ombudswoman, earned his Doctorate of Philosophy in Social Foundations of Education from Alemayehu, Ed.’s Note: Alem Asres (PhD), formerly the Ethiopian Ombudswoman, earned his Doctorate of Philosophy in Social Foundations of Education from the University of Maryland, College Park. The views expressed in this article do not necessarily reflect the views of The Reporter. He can be reached at alemasres@gmail.com.
Revising the Ethiopian Commercial Code

There are no plans to file a complaint by shareholders for mismanagement of share companies except for taking the case to court. Only the financial sector is regulated by the National Bank of Ethiopia (NBE) and shareholders can file complaints and the regulatory body will investigate before taking any measures. There are circumstances where the NBE invalidates the election of board of directors.

The concept of "principal-agent conflict", which is the conflict between managers and shareholders, is not addressed in the Ethiopian Commercial Code. As a result, it has exposed share companies to misuse and abuse by agents and managers.

Articles 555-560, give guidance about foreign firms have abroad having a subsidiary office or branches in Ethiopia. Those subsidiaries and group holdings are not recognized in Ethiopia and are not regulated in any way. However, the state of subsidiaries and group holdings are not recognized and accounts cannot be consolidated. Overall, the commercial code was a well-drafted code for the time and happened to be useful in the last 58 years.

But since the 1960s the world has moved and things that started in the 1960s have become obsolete. This shortcoming can be overcome by using the intelligence of the 21st century to review and update the commercial code to match the caliber of today's businesses. The views expressed in this article do not necessarily reflect the views of The Reporter.

Jitu Horticulture Prvct Limited Company Invites Competent Applicants for the under listed vacant Positions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Grade</th>
<th>Salary</th>
<th>Place of Work</th>
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<td>Driving Lesens Grade 5</td>
<td>Company Scale</td>
<td>Addis Ababa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Driving Lesens Grade 3</td>
<td>Company Scale</td>
<td>Addis Ababa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Position</td>
<td>Degree in Accounting</td>
<td>Company Scale</td>
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All these are part of modern legal contract in shaping today's businesses since national barriers are coming down bringing global competition closer to home. As a result, even the terminology used in other countries' contracts cannot be interpreted in the Ethiopian commercial code. The law has many shortcomings, by virtue of its age, to serve the interests of businesses of today and the future.

In conclusion, the law has to be updated, but when it is updated it has to consider the above points. Above all, the law has to be drafted to enable businesses create jobs, prosper and make innovations easy to compete in the global village.

The intelligentsia of the 1960s and advisors were very few but they have proven to be well educated to have the intellectual capital to think and draft a law that helped us regulate businesses effectively for 58 years. We need to recognize this achievement of the 1960s lawmakers to think deeper and work hard to have a code that will enable Ethiopian companies compete in the global economy.

If we can't match the intellectual capital of the 1960s, then we will be disrupting businesses by setting chaos in the system. If the law is drafted with second-rate intellectuals that give little emphasis to innovation, businesses and prosperity, it will be a major impediment for the country.

There is an overriding skepticism towards the capability of contemporary lawyers, legislative drafters in drafting a 21st century commercial code or the ability of the lawmaker in scrutinizing details of the code to matching the caliber of the 1960s. This shortcoming can be overcome by using external contractors and conducting repeated stakeholders meeting to see if the new code will enable businesses in the 21st century to compete. But, we have no choice, and the commercial code has to be revised and the new commercial code must enable businesses to be innovative in creating jobs and prosperity.

Ed.'s Note: Yared Haile-Mekel, MSc, MPhil, and MBA, is the managing director of YHM Consulting. YHM Consulting and is an investment advisory service working in the area of start-ups, equity investing, debt financing and turnaround management. The views expressed in this article do not necessarily reflect the views of The Reporter. The writer can be reached at yarhm@aol.com.

Ed.'s Note: Mohamed A. El-Erian, Chief Economic Adviser at Allianz, was Chairman of US President Barack Obama’s Global Development Council and is the author of The Only Game in Town: Central Banks, Instability, and Avoiding the Next Collapse. The article was provided to The Reporter by Project Syndicate: the world’s pre-eminent source of original op-ed commentaries. Project Syndicate provides incisive perspectives on our changing world by those who are shaping its politics, economics, science, and culture. The views expressed in this article do not necessarily reflect the views of The Reporter.

OIl's uncertain...

as a temporary windfall, not a permanent state of affairs or even - unless there is a notable geopolitical shock - a trend that is likely to intensify in the year ahead. This means that producers should resist the temptation to use their higher revenues for new recurrent spending. And they should act quickly to reinforce their collective discipline to minimize the risk of a free-for-all that negates the hard-earned gains of recent years.

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UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (UNDP)
Recruitment of Staff Members and Individual Consultants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Brief Consultancy / Job Post</th>
<th>Contact Type</th>
<th>Procurement Ref. No.</th>
<th>Web-link to download Proposal Submission</th>
<th>Submission deadline</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Recruitment of National Consultant to undertake study on rural non/ off farm (RNF) income generation activities (ONLY for Ethiopian Nationals)</td>
<td>IC*</td>
<td>ETH/IC/2018/002</td>
<td><a href="http://procurement-notices.undp.org/view_notice.cfm?notice_id=43701">http://procurement-notices.undp.org/view_notice.cfm?notice_id=43701</a></td>
<td>Tuesday February 6th, 2018 Addis Ababa Local Time</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Important information on UNDP employment modalities:
- *Individual Contractor (IC)*: a procurement modality for individual consultancy service. Please note that it is not Firm Level Service.
- **Fixed Term Appointment (FTA)**: a modality of hiring individual as a staff contract for a period of one year or more.

The use of UNDP’s name and logo without UNDP consent is inappropriate. UNDP strongly recommends that people who receive solicitations to apply for positions or engage in procurement processes exercise caution to ensure authenticity. UNDP advises the public that:
- UNDP does not charge a fee at any stage of its recruitment or procurement process. All information related to these processes is published on the national or global UNDP websites.
- UNDP does not request or issue personal bank checks, Money Grams, Western Union or any other type of money transfer at any stage of its procurement or recruitment processes.
- UNDP does not request any information related to bank accounts or other private information prior to formal registration as a vendor.
- UNDP does not request or issue personal bank checks, Money Grams, or issue personal bank checks, Money Grams, Western Union or any other type of money transfer at any stage of its procurement or recruitment processes.
- UNDP does not charge a fee at any stage of its recruitment or procurement process.
- UNDP does not accept any personal bank checks, Money Grams, Western Union or any other type of money transfer at any stage of its procurement or recruitment processes.
- UNDP does not accept any personal bank checks, Money Grams, Western Union or any other type of money transfer at any stage of its procurement or recruitment processes.
- Related queries can be sent through scam.alert.et@undp.org.

KK PRIVATE LIMITED COMPANY

VACANCY NOTICE

KK Private Limited Company (KK PLC) is a reputable company established in Addis Ababa in accordance with the Ethiopian Commercial Code with a grand vision and paid up capital of Birr 150 million. KK PLC is proudly serving the Ethiopian market in acrylic and blanket manufacturing, export of Coffee, oilseeds, pulses, spices, etc., import and sales of known brands of construction machines and tires of different sizes. Since recently, it has expanded its business horizon to real estate primarily in Addis Ababa city. KK PLC has over 500 employees who have been giving their best to bring the Company to its excellent shape today.

To steadily continue its growth at even faster rate, KK PLC desires to fill the following three critically important positions immediately. Interested and competent applicants with the requisite qualification and experience mentioned here below are invited cordially to apply for one of the following positions:

1. **Job Title**: General Manager
   - Reporting to: Board of Directors
   - Place of Work: Addis Ababa
   - Type of Employment: Permanent
   - Salary and Benefits: Extremely high and attractive salary including performance-based special benefit package.

**Qualification**
Applicants should have MBA degree in business administration, management, marketing, finance, or equivalent.

**Special Trainings**
Trainings in one or more of the following: marketing and distribution, international business management, value chain management, operations/production management, Strategic planning, and computer user applications are highly desirable.

**Experience**
At least 12 years of experience in managing diversified business organizations of which at least 5 years is as general manager in Ethiopian manufacturing and trading business environment. The successful candidate must have rich experience and good knowledge of manufacturing, export business and managing business relationship with financing institutions. Hands on successful experience and proven track record in managing business development projects and diversification is extremely desirable. Experience in new investment, project management, and factory installation on export and manufacturing works the Company envisions to establish, is a clear advantage.

**Personality Attributes Required**
The ideal candidate should be dynamic, individual, motivated, decision maker, self-starter and problem solver, excellent communicator, flexible and highly result oriented with proven track record of delivering concrete results under time pressure. Moreover, the candidate should be a leader who can build and manage his/her team under his supervision into a cohesive vibrant winning team. He should be multi-talented. Moreover, ability to translate the Company's vision and mission into high and realistic business objectives, strategic and operational plans, mobilize his/her team to successful realization of the planned and diversify the company's business is an important indicator of future success in the position.

2. **Job Title**: Export Manager
   - Reporting to: The General Manager
   - Place of Work: Addis Ababa
   - Type of Employment: Permanent
   - Salary and Benefits: Extremely high and very attractive salary, supplemented by result-based special benefit.

**Qualification**
Applicants should have a minimum of BA degree in international business or export management, business administration, management, marketing, economics, finance, or equivalent.

**Special Training**
Trainings in international (export) marketing, supply chain management, customer service, Business communication and branding are clear advantages

**Experience**
At least 10 years of service in the field of marketing of which over 5 years is in export marketing management of coffee, oilseeds and spices, etc. Very good knowledge of the challenges and opportunities of Ethiopia’s export business, export destinations and potential International Markets for development, preference and buying behavior of each buying country and company is a requisite criterion for selection. Practical knowledge of the candidate in the selection of coffee, of seeds, pulses and spices, etc. processing plant is a super plus.

**Personality Attributes Required**
The ideal candidate is required to be result-oriented, fast decision-maker and problem-solver, and self-starter. S/he should be great communicator and responsive to customers requests and used to work and service with multi-cultural buyers. The applicant should be time conscious and with high level of integrity. Additional international language skill in addition to English is a plus.

3. **Job Title**: Communications and PR Manager
   - Reporting to: The General Manager
   - Place of Work: Addis Ababa
   - Type of Employment: Permanent
   - Salary and Benefits: High and attractive salary

**Qualification**
Applicants should have an BA degree in business communication and PR, marketing, journalism or equivalent.

**Special Trainings and Skills**
Corporate communication, marketing and customer service, journalism, Public relations, negotiation and computer user application are important skills that will strongly count in favor of an applicant.

**Experience**
At least eight years of experience as communication and public relations officer in a business organization environment of which 3 years or more is as director or head of corporate communications and public relations.

**Personality Attributes Required**
The candidate should demonstrate strength in the areas of public and third party communication, outspoken and persuasive, excellent writing skills, event organization capabilities and socialization skills.

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where political elites of the continent gather to decide on behalf of a billion people, as they see fit.

This is clearly manifested in the preamble of the charter of the AU, according commentators; compared with the charter of the United Nations (UN), the basic problem is already found in the first sentence of AU charter. The UN charter starts by saying “We the people of the United Nations,” while the first sentence of the preamble of the AU charter states “We the heads of the state and government of.” This statement, commentators say, is a clear indication of how detached the decision of heads of state and governments in the continent is from the people of the continent.

That is why, they continue to argue, the organization and its bi-annual summit is something that mainly focus on the interests of the leaders and not the public. In this regard, many commentators observe that with the current structure and the choice of agenda topics that are on the table, there is low expectation of action and if it could bring any tangible change in addressing the problems of the continent.

Leulseged Girma, a geopolitical analyst, shares this evaluation. “AU doesn’t bring any tangible change to the problems of the continent. For example, the major themes of this year’s AU summit is fighting corruption; however, to fight corruption first of all the top leadership of the continent should have a clean hand from corruption. But, how are these African leaders assuming power? In many countries constitutions are violated to stay in power, conflicts are intensified clearly proving how corruption is rampant in the continent. Therefore, without having so many countries freed from corruption, I don’t hope that whether human and other democratic rights will be respected in the continent,” Leulseged opined.

Leulseged insists that there has to be a commitment from the top leadership to really address the critical issues of the continent. Seventeen years after the creation of the AU, a protocol on the free movement of people has still not been adopted.

True to form, the same protocol is yet among the list of agenda topic on the ongoing AU summit in Addis Ababa. This year’s summit, according to Ethiopian Foreign Minister Workneh Gebehu (PhD), are reforming the AU, enhancing inter Africa trade, agricultural development, single African market and of course the issue of peace and security with focus on the situation in the South Sudan and Somalia.

Regarding the reforms, the summit is expected discuss AU’s reputation of being ineffective with many decisions passed, but very few implemented by the member states.

It is hoped that at this summit, a mechanism will be adopted ‘to ensure the implementation of legally binding decisions.’ The AU is an intergovernmental organization, and member states often use their own sovereignty as an excuse not to implement continental decisions, experts argue.

Apart from the issue of sovereignty the issue of lack of finance is another headshot that implementation of decisions made by the AU in this regard. Leulseged argued, “Failure to generate your own finance is very dangerous, AU’s failure to generate its own finance has always crippled the decisions it makes. You don’t expect a malnourished human to stretch its hands to help others, do you? That’s how AU is for me,” he explains.

This and other reasons crippled the organization to implement its decisions; however, there are also critics on the over all decisions made by the organization, some even argue that the organization from the outset does not make decisions that really matters to the African population and the leaders rather engages themselves in discussion and meetings that does not contribute anything to the problems of the continent.

Chaiman of Blue Party, major opposition in Ethiopia, Yeshiwas Assefa is among those individuals who is very critical the decisions made by African leaders in the bi-annual summits. He argues that African leaders are not willing and committed in addressing the critical issues of the continent such as democracy, human rights and free and fair election.

He further states: “since most of African leaders are dictators and violates the constitutions of their country they are not in a position to discuss and made a vital decisions which will address the problems of the continent and the request of the public. Therefore, he argues, they prefer to raise some soft issues which don’t require any political commitment and determination but simply talk.

Among the recommendations forwarded by the Rwanda president and the reforms panel ‘strengthening the enforcement of a sanctions mechanism’ that would test the ability of AU member states to the limit of their sovereignty, for the sake of the institutional impact of pan-African bodies is one of them.

Other measures in the reform plan also aim at making the AU Commission (AUC) in Addis Ababa more effective. These

Reality through . . .

artists in the development and production of their own virtual reality ideas. In addition, they work towards introducing African and international audiences to African-produced virtual realities.

Daha Memen, an arts and culture student in Germany and an intern at Goethe-Institute and the one in charge of organization says, “New Dimensions: Virtual Reality Africa” was displayed in Johannesburg, South Africa before traveling to Ethiopia.

The exhibition was organized to support virtual reality startups in the continent. The selected movies have been touring in other African countries and were also a part of European festivals including a festival in Berlin, Germany.

“We have got a very good feedback since this is the best opportunity to experience virtual reality. We have also noticed people are interested in VR,” Daha explains. She says they are promoting the event on social media and also using icreddis’ contacts.

According to her, the range of movies presented from documentary to feature attracts various audience. VR is also opening up possibilities for artists. “Artists can work on a whole new level using virtual reality.”

It opens opportunities for animation and getting the people into the movie,” she points.

Although virtual reality is a growing medium, it hasn’t developed that much in the Ethiopian art scene. Neither the artists nor the audience are not used to the idea of using VR in the arts sector.

Daha says the aim of the exhibition is to introduce the medium to artists and show the possibility of using VR. Motivating people to use it is the second goal although not having enough technical equipment has been a challenge.

“It might be easier for consumers to use it but it takes a lot to actually produce it. The equipment might not be available now but it is something we can work together,” she explains.

For her, experiencing cinema through VR is an emotional journey as she gets immersed to the event on social media and also using icreddis’ contacts.

“Some people are disconnected with the reality, all their senses are disconnected with the reality, all their senses are disconnected with the glasses. This is the reason for Dahna saying “It is a new experience to the body and mind”.

Virtual reality has evolved since its introduction in the 1960s. Over the years, the development of omnidirectional cameras, also known as 360-degree cameras or VR cameras increased the ability to record in all directions.

From 1970 to 1990, devices for medical, flight training, automobile industry design, and military training purposes started to flood the market. The now popular headsets started to be widely sold for private purposes after the 1990s. Presently there are around 230 companies developing VR related products. Facebook, Google, Apple, Amazon, Microsoft, Sony and Samsung all have dedicated VR groups.

On the other hand, the technology has been criticized in regards to health related consequence such as an effect on vision and neurological development.
Mesoret to make her marathon debut

Kenenisa up against Mo Farah

By Dawit Tolesa

Long-distance runner and two-time Olympic Champion Meseret Defar will run her first marathon race at the Tokyo Marathon on February 25 while Kenenisa Bekele will face Mo Farah and Eliud Kipchoge at this year’s London Marathon.

The 34-year-old Meseret – two-time Olympic 5,000-meters winner and four-time world indoor 3,000-meters champion – spent the past few years making a gradual transition to the road. The world athletics governing body, the International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) unveiled on January 22 that marathon debutante Meseret is among the Tokyo Marathon entries list. Meseret has been one of the top female Ethiopian athletes in various distances, mainly 3,000, 5,000 and 10,000 meters in international races. She has won in top athletics competitions in 5,000 meters.

In 2007, she became the first woman to complete a 2-mile run under 9 minutes (8:58.58). This was an 11-second improvement on the world record. She made her half marathon debut at the Rock ’n’ Roll Philadelphia Half Marathon, winning in a time of 1:09:44. This excelled Berhane Adere’s fastest time on American soil for the distance, and was the fifth fastest debut ever.

According to IAAF, Meseret will line up against compatriots Ruti Aga who finished at the 2017 Berlin Marathon in 2:20:59, and Shure Demise, whose 2:20:41 performance at the Dubai Marathon is the fastest performance ever by an U20 athlete.

Mesoret took a break from competition in 2014 in order to start a family and she promised to return by 2015. Now she will be back with new enthusiasm and vigor. Meanwhile, Kenyan 2015 world silver medalist and Tokyo champion Helah Kiprop and Paris Marathon champion Parity Honoripo are also set to compete.

Elsewhere, one of the greatest long-distance runners of all time, Kenenisa Bekele, will be up against Mo Farah and Kenyan Eliud Kipchoge on the line for the IAAF Gold Label road race on April 22.


London will be a tough race for Kenenisa as rivals Mo Farah and Kipchoge will also be in the line-up.

Mo won 10,000m event and came to in the 2nd 5000m event after Ethiopian Muktar Edris. Farah won his final track event in Diamond League, in Birmingham and Zurich. He is not new to road races. He run in 2014 for the first time in London Marathon and finished eighth in 2:08:21.

Meanwhile, Kenyan long-distance runner Kipchoge, also known as “the greatest marathoner of the modern era,” is expected to be a formidable opponent. Since he started road race in 2013 at the Hamburg Marathon, he only finished second at the Berlin Marathon in 2013, finishing in 2:04:55 behind Wilson Kipsang. He recently won the Berlin Marathon on September 24, 2017.

Mekelle to face Sidama Coffee this week

By Dawit Tolesa

Week 13 matches of the Ethiopian Premier League (EPL) are to be played mostly in regional stadiums. Mekelle City are scheduled to play against Sidama Coffee while Wolaita Dicha face St. George and Adama City host Welwalo Adigrat at the town’s Abebe Bikila Stadium.

Most matches were postponed from last week and the Ethiopian Football Federation (EFF) has been rearranging fixtures starting from week 13. Because of the 30th African Union summit being held in Addis Ababa, the EFF postponed four games from week 12 and only two of week 13 EPL matches will take place this weekend in Addis Ababa.

Saturday’s fixtures will see Wolaita Dicha facing St. George on home turf. The southern side are not easily beatable in front of their fans and Saturday’s match will be pivotal for both sides. Wolaita are placed in the middle of the table with 13 points. They were tottering in the relegation zone at the start of this season but have shifted to winning mode in the last couple of weeks.

On week 12, Wolaita played against Welwalo Adigrat University. Eabetu Mena opened the score sheet in the 33rd minute. However, university side forward Mulalem Tilahun equalized in the 44th minute, and the game ended in a draw.

Meanwhile, St. George’s match timetable has been marred by scheduling conflicts. Last week’s highly anticipated match against current league leaders Dedebit was postponed for security reasons. Today’s week 13 fixture will see St. George playing against Wolaita Dicha. The Horsemen will be tested by the southern side.

Elsewhere, a highly anticipated match will see Mekelle facing off Sidama Coffee at home turf. It will be a do-or-die match as both sides are vying to sit among the top four. With 18 points and having one match in hand, newcomers Mekelle are placed fourth in the table.

Week 12 saw Sidama Coffee thrash Paul City 3:4 at Virgalem Stadium. Wondimeneh Aynalem opened the score sheet in the seventh minute, followed by winger Addis Gidey 18 minutes in, and Wondimeneh Aynalem scored the third goal after 20 minutes. A win helped Sidama Coffee to place eighth with 13 points, having one match in hand.

Another fixture will see Adama City taking on Welwalo Adigrat at Abebe Bikila Stadium and Dedebit facing newcomers Jimma Aba Jiffar. Dire Dawa City will host Ethiopia Coffee.

Dedebit top the table with 25 points, while St. George (with one match in hand) follow with 20 points. Jimma Aba Jiffar are third with 18 points. Dire Dawa City, Arba Minch and Electric are at the bottom of the table.

Week 13 EPL Fixtures

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Match</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sunday 28/1/2018</td>
<td>Wolaita Dicha vs. St. George</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hawassa City vs. Arba Minch</td>
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<td>Dire Dawa City vs. Ethiopia Coffee</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Wednesday 28/1/2018</td>
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<td>Mekelle City vs. Sidama Coffee</td>
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Weekend matches:

<table>
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<th>Date</th>
<th>Match</th>
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<tr>
<td>Saturday 27/1/2018</td>
<td>Wolaita Dicha vs. St. George</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hawassa City vs. Arba Minch</td>
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