#StaySafe

NATION ON EDGE

By Kaleyesus Bekele

After series of negotiations and deliberations, the National Bank of Ethiopia (NBE) has finally given the greenlight to the national telecom company, Ethio telecom to start mobile money services.

Ethio telecom has submitted its application to the NBE asking for license to launch a mobile banking service in the country, last year. The management of Ethio telecom has been in talks with the central bank for more than a year. After marathon negotiations the regulatory body of the financial sector has given a nod to Ethio telecom to launch mobile money.

Last April, NBE issued a directive dubbed the Licensing & Authorization of Payment Instrument Issuers, allows transactions to be performed through mobile phones after customers deposit a sum with an agent. According to the directive financial transactions using any mobile money service will use the banks as a trust account for the deposited funds.

At a consultative meeting Ethio Telecom held with IT and start-up companies on the ongoing national telecom reform program, CEO of the company, Frehiwot Tamiru, disclosed that NBE has given permission to Ethio telecom to launch mobile money service. Frehiwot said Ethio telecom will establish a wing—strategic business unit—that will work on the mobile money service. “The new business wing will be regulated by the NBE not by the Ethiopian Communication Authority (ECA),” Frehiwot said.

According to Frehiwot, foreign firms will not be allowed to engage in mobile money services, as of now. ECA is in the process of licensing two foreign telecom operators. The NBE directive allows only Ethiopian nationals and Ethiopian diaspora to engage in financial transaction services. The telecom firms that will soon join the local telecom market will not be able to engage in mobile money services.

The Ministry of Finance (MoF) is also in the process to partially Eyes USD 1.8 billion in revenue from infrastructure lease

SoE revenue falls short of target

Ethiopian, CBE contribute to 83 percent of Forex earning

By Birhanu Fikade

The State owned Enterprises (SoEs) have generated some 300 billion birr in revenues, 38 billion birr short from the targeted revenues while securing 55.66 billion birr in profits which as well short of the 79 billion birr in profit before taxes, set for the concluded Fiscal Year.

Beyene Gebremeskel, director general of the Public Enterprises Holding and Administration Agency (PEHAA), briefing reporters about SoEs performance and future plans last Wednesday, said that 20 out of the 21 SoEs have reported a total of 55.66 billion birr profit during the last FY. Out of the reported profits, Ethio telecom has managed to generate some 28.15 billion birr, a lieu of some 50 percent.

The transition that many hoped would transform Ethiopia to a more democratic state has never been devoid of challenges from day one. Frequent protests have consumed the energy of both the government and the public. Attacks and killings of civilians, high-level government and military officials as well as prominent individuals, risked to derail the transition. Whatever adjectives one could use to explain how challenging the past two years were in Ethiopia, it is undeniable for many that the transition carried both hope and despair. See the full story on page 10

CBE to hire consultants for new strategy, structure

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Freedom unthinkable without justice!

Justice is a fundamental pillar of any society. Without justice society cannot exist. It’s only when justice is upheld that Ethiopians can put an end to its long chapter of ordeal and heal itself. Ethiopians should not succumb to the vitriolic narrative peddled by elements bent on stoking political crises and demonstrate that they are a rational people which have no time for the perpetrators of suffering and injustice. Each and every citizen owes the duty to play a meaningful role in institution building efforts so that justice is not abused. In this regard it’s of the essence to ensure the independence and neutrality of the courts, the electoral board, the media, and security personnel. Anyone who wants to taste freedom must first discharge his obligations and contribute his share to ensuring that justice prevails throughout Ethiopia. Freedom is unthinkable without justice.

Ethiopians have always yearned for justice. For centuries they have shouldered the yoke of oppression and lived a life of misery, poverty and indignity due to the injustice dished out to them at the hands of successive tyrants. Such has been an indelible mark of their history. The primary reason for the downfall of the imperial order of Emperor Haile Selassie I and the military dictatorship of the Derg regime and presently the end of the 27-year rule of the Ethiopian People’s Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) by the forces of oppression was the inability of these rulers to learn from the fatal mistakes of one another has not only made life a living hell for Ethiopians, but also continues to pose a grave existential threat to the nation to this day. Given that the imperative to get preparations for the upcoming general elections into full swing makes it imperative to attach the utmost importance to defending the national interest, it’s incumbent on the public to focus on matters critical to ensuring the prevalence of justice.

Ethiopians have a long tradition of respect for the law. Now though this respect has all but gone, allowing lawless elements to wreak havoc in many parts of the country. The party controlling the levers of power as well as justice sector actors should accord the utmost priority to the realization of a just society. The courts have to be able to enjoy institutional independence. Moreover, the decisions they give must be respected, particularly the government, no matter how strongly one disagrees with them. As the rule of law is trampled justice will become a tradeable commodity; the weak will be at the mercy of the powerful; unscrupulous public officials will abuse their power with impunity; and folks seeking justice will lose faith in their country. If the three branches of government are unable to carry out their duties in accordance with the principle of check and balance, justice will remain an elusive dream.

In the absence of justice only tyranny thrives, not freedom. Ethiopians have maintained their unity for centuries because they have stuck together through the good times and bad times. The shared values they have developed over time have enabled them to transcend ethnic, religious, cultural, ideological and other differences. Tolling day and night to undermine justice and thereby engender tyranny as opposed to galvanizing Ethiopians to lay the foundations for a peaceful, democratic and prosperous Ethiopia is both intolerable and madness. Citizens may be able to live in equality under the law insofar as justice prevails. If Ethiopians believe that the courts are the bastions of justice and everyone is held accountable for his actions no matter his station in life, Ethiopia’s future will be brighter. Ethiopians must reject in no uncertain terms anyone who pulls others down to his level instead of pulling together for a common cause. They have suffered enough from the apate of destructive violence that has been racking the country for some time now as well as the near absence of justice. Ironically, those who used to routinely flout justice are in turn now crying for it. The government needs to look into itself critically if this sad chapter is to come to an end. People claiming they were denied justice are entitled to be heard and have their grievances addressed if they turn out to be legitimate.

In a country where a slew of commendable legal reforms have been introduced there should be no place for any and all acts that result in a subversion of justice. The prospect of such a scenario can be avoided by, among others, full respecting such due process rights of arrested or accused individuals as presumption of innocence, the right to be released on bail and the right to a speedy trial.

The surest way to forge national consensus and deepen the democratization process is to uphold justice. The consensus Ethiopians aspire for may be built by acknowledging that all Ethiopians are equal; eschewing and exposing bigotry, exclusionism and other immoral acts that are contrary to Ethiopians’ virtues; advocating respect for the commitment to the necessary sacrifice for the nation and its people. Any Ethiopian who truly desires to see social traumas healed and live in freedom should act rationally and not let his emotions get the better of him. Inasmuch as someone deserves to be lauded for his good deeds he should be held answerable for his misdeeds. It’s disingenuous and downright dangerous to arrogate praise for a creditable act but hide behind one’s ethnicity to avoid being brought to justice for his crimes. Ethiopians need to realize that the freedom they have always yearned for is unthinkable without justice.
By Brook Abdu

The Commercial Bank of Ethiopia (CBE) is preparing to hire a consultant for the preparation of yet again another strategy that would help the state bank become a world-class bank by 2025.

CBE, which went through not less than three restructuring and reorganization within the past three years, has asked consultants to express their interests in diagnosing the weaknesses of the bank and come up with “proper remedies, design strategies and draw a clear plan of action for the implementation as well as monitoring and evaluation tools.”

The whole consultancy services include eleven components. These are mandate definition, corporate and functional strategy design, asset quality review and turnaround solutions of distressed loans, corporate governance, risk management and audit, quality management and control, domestic and international banking operation, credit and resource management, human resource and institutional capacity, digital banking, marketing and product development, and information system, technology and cyber security, according to the request for expression of interest announced by the CBE.

But most of the elements in this new consultancy announcement had been studied by the Frankfurt School of Finance and Management, meant to last from 2011 to 2020 but were left without implementation, The Reporter has learnt from sources within the Bank.

According to the website of the School in Frankfurt, the consultancy included design and implementation of a comprehensive human resources strategy; design, development and provision of external trainings to CBE staff, and organizational structure study.

This project, started by Bekalu Zeleke, the former President of the CBE, was scrapped by Bacha Gina, the CEO and President of the Bank. Bacha then hired a local consultant to provide the same kind of service.

However, while implementing it, inconsistencies and less communication within the bank, had created chaos among the leadership as well as employees of the state bank. Further, with the coming of Abie Sano, again a new in-house developed structure and strategy was developed that are meant to fit in the bank’s current status and growth.

Abie’s new structure was being implemented and appointment of directors for the 30 districts in three regions was ongoing until a few days back, sources said. In his covering letter to this new structure, Abie noted that the new structure is needed because of the growth level the bank had reached at and the dynamism in the banking sector at large. The newly planned consultancy service is said to make the bank prepare itself for its vision of becoming a world-class bank by the year 2025. Hence, the planned structure will focus on gap identification and help improve it.

A senior management team member at the CBE told The Reporter that the intention of hiring the consultants for the said services was heard very recently within the headquarters and it came as a surprise to them because the assignment of new directors at the newly formulated districts was not completed by the time the plan was heard.

“People were still being appointed to the newly formulated districts according to the in-house developed document. Even distribution of bank branches to the newly restructured districts is not complete,” the expert said.

The source worries that this is going to further create instabilities within the bank and on employees who are already frustrated and are leaving in numbers unseen in the past. Frequent restructuring and reorientation within the bank are also affecting operations apart from the huge amount of money spent on such studies, the source said.

Because the implementation of the last structure was not completed, there is also a communication breakdown and there is a reporting gap within the bank. There is also no guarantee that the new one won’t be changed when a new management comes, the source said in fear.

But some sector experts say that the points in the expression of interest are broad and focus on multiple aspects of the operation, capacity building and corporate health. Hence, it will be a meticulous task that should last longer than a mere structural and operational reorganization.
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Six ethnicities in the South decide to form one region

By Brook Abdu

Five zonal administrations and one special woreda have decided to form their own region named South West Ethiopia Region, based on the peaceful and violent attacks on minorities at various times claiming lives, injuring many and destroying property.

The question of statehood in the South has been a contentious process since its inception and both the regional and federal governments have been engaged in studying the matter and prescribing recommendations that would solve the quagmire.

The structuring of the South region from the outset was a debatable issue and a subject of study in the fields of federalism and constitutional law. And after the Sidama became a separate state by separating from the South, many have argued that this has come Pandora’s Box in the country.

First the South regional government commissioned a study to find solutions to the growing government of statehood. The study came up with a recommendation that the region be maintained as it is, if the zones agree to do so. The second recommendation was to establish the Sidama as a separate state and maintain the others as they were (the Sidama and the South region at this time). The third was to stratify the region into a maximum of five regions because it would be difficult to govern, to get their own regional states.

Accepting the last recommendation, after failed attempts to go for the second, the federal government established a committee to discuss with zonal administrations and organized neighboring administrations into one regional government.

In this regard, the South Western Region is progressing into realization with the approval of the formation by the respective six administrations.

However, the matter in the south still remains to be far from solved as other zonal administrations had requested to establish regional states have referred their matters to the House of the Federation (HoF) for a solution. The HoF is the body that decides on issues of identity and statehood.

The question of statehood in the South was raised on the grounds of article 47 (2) of the constitution which allows any requesting ethnic group to establish a regional state of their own. Nevertheless, the government said that allowing many ethnic administration become a region would be difficult to administer and therefore solutions to overcome the perceived challenges.

New parliamentary term to kick off amid tension

By Yonas Abiye

In what many expect to be a contentious move that can escalate the ill-feeling between the Tigray Regional State and the Federal government, the House of People’s Representatives (HPR) and House of Federation (HoF) will hold their 6th year joint session on Monday, October 5, 2020. President Sahlework Zewde will deliver an opening remark focusing on government’s key activities in this Ethiopian fiscal year. Her remarks will highlight major legislations that will be endorsed in the House, as per the duty and responsibility of the House enshrined in the constitution. The House of Federation will also hold its regular session on October 6 and 7, 2020 according to the information obtained from both the HoF and HPR.

However, this year’s parliamentary session would kick-off amid the controversy and standoff between the federal government and the Tigray administration, led by Tigray People’s Liberation Front (TPLF). The party has repeatedly rejected the extension of the parliament’s term.

TPLF has 38 seats in the lower chamber of the House. Thus, the current six-year parliamentary term, which will officially be opened on Monday, will last for one more year with at least 38 empty seats out of a total of 547 seats. Speaking to Tigray Mass Media Agency, Asmelash Welde Sellassie, executive member of TPLF, said the party will not comply with laws, directives, and regulations, among others, to extend the current term of the federal government after its current term in office comes to an end on October 5, 2020.

Asmelash, who was the former chief government whip, said that on October 06, 2020 the constitutional term limit for both the HPR and HoF, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) and the Council of Ministers (CoM) will expire; he chairs, will have come to an end, rendering the incumbent’s stay in power “constitutionally illegal.” An excerpt from Asmelash’s interview was also published on TPLF’s official Facebook page.

The Tigray regional state has unilaterally conducted the 6th election for the regional council, which was subsequently formed on September 24, 2020. The newly formed council has also appointed TPLF’s Chairman Debretion Gobemichael (PhD) as the regional president.

If TPLF-led Tigray regions insist in its protest of the extended term of the legislative body, millions of people in Tigray will not be represented in the legislative chamber until the upcoming General election.

This also is expected to prompt the parliament into considering a disciplinary action regarding the 38 absentee MPs, who have been representing Tigray during the past five years of the 6th parliamentary term.

According to the current HPR Working Procedures and Members’ Conduct (Amendment) any member representative has to attend the parliamentary meetings during regular and other urgent sessions, called by the House Speaker.

However, it is not clear what kind of disciplinary or administrative measures, the Houses could take against TPLF members if they refuse to recognize the extension of the current term.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Bank Approves USD 27.33 Mln to Ramp up African Union’s COVID-19 Response Initiative

The African Development Bank’s Board of Directors approved USD 27.33 million in grants to boost the African Union’s (AU) efforts to mobilize a continental response to curb the COVID-19 pandemic.

The grant will support the implementation of the Africa Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (Afar CDC) COVID-19 Pandemic Preparedness and Response Plan through strengthening surveillance at various points of entry in the continent. It also helps build sub-regional and national capacity for epidemiological surveillance and ensuring the availability of testing materials and personal protective equipment for frontline workers deployed in hot spots.

President of the African Development Bank (ADB), Akinwumi Adesina said “With this financing package, we are reaffirming our strong commitment to a coordinated African response to the COVID-19 crisis.”

According to ADB, at the beginning of February 2020, only two reference laboratories in Senegal and in South Africa could run tests for COVID-19 on the continent.

The Africa CDC, working with governments, the World Health Organization, and several development partners and public health institutes, have increased this capacity to 44 countries currently.

Despite this progress, Africa’s testing capacity remains low, with the 37 African Development Fund eligible countries accounting for only 40 percent of completed COVID-19 tests to date.

(ENA)
Amnesty International released its belated report on the affairs of Ethiopian migrants in Saudi Arabia prison and highlighted the treatment most are receiving that is life-threatening including electric shocks when complaining and deaths to some. It called for the Ethiopian government to work with the government of Saudi Arabia and partners and transfer them to Ethiopia with urgency.

Calling their treatment as “hell”, the detained, and most from northern Yemen pushed out by the Huthi and Saudi forces, in a nation that has reminded unstable and at war for the last decade. Most Ethiopians are still believed to be stranded in the country with little resources and little support from international partners who are overwhelmed by the numbers of people affected and donor fatigue from rich nations.

“Thousands of Ethiopian migrants, who left their homes in search of a better life, have instead faced unimaginable cruelty at every turn. Confined to filthy cells, surrounded by death and disease, the situation is so dire that at least two people have attempted to take their own lives,” said Marie Forestier, Researcher and Advisor on Refugee and Migrant Rights at Amnesty International.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, while overwhelmed with little resources highlighted in a statement some of the work it’s doing to help reduce the impact its citizens are facing in Saudi Arabia.

“Ethiopia continues to receive its most vulnerable citizens from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA), although the COVID-19 infection rate spikes at home. Since April 2020, Ethiopia has repatriated and quarantined 3,998 of the most vulnerable migrants. They have been in the process of being reintegrated into their community”, it said in a statement.

“Another round of 2000 comprising of women, unaccompanied minors, and migrants with health conditions have begun to arrive in the capital since the eve of Ethiopian New Year in a safe and dignified manner. So far, we have received 964 (38 infants), assisted them in the temporary transit places (Universities in the capital), and sent them to their destination community for reintegration”, the statement continued.

There has been an attempt to bring some of the most affected victims to Ethiopia, where many were transported courtesy of the Ethiopian government yet that has been a drop in the ocean for the further thousands that are still stranded in most Gulf Nations and North Africa, as they look for passage to Europe and other destinations.

“Despite travel restrictions due to COVID-19, at least 34,000 Ethiopian migrants returned to their home country globally between April 2020 and September 2020, including 3,998 from Saudi Arabia. This shows that returns have not totally halted and it is still possible to repatriate Ethiopian migrants, if both governments are committed to doing so”, the report noted.

BGI, Habesha launch new products

By Samuel Getachew

BGI Ethiopia is set to introduce a new product, SENQ. This is to be a non-alcoholic malt beverage from one of Ethiopia’s biggest breweries of beer after it introduced a new dark brown beer, Doppel earlier this summer to the local market.

“Despite the difficulties that have come out of COVID-19, BGI is working tirelessly to strengthen the severely disrupted economy,” the company said announcing the new launch which is set to complement its famous brand, St. George beer and the Castel brand.

Castel, while it has shown a lukewarm success in the capital, is one of the best-selling beers in the region of Tigray, where beer is widely consumed. While the local beer sector has been hit hard with a slew of challenges, including an increase in tax that was abruptly introduced earlier this year, ban on television advertisement and the COVID-19 pandemic; other companies have also launched new products this year.

Earlier this month, Habesha introduced Kidamo beer in a direct competition to St. George, a light beer that is 4.8 percent alcoholic. In addition, the company is also set to launch a belated draft beer of its signature product, Habesha draft this year, according to Afel Amberber, the Marketing Manager of Habesha.

The company owned by Bavaria and local shareholders also owns a non-alcoholic drink, Negus, which has a growing market share in the booming non-alcoholic market. BGI was forced to cancel the introduction of its Bouffard beer product, popular in Cameroon, after a lukewarm reception from early consumers and placing advertisements across the capital. BGI, owned by a French company, dominates the market with St. George and earlier this year, cancelled its Zehidar brand and transformed its facilities in Wolkite for the production of St. George beer.

National Bank Introduces Directives to Support Small Farmers

The National Bank of Ethiopia (NBE) announced on Thursday, the introduction of directives that enables small farmers to use movable properties as collateral and also benefit from micro-insurance.

Announcing the two directives, NBE Governor Yinager Dessie said using movable properties as collateral is critically important for the livelihood of farmers in general and the agriculture sector in particular.

The actual execution of the new directives will be a game changer to transform the agriculture sector which employs over 80 percent of the total population, he said.

“We have now prepared the Collateral Registry and the directives will be implemented this coming Ethiopian New Year,” Yinager stated. Accordingly, banks will allocate 5 percent for small farmers using movable properties as collateral starting from September 2020, it was learned.

Livestock, crops, landholding certificates, and forest, among others, are among collateral properties to be taken as financial sources in terms of credit.

PM Abiy Appoints Opposition Leader as Policy Research Institute Deputy Director General

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed on Thursday appointed Professor Beyene Petros, a veteran opposition political party leader in Ethiopia, as Deputy Director General of Policy Research Institute, a government policy research think tank.

A professor of Biology at Addis Ababa University and former member of the Ethiopian House of People’s Representatives, Beyene has been in politics since 1991. Currently, he is the Chairman of an opposition party Ethiopian Social Democratic Party.

The Policy Research Institute was established in November 2018 by the Ethiopian government with the mission to conduct research and policy analysis that provide knowledge-based inputs to policy making and implementations.

It also aims at disseminating research outputs and findings to the policy and research community, academia, the development community and other stakeholders.

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In an effort to encourage honesty and build a culture of pride in paying taxes, the current government introduced an annual top tax payers’ appreciation day last year. About 200 tax payers were recognized this year, although the event did not feature major Chinese, Indian and Turkish giants. After handing out appreciation awards at the impressive Sheger Park to loyal tax payers on September 23 2020, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) expressed his hope that the number of top tax payers will grow next year. He vowed that the appreciation will not be limited to crystal trophies and certificates. He pledged to reward loyal tax payers with real gold and platinum. The PM further noted that priority services and premium customer care privileges will be provided across public agencies for top tax payers. A similar event to appreciate loyal tax payers was organized last year at the National Palace. Back then, 165 companies and individuals received recognition from PM Abiy. The Ministry of Revenues announced that the awardees are selected on the basis of 12 major criteria. In order to be considered and appreciated as loyal and top tax payer, one has to provide essential tax payment data and disclose the amount of tax and penalty profile of the tax payer. More adds to the list. Differences in audit findings, assessments of tax calculations and tax refunding amounts are considered in order to evaluate the performance of tax payers and come up with a top payers’ list. There are, however, more stringent criteria to be fulfilled before the companies see their names on the list. Obviously, top tax payers need to refrain from tax evasion and fraud. The requirements demand that they issue receipt for every transaction and not have a record of using bogus receipts. More stringent requirements include clearance from customs related risk factors and neatness of post audit assessments. Another one is that top tax payers must appear seamless during accidental inspection. Information obtained from the Federal Police and Attorney General on the tax payers’ record and behavior is also another factor for selection. Debt repayment history of the tax payers is also weighed in. Based on these benchmarks, 200 top tax payers joined the PM at his gala reception this year. Zooming in on the list, one might find some awkwardly missing giants. While importers and individual business persons have been recognized, top foreign investment giants are nowhere to be seen. According to the 2020 World Investment Report, China was the largest investor in Ethiopia in 2019, accounting for 60 per cent of newly approved FDI projects with significant realized investments in manufacturing and services. In addition to China, the largest volume of FDI inflow to Ethiopia comes from Saudi Arabia and Turkey. Very few from these countries have made it to the top tax payers’ list. For years, mega construction projects have been awarded to Chinese firms, mostly state owned. Yet, Huawei Technologies, East Steel, Dong Fang Spinning and Printing and some others from China, the largest volume of foreign investments benefited, mostly from the Chinese market. Ethiopia was among the largest investors in African countries. However, the ceremonious event did not feature the likes of Salini Impregilo, an Italian contractor, rank second and third top tax payer in the country for consecutive years? In response to these questions, Public Relations Director of the Ministry of Revenues, Ummi Abba Jenmal stated that the criteria set out are the only gauge that determines recognition. She said: ‘the size and number of projects these companies run or the contracts they win do not necessarily matter.’ One more thing unusual about the awarding event is the timing. Normally, in the Ethiopian fiscal year, high level tax payers settle their dues until the early second week of October. For this fiscal year, the last due date is scheduled for October 9, 2020. However, the ceremonious day was held in September. Some argue such practices might not reflect the actual number of tax payers being recognized. But according to Ummi, there are calculations done before hand that help determine how much money will be paid in taxes. Though FDIs are not considerably recognized as top tax payers, inflows to Ethiopia also contracted in 2019. FDI stood at USD 2.5 billion in 2019 from USD 3.2 billion the previous year. According to the 2020 World Investment Report, FDI was adversely affected by instability in certain parts of the country, including regions with industrial parks. Yet Ethiopia remained the biggest FDI recipient in East Africa.
The National Electoral Board of Ethiopia (NEBE), the sole body entrusted to hold polls of any sort, said that it had to halt its preparation for the polls, originally slated for late August 2020, due to the restrictive measures put in place by the government to prevent the spread of the coronavirus pandemic, first discovered in the country in March, 2020.

By Brook Abdu

The transition that many hoped would transform Ethiopia to a more democratic state has never been devoid of challenges from day one. Frequent protests have consumed the energy of both the government and the public. Attacks and killings of civilians, high-level government and military officials as well as prominent individuals, risked to derail the transition. Whatever adjectives one could use to explain how challenging the past two years were in Ethiopia, it is undeniable for many that the transition carried both hope and despair.

Many placed their expectations on the 2020 General Election to level the field and at least show a way for a positive political discourse. However, with the extension of the election, due to the global coronavirus pandemic, the political tension was reignited with the transition itself was put on trial.

The National Electoral Board of Ethiopia (NEBE), the sole body entrusted to hold polls of any sort, said that it had to halt its preparation for the polls, originally slated for late August 2020, due to the restrictive measures put in place by the government to prevent the spread of the coronavirus pandemic, first discovered in the country in March, 2020.

Although the decision by the NEBE was made before the country announced a State of Emergency (SOE) meant to prevent the spread of the virus, the SOE came later. The overlap between the SOE and the election period, which the Board said should be postponed, triggered one of the most exhaustive constitutional debates in the country.

In May 2020, the government proposed four alternatives to overcome the quagmire. Presented to representatives from political parties in the country, in a meeting held within the premises of the Prime Minister’s Office (PMO), the alternatives were amending the constitution to extend the government’s term, extending the state of emergency, dissolving the House of Peoples’ Representatives (HPR) or interpreting the constitution to find a way to extend the election and the terms of the HPR and the Executive body.

The current Attorney General, then deputy, Gedeon Timoteos (PhD) presented the pros and cons of each alternative. Finally, the government announced it has chosen the constitutional interpretation alternative. With this began the hottest constitutional debate and argument that showed the extreme facet of the Ethiopian politics. Some like the Ethiopian Democratic Party (EDP) were recommending a transitional government to straighten the path to an inclusive transition. Tigray People’s Liberation Front (TPLF) was of the view that there is no legal ground for the government to continue if the elections are extended, since the constitution provides that state power which should only be assumed through elections. Others said the government should look for ways of holding the elections rather than postponing it, as they say, the country had held elections even during the Ethio-Eritrean War, two decades ago. On the other hand, there were political groups that called for an inclusive national dialogue before making any decision to postpone the elections and extend the terms of the government.

Despite all the debate, the HPR endorsed the constitutional interpretation route and referred the matter to the Council of Constitutional
EDP wanted the establishment of a transitional government believing it will make the transition successful and inclusive of all political voices.

Inquiry (CCI), a body under the House of the Federation (HoF) that is given the power to interpret the constitution and present its decisions to the House of Federation (HoF) for endorsement.

After three hearings from experts and members of the constitutional drafting committee members as well as reviewing documents from 34 experts that sent recommendations from across the world, the CCI decided that the spirit of the constitution allows to postpone elections at times of a pandemic or other public health or security matters and the existing executives and lawmakers should stay in power until elections are conducted.

Accordingly, the whole attention shifted to the prevention of the coronavirus pandemic which has kept on increasing within the five months since the announcement of the SOR. As of Thursday, October 1, 2020, 75,388 people were reported to have contracted the virus and 1,205 people have died because of it. Addis Ababa, Oromia and Tigray regions rank first to third in terms of having the highest number of infected people with 38,012, 10,707 and 5,683 infections.

But, especially after Tigray held its regional council elections on September 9, 2020, the narrative that the federal and the remaining regional governments would not have the legitimacy to stay in power after October 5, 2020 (Meskerem 25, 2013 in the Ethiopian Calendar) since the elections were not held on the fifth year since the last one in 2015 as stipulated by the constitution, has become an issue. In a televised discussion, for instance, prominent politicians Lidetu Ayalew of EDP and Jawar Mohammed of the Oromo Federalist Congress (OFC), both detained now, boldly stated that the current government does not have the legitimacy to rule after October 10 indicating the military and other security institutions should not be accountable to the incumbent after that time.

Similarly, in a statement issued via the regional communications department, Tigray’s government said that the government should accumb to the calls by the Coalition of Federalist Forces that wanted for an all-inclusive discussion in the country before October 5 comes. But come that day, the government won’t be able to make any laws and its decisions won’t be respected.

According to Adane Tadesse, the President of EDP, the issue behind the October 5 or 10, 2020 is the fact that the terms of the executive as well as the HPR ends beyond that time. But, he says, the irony in this is that it is the government that insisted on holding the elections reasoning constitutional provisions, while EDP and others called for its postponement given the various ailments in the country.

“They argued for holding the elections when we said the country was not ready. Now, they are the ones who justified and are arguing for the postponement of the elections and hence, the terms of the government,” he told to The Reporter.

EDP wanted the establishment of a transitional government believing it will make the transition successful and inclusive of all political voices.

“As we believed that the government’s legitimacy ends if elections were not held, we have proposed the establishment of a transitional government,” Adane said, also adding that, “but this does not mean all things will crumble overnight come the day the government’s term ends.”

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Raghav Prasad is the Division President for Sub-Saharan Africa with Mastercard Corporation. Mastercard is set to help Ethiopia achieve its digital economy by 2025, by helping millions have access to Digital Payment and creating sustainable employment and have them be part of the future of digital economy. In addition, it is planning on helping small businesses and entrepreneurs achieve a payment digitization system within a continent where up to 90 percent of the population is still transaction in cash. Here, he reflects on issue of job creation and cashless societies in developing countries including Ethiopia with The Reporter’s Samuel Getachew. Excerpts:

The Reporter: The foundation is having a growing partnership and interest in areas of knowledge transfer, education, and financial inclusion in Africa. Share with me the highlights of its work in Ethiopia?

Raghav Prasad: Mastercard is committed to partnering with the Ethiopian government and key players in the ecosystem to drive the charge towards a broad-based digital economy in the country. Over the past few months, we have worked closely with key government players to create the framework for us to work together, which has resulted in this MoU that will deliver a significant impact across several aspects of the economy.

Over the next few months, we hope to work not only with the Ministry of Innovation & technology but with other departments as well, to lay out plans for driving digitization that delivers greater efficiencies in public service delivery, improve agricultural productivity, supports the expansion of youth employment and deliver better tax collection/compliance.

Some of the vision of Mastercard is bold, to say the least. Such as helping “bring 1 billion people and 50 million micro and small business into the digital economy by 2025.” Tell me about that?

Five years ago, we made a commitment to bring 500 million financially excluded individuals into the digital economy. Through 350 programs in over 80 countries from 2015 to 2020, we have already achieved that goal. This has emboldened us to dream even bigger! We’re now focused on extending our commitment to taking this number to 1 billion individuals by 2025.

These goals reflect our philosophy and mission of “doing well by doing good,” of harnessing our insights, technology, and expertise to advance inclusive growth and make a substantive and enduring social impact. In fact, we have extended this

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commitment beyond just the big goal of 1 billion individuals – we have also committed separately to supporting 50 Million MSME-SEMs and 25 Million women entrepreneurs in becoming financially included. This will be achieved through a broad range of efforts including ongoing work on government disbursement solutions, digitizing pay for private-sector workers, expanding partnerships with mobile network operators, providing money management and payment solutions for gig workers, scaling up efforts with fintech, digital platforms, and digital wallets/apps as well as addressing needs of the financially vulnerable.

The new MoU that was signed by the Ethiopian Ministry of Innovation and Technology and Mastercard is to help in areas of digitalization. Tell me about that?

A few weeks ago, we announced a partnership with the Ministry of Innovation and Technology to develop and implement strategic solutions and policies geared towards achieving a digitized economy in support of the Ethiopian Government’s Digital Ethiopia 2025 strategy. Under the MoU agreement, Mastercard will bring to bear its global technology platforms and apply its insights and experience from working with governments around the world in supporting Ethiopia, to achieve its digital transformation objectives. These activities will directly support efforts towards driving financial inclusion, creating safe and accessible digitized payment solutions for small businesses, and implement digital identity projects.

We owe this partnership largely to the meeting between President Sahle-Work Zewde and our Executive Vice Chairman, Anne Cairns, last year. We are very excited about the progress we have made in our engagements with the Government of Ethiopia and believe that this is just the beginning as we will be working very closely with MINT to extend this partnership across several sectors of the economy.

The idea is to help small businesses mostly hit by COVID-19 and lack of financial inclusion which is a widespread concern among entrepreneurs. How will the new partnership help in terms of changing that narrative?

The small and micro business segments are the life-blood of the economies of Africa. In fact, the World Bank estimates that SMEs are responsible for 77 percent of all jobs in Africa and as much as half of the GDP in some countries. Their success drives ripple effects that impact communities lives and local communities in long-lasting ways. This is especially pronounced in today’s pandemic-hit world, since high youth unemployment in the region, often means starting a small business is the only way to earn a living. Unfortunately, when small businesses suffer, everyone suffers – a post-pandemic world especially; supporting this community is the single most important task right now. These unprecedented times call for unparalleled innovation that puts citizens and customers first. We must deliver the right tools and the most valuable insights to navigate the adversities of today and prepare for the challenges of tomorrow. Our decades of technology investment and expertise in forging transformative partnerships make us a network for small businesses that are secure, resilient, and reliable in uncertain times.

We believe that SMEs/MSMEs need to be supported with the right tools to navigate challenging times, sustain themselves in crisis, scale, and ultimately succeed. Mastercard is committed to powering small businesses through our resilient network, insights, technology, products and services, and philanthropic support including a USD 250 million pledge to support SME/MSMEs globally.

By joining forces with different stakeholders – like the Government of Ethiopia and various stakeholders like banks & fintechs, we believe we can make the world a lot better for our communities and societies. For example, for micro and small businesses, the biggest hurdle to growth is not having access to working capital loans. Mastercard’s technology makes it possible for them to digitize their transactions – both sales & purchases – which provide financial institutions the ability to evaluate them for credit and allow them to be resilient during tough times and grow and prosper during good times.

We have a full suite of solutions that can significantly reduce the cost of accepting payments digitally. This means reinventing the infrastructure that small shops need to accept digital payments. For example, our new ‘Tap on Phone’ solutions allow an MSME to turn their mobile phone into a contactless payment acceptance device, reducing the cost of such infrastructure by orders of magnitude. Our other technologies like Mastercard QR enable consumers even at the bottom of the pyramid to move payments digitally via their mobile devices, and, MSMEs to accept these payments in a similar way. This eliminates losses through theft and the costs associated with holding and storing cash safely, while producing digital transaction records for multiple uses.

What are some of the strategic solutions that the partnership will be looking at?

Like I mentioned earlier, Mastercard is committed to Ethiopia and with the Ministry of Innovation and Technology we intend to help define the frameworks and plans to drive the digitization of the payment ecosystem and enable micro and small merchants to gain access to digital payment products, so they can make and receive payments digitally, allowing them to reduce costs. More importantly, digital transaction records will also help banks to evaluate small and micro businesses for credit, offering working capital loans that help them grow. This growth generates employment and incremental tax revenues, support the Government of Ethiopia in reducing the “cost of cash” and the leakage of revenue into the shadow economy, and, support Ethiopia in driving digital transformation by strengthening their existing infrastructure, developing and enabling systems (Digital ID) and facilitating digital interactions between the government, private sector, and citizens (Digital Payment).

Mastercard is still a cash-based economy and has had an ambition of increasing digital payment within the nation and as a way for local entrepreneurs to be connected to the rest of the world.

How important is a digital payment option in your opinion to a nation that still uses an old method that most nations, even neighboring Kenya has moved on from.

Digitization – and payment digitization in particular – can be a solution to reinvigorate the economy going forward. According to a study by Moody’s Analytics, each 1 percent increase in the use of digital payments across the world produces an average annual increase of USD104 billion in the consumption of goods and services. This represents an 0.02 percent increase in GDP in developed markets and a 0.02 percent increase in developing countries.

Even before this pandemic, forward looking governments in emerging markets like Ethiopia, have recognized the need to digitize their economies and reduce cash dependency in order to drive financial inclusion and citizen wellbeing. In this context, I believe payment digitization not only alleviates many of the downsides of cash but also create avenues of growth and innovation for people and businesses to thrive.

In Africa, cash still represents 85 to 90 percent of all transactions and this comes with significant direct and indirect costs for Governments. Direct costs include lost tax revenues, the cost of cash production, handling, transportation and storage. A recent study shows that the cost of excessive cash usage is around 1.5 percent of the global GDP.

Migrating payments to digital formats allows even the unbanked, to become financially included and the economy to thrive. Take for instance small farmers. Today they are dependent of agents to help them sell their crops and receive all their payments in cash, which means it is impossible for them to get loans. Digitization of transactions through “marketplace” apps allows their payments and receivables to be recorded digitally, thus enabling them to access credit facilities. This in turn helps them buy more seeds or land, grow more and produce and business in the process.
THE RISING TREND OF ONLINE SHOPPING
The ritual of shopping could be a great activity to spend a few hours or it could be a dreaded hellscape one avoids like a plague. Nonetheless, it’s something people must do even if it’s as rarely as possible. Dedicated shoppers wander around the never-ending shops of Mercato, walk down Hayahulet or Bole road going into shop after shop hoping to find, by some miracle, a pair of pants, shoes, shirts, anything, that could make them feel good.

The reluctance to physically visit shops amid the pandemic has cut the number of retail customers a great deal; consequently, shops are attempting to find digital means of showcasing their goods. Ecommerce has yet to find a footing in the country but some retailers are finding ways of making online sales work for them.

Shop Habesha is a new virtual platform that began operation 4 months ago. It sells items from shops that are willing to use Shop Habesha. Mainly focused on selling clothes, electronics and cosmetics, Shop Habesha has a large traffic on its telegram and facebook pages.

Kaleab Hailu, owner and manager of Shop Habesha, says: ‘I have no products of my own. I run my business like amazon, shopify and others that don’t own physical products. I connect suppliers and customers. I make money using only my phone while listening to music laying in bed.’

Kaleab also does advertising and promotion jobs on the side but Hulunem.com, his online shop, is his main source of livelihood. He gets a few hours of sleep a night, dedicating his time to posting on social media channels and managing the shopping site. His sales commission ranges from 500 to 10,000 birr, depending on the product. His telegram channel nearly has 180,000 subscribers.

Kaleab further remarked: ‘the virtual retail market is definitely upgrading everyday. It is getting better. Since wi-fi has become accessible for an increasing amount of people, I think this is how people are going to do business from now on. And it is not only products and goods but also a lot of online services come straight to your door.’

Danait Tadesse, a marketing professional and online shopper says: ‘I hate going around trying to find something of my taste at a reasonable price. Other customers have the same problem. Having experienced online shopping, she figured she could start her own shopping channel on telegram and join the trend. She marketed items from Dubai or Bangkok and got them from people who bring them from abroad and sale them here. However, the commotion on her telegram channel, Shop til U Drop, has gone down over the last few months. The limited number of people that have travelled for business due to the pandemic and the difficulty of finding those that have are the reasons behind the dip.

The pandemic has increased the number of people flocking to online stores and shops. Those that have been around longer than a year are thriving. Sisay Worku manages a store located around Mexico but his main focus is on digitally marketing his products, specifically through his telegram channel Only Brandi that has about 280,000 subscribers. He encourages customers on his telegram channel to visit his store physically. He believes that a physical store inspires trust in the retailer.

The ability to compare prices among multiple digital stores before making the decision to purchase makes online shopping preferable but trust is a big issue. Danait says she has experienced difficulties with some customers when they meet at delivery. Items not looking like the pictures, clothes not fitting, or general reluctance to trust the seller are common bottlenecks.

High end products like perfume, watches and shoes attract people online and Sisay’s store offers a special delivery service for extra payment. His online store has been growing for the last four years and he has been able to hire motorcycles to deliver goods all over the city. He also occasionally mails products or hires cars to deliver goods outside of Addis. He is also in the process of developing an app to ease the transaction.

Hana Terefe is a designer whose sales is also focused online. ‘The market has moved online now. So I want to keep up. One of the ways I am trying to keep up is by studying Digital Marketing at a certificate level. I love being creative and making simple everyday clothes.’

Her designing business has grown enough that she now employs people in the production line at her workshop. Her clothes are often custom made or by special order. People can view her products on facebook or telegram or they can visit her workshop.

Retailers are handling the lack of e-commerce infrastructure by finding workarounds but a digital payment system is necessary for the industry to thrive. The lack of an online payment system definitely has an effect. But as long as it is delivered in person, it doesn’t become much of an inconvenience. An online payment system would have definitely increased the transaction,’ noted Danait.

Kaleab agrees. ‘Digital marketing and e-commerce are our future and there could be a lot of things done, if we had those things available.’ Scrolling through Instagram or going through websites like Merkato or Hulunem from the comfort of your home would be a lot easier with a functional digital payment system to close the deal; but that day is not far off. ‘The online market is not so big that you can be totally committed to it but it is promising in the future. So I am taking it very seriously,’ said Hana.
ACCA MEMBERS IN ETHIOPIA

We're the world's most forward-thinking professional accountant body.

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ACCA Ethiopia is proud to acknowledge its fellows and members who form a valuable part of our global network.
Governments have responded to the COVID-19 crisis and the social and economic disruption it has wrought with a range of ad-hoc schemes, including paid furloughs, cash transfers and family support. While commendable, these responses share two major limitations.

First, many are temporary, short-term fixes, covering lockdowns or a notional period until economic recovery kicks in. They do nothing to change the underlying circumstances that left many millions of people vulnerable, or to put them in better standing to face future crises.

Secondly, the measures simply do not address the existential threats that face many of the world’s worst-hit communities. Although worldwide government spending on the COVID-19 response is more than USD 11 trillion, by far the largest responses have come from rich countries. For example, the European Union recently adopted a Euro 750 billion recovery plan equivalent to 6 per cent of its GDP while Japan’s economic recovery plan equates to 22 per cent of its GDP (or USD 1.1 trillion). But among low-income developing countries the fiscal response has averaged 1.2 percent of GDP.

Developing countries, in low-income countries, have limited domestic resources, made worse by falls in some export commodity prices. They are simply unable to put in place the comprehensive crisis response measures their people need, let alone the longer-term social protection systems that would create more fundamental resilience.

Even before COVID-19, 40 per cent of the global population was either not covered, or only partially covered, by social security. Almost two-thirds of the world’s children had no social protection coverage, only 22 per cent of unemployed persons received unemployment cash benefits, and just 28 per cent of persons with severe disabilities received disability cash benefits.

Global crises like this pandemic observe no geographical or political borders. Against them we are only as strong as the weakest among us. If we are to build greater resilience and a more effective ability to recover, we need to support all countries in creating robust social protection floors. The current piecemeal approach is like starting to recruit firefighters after a blaze has broken out, and then directing them to save only a few rooms in the burning building.

Clearly, this doesn’t work particularly in these circumstances, international solidarity is essential, and in everyone’s interest.

Social protection floors for all are affordable. The financing gap for all developing countries – the difference between what they are already investing in social protection and what a full social protection floor (including health) would cost – is about USD 1.161 billion in the current year, including the impact of COVID-19. But the gap for the low-income countries is only some USD 78 billion, a negligible amount compared to the GDP of the industrialized countries. But the amount required to cover one per cent of the gross national income of donor countries.

International human rights law recognizes that wealthy States have a duty to help fulfill social rights in countries with more limited resources, and a number of steps have already been taken to convert this commitment into concrete assistance. In 2011, an expert advisory group recommended donors provide predictable and credible aid to convert this commitment into concrete assistance. In 2020, Ethiopia has launched a COVID-19 response aimed at providing 133 million low-income Ethiopians with 3 months of financial support.

Countries must deploy the maximum resources available to convert this commitment into reality for all. This may require more effective approaches to taxation and tackling corruption. Longer term, this redistribution of assets will help to curb inequality and discrimination and support the Agenda for Sustainable Development’s promise to “leave no one behind”. This crisis offers us many lessons. One that cannot be ignored is the need to strengthen social protection in developing countries. In 2012, two independent UN human rights experts proposed a Global Fund for Social Protection to help low-income countries create social protection floors for their people. The same year the ILO’s membership – governments, workers and employers from 187 countries – backed the idea of comprehensive social protection with a unanimously-adopted pledge to “establish and maintain...social protection floors as a fundamental right”.

We regularly hear pledges that we must, and will, “build back better” from the current crisis. We can only do so if every country has a minimum level of social protection, including the poorest and most marginalized.

Countries must deploy the maximum resources available to convert this commitment into reality for all. This may require more effective approaches to taxation and tackling corruption. Longer term, this redistribution of assets will help to curb inequality and discrimination and support the Agenda for Sustainable Development’s promise to “leave no one behind”. This crisis offers us many lessons. One that cannot be ignored is the need to strengthen social protection in developing countries. In 2012, two independent UN human rights experts proposed a Global Fund for Social Protection to help low-income countries create social protection floors for their people. The same year the ILO’s membership – governments, workers and employers from 187 countries – backed the idea of comprehensive social protection with a unanimously-adopted pledge to “establish and maintain...social protection floors as a fundamental right”.

We regularly hear pledges that we must, and will, “build back better” from the current crisis. We can only do so if every country has a minimum level of social protection, including the poorest and most marginalized.

Universal Social Protection Floors, Our Joint Responsibility

By Michelle Bachelet, Olivier De Schutter and Guy Ryder

Horn of Africa and the second in Africa. It is home to half of population in the Horn region, one of the strategic blocks in the continent.

Summary of the UN Charter

The United Nations was established at the end of the Second World War. The conference of its establishment was held in San Francisco in 1945. There were only 51 countries that signed on the Charter. Representing Ethiopia, Abdi Aklilu Allahwebl, the then Foreign Minister, signed the Charter. Ethiopia is one of the earliest signatory countries of this charter. Apart from that, Ethiopia has ratified many of the United Nations conventions and also served as a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security council. Unlike many African countries, Ethiopia also was member of the former League of Nations.

Contribution to Peace Keeping Missions

As a founding member of the United Nations, Ethiopia also supported the United Nations Principles of Collective Security that focus on the global peace and security. By supporting the principle, Ethiopia has participated in different peace-keeping operations starting from the 1960s. Subsequently, Ethiopia has actively participated in operations organized and led by the United Nations and the African Union.

Ethiopia sent troops to South Korea, Congo, Rwanda, Burundi, Liberia, Abiy and Darfur (in the Sudan), Somalia in peacekeeping missions. Currently (September 2020) Ethiopia has contributed 6397 troops to the Peace Keeping Missions of the United Nations in the world. This makes Ethiopia first from the world.

Ethiopia as a founder and seat of the African Union

In the permanent membership of the Security Council, Africa is not represented. Rather it is expected to implement the decision made by the five veto powers. Ethiopia played a great role for the new organization. Ethiopia was also member of the former Organization of the African Union (OAU). This continental organization was formally established in the conference of the heads of state of the leaders of government in the capital of Ethiopia, Addis Ababa. Some compare it to the permanent seat of its origins on 25 May 1963. The founding of the OAU became a single achievement for the entire unity. Addis Ababa has become the Head Quarter of the OAU. In the new millennium, the organization is changed into the African Union (AU). Moreover Ethiopia is the seat of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa. Ethiopia is supporting troops through UN-AU hybrid peace keeping forces. Besides Ethiopia is a logistic base of the East African Stand by Force. She is playing a great role in maintain peace in the region and the continent at large.

Ethiopia is origin of Mankind

Various researches of scientists are showing that East Africa is the origin of mankind. Lucy, a 3.2 million-year-old fossil skeleton of a human ancestor was found in Ethiopia on November 24, 1974. It is regarded as one of ancient fossil that indicates East Africa as the place where the first human being originated. One can argue that in ancient time few Africans “possess” the whole world but now segregate from decision making process in the Security Council as permanent member.

Ethiopia Won Injustice of Colonialism

The Scramble for Africa on 1885 was formulated by the Berlin Conference in 1884-85. In implementing the partition on the continent, 186 African countries were created by the imperial powers moving into most of African countries. Ethiopia...
Honouring human rights pioneer: Mesfin Woldemariam
1930-2020

By Deprose Muchena

Amnesty International pays tribute to Ethiopia’s human rights giant, Professor Mesfin Woldemariam, who died aged 91 on 9 September, having distinguished himself as one of the country’s most prominent human rights defenders.

Renowned for saying “Oppression needs people who can bear it”, Professor Woldemariam was one of the founders in 1993 of the Ethiopian Human Rights Council (EHRCO), the country’s first civil society organisation exclusively dedicated to the cause of human rights at a time when repression was rife following years of military rule.

Professor Woldemariam’s activism started while he worked as a lecturer in geography at Addis Ababa University in the years following the failed 1960 coup attempt against Emperor Haile Selassie. In a move that was widely seen as an attempt to silence dissent at the university, Professor Woldemariam was one of the university’s staff handed administrative government jobs in the 1970s. He was appointed Governor of Gimbi Sub-Province in Wellega, Oromia, but he refused to take up the appointment unless it was personally offered by Emperor Haile Selassie. He eventually got his day with the Emperor.

Professor Woldemariam, however, found himself on the wrong side of public sentiment when the military government decided to execute some 40 former senior government officials implicated for their role in filling with mistruths by a government commission of inquiry that Professor Woldemariam was part of. The commission’s findings were never revealed nor were the suspects given the opportunity to defend themselves in fair trials.

He found his footing again, returning to the limelight by partnering with others to form the Ethiopian Human Rights Council a few months after Emperor Haile Selassie was overthrown in 1991. Professor Woldemariam often explained that the Council was created to educate and assist the then transitional government in “respecting, protecting and fulfilling human rights”. He went on to lead the organisation as its chair until 2005 and endured ceaseless harassment and intimidation from the government for investigating, documenting and reporting human rights violations.

On leaving the EHRCO, he advised the Rainbow Party, which was part of the opposition Coalition for Unity and Democracy (CUD), that took on the ruling Ethiopia People’s Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) in the highly contested 2005 general election.

This election was marred by post-election violence that erupted in Addis Ababa and other major cities in June and November 2005, leading to the arrest of Professor Woldemariam and 29 other opposition leaders and journalists. He was charged and prosecuted in a trial that fell well below international fairness standards and sentenced to life imprisonment on 16 July 2007.

During his imprisonment, Amnesty International declared him a Prisoner of Conscience who was detained solely for peacefully exercising his human rights, and campaigned for his immediate and unconditional release.

In July 2011, Professor Woldemariam was released alongside 38 other opposition politicians, prominent human rights defenders and journalists who were unjustly detained after they signed a request for pardon.

After his release, Professor Woldemariam wrote many books and public articles for local newspapers. Amnesty International salutes Professor Woldemariam for his contribution to human rights in Ethiopia.

May he rest in power!

Ed’s Note: Deprose Muchena is Amnesty International’s Director for East and Southern Africa. The views expressed in this article do not necessarily reflect the views of The Reporter.

SoE revenue falls . . .

According to Beyene, the SoEs were expected to generate 33 billion birr in revenues. In his briefing, Beyene mentioned that a total of 13 billion birr dividend has been paid. The target was to contribute some 19 billion birr. The slew of directives comes from the Commercial Bank of Ethiopia (CBE) with eight billion birr and the Ethiopian telecom has settled 4.5 billion birr.

In terms of repayment of outstanding loans, seven SoEs were able to repay 15.3 billion birr against the 17 billion birr intended to pay for domestic creditors. In addition, a USD 604 million foreign loan has been paid and more than half of that was the share of Ethio telecom.

During last FY, the SoEs have been able to generate USD 8.67 billion in earnings from remittances, export of goods and services while the plan was to secure a USD 12.52 billion in earnings. Beyene said that Ethiopian Airlines Group has generated USD 3.75 billion, a 42.1 percent share, while CBE generated USD 3.45 billion, representing close to a 40 percent share. These two alone have contributed 45 percent of the total earnings.

Out of the 21 SoEs the agency oversees, the Sugar Corporation turned out to be the single entity to report losses which Beyene refrained from disclosing the amount. But last year, four more SoEs had incurred losses.

Nation on edge . . .

The reason for EDP to propose the establishment of a new government is because it believed the country has more burning issues that need to be resolved than hold any crisis because of the pandemic. He even said that he doesn’t think a special event is concerned about it given the pandemic is not a public health threat.

The CCI was the announcement that the virus is no longer a stay to be a public health threat. The NEBE has now been directed to proceed with the preparations for the upcoming election. The PMO Press’s attempt to get a comment from the PMO Press Secretariat on this matter did not materialise.

While it is time that will tell what would follow the specific dates, the federal government is concerned about it given the fragile nature of the country. The NEBE has now been directed to proceed with the preparations for the upcoming election. The PMO Press Secretariat on this matter did not materialise.

With the highly contested 2005 general election being the end of the term of the government on the said dates, have solid grounds to say why.

The Reporter’s attempt to get a comment from the PMO Press Secretariat on this matter did not materialise.

But organizing discussions is a difficult task to accomplish, he stressed.

“Military shoulder brushing disintegrates a nation. A civilised politics calls for dialogue, not war,” he said.

Musa also agreed that the narrative related to October 5 or 10, 2020 (Meskerem 25 or 30, 2013 in the Ethiopian Calendar) have caused a visible frustration within the government. As the election in Tigray and the push for the federal government to proceed with the election in Amhara, were not materialized, he said.

“Military policies are myths that we see are signs of frustration. But, don’t think a special day would follow this special date,” he opined.

But, he believes that the people, who are raising concerns relating to the end of the term of the government on the said dates, have solid grounds to say why.

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**Artist Uses Leaves And Flowers To Create Mesmerizing Bird Portraits**

Whether we've already discovered them or not, we all have our own ways of finding inner peace. For Hannah Bullen-Ryner, it comes through reconnecting with Mother Earth.

Bullen-Ryner composes beautiful birds using only natural materials found locally and no permanent fixings. Scavenging her surroundings, she puts together flowers, leaves, twigs, and berries to form delicate portraits either on the woodland floor or under one small oak. When she's done, they last only a few moments before nature starts reclaiming them. Luckily, that brief period of time is enough for Hannah to photograph her artworks, or as she calls it, offerings to Mother Nature. Soon after, they get taken by the breeze, rearranged by the rain, or wriggled through by an insect and leave no trace behind.

The artist says she creates to share her love for nature and to soothe her soul, and you can definitely feel it in the photos of her ephemeral pieces.

(Bored panda)

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**Facebook introduces cross-app communication between Messenger and Instagram, plus other features**

Facebook announced that it will begin rolling out new functionality that will allow Instagram and Messenger users to communicate across apps, in addition to bringing a host of Messenger-inspired features to the Instagram inbox. On Instagram, users will be presented with an option to update to a new messaging experience that offers the ability to change your chat color, react with any emoji, watch videos together, set messages to disappear and more. As a part of this update, they’ll also have the option to chat with friends who use Facebook, the app will inform them.

The broad set of more “fun” additions to the Instagram inbox will serve as a way to entice users to agree to the upgrade. This decision, in turn, locks users further inside the Facebook universe. With cross-platform messaging interoperability, users may see fewer reasons to try a different chat app as one messaging app can reach friends and family across two of the world’s largest social networks.

Facebook says the new interoperability will also work even if the Instagram users don’t have a Facebook account, and vice versa.

In time, Facebook plans to fold WhatsApp into the experience, too, in a further consolidation of its market power.

(TechCrunch)
#REPORTERBOOK

**Apple to release new emojis with iOS 14.2**

While the current version of iOS is iOS 14.0.1, Apple is already testing iOS 14.2. The company released an early beta version of the update and it includes a new set of emojis, as Emojipedia spotted.

Apple already shared an early look of the new emojis back in July. Overall, there will be dozens of new emojis this year. Emojis will also be more diverse and inclusive than ever with new variations of existing emojis.

Earlier this year, the governing body in charge of approving new emojis, the Unicode Consortium, approved 117 new emojis as part of Unicode 13.0. Operating system developers and social network companies, such as Apple, Google, Microsoft, Twitter, Facebook and Mozilla, then draw their own versions of the new emojis and release them on their platforms.

In this release, you’ll find a transgender flag, a smiling face with tear, pinched fingers, two people hugging, some insects and animals, a disguised face and more.

When it comes to new variations, there will be a Mx Claus, a gender-inclusive alternative to Santa Claus and Mrs Claus. Tuxedos are no longer limited to men and veils are no longer limited to women. You’ll be able to send an emoji with a woman wearing a tuxedo and a man wearing a veil. (TechCrunch)

**Twitter’s voice tweets are rolling out to more iOS users, and transcriptions are on the way**

Twitter has just expanded its voice tweets feature, which lets you record a snippet of audio to include with a tweet, to more users on iOS. But perhaps more significantly, Twitter is now saying it plans to add transcriptions to voice tweets to improve accessibility, which could help address criticisms from the feature’s June 17th launch.

Without any way to see a transcription, voice tweets were quickly criticized for not being accessible. Then it came to light that there wasn’t a dedicated team at Twitter for accessibility — instead, the company asked employees to volunteer their time on top of their usual work to focus on accessibility. That all meant that one day after voice tweets were announced, the company told The Verge it was exploring how to make a “more dedicated group” focused on accessibility.

Twitter has since announced two new teams dedicated to accessibility, on September 2nd: one promoting accessibility within Twitter’s products, and one focusing on accessibility for Twitter as a business. And as part of that announcement, Twitter said it’s planning to add automated captions to audio and video on the platform by “early 2021.”

Twitter also plans to start testing voice DMs soon. (The Verge).

#ThisWeekInHistory

On October 3, 1863 President Abraham Lincoln issued a proclamation designating the last Thursday in November as Thanksgiving Day.

IEAF Colonel Assefa Ayene signs the logbooks of the first batch to accept Firefly planes from Fairey, watched by Swedish Major Frank Lonnberg and three Ethiopian ferry pilots.

#ethiopianairforce
A Cool New Energy-Efficiency Policy

By Iain Campbell

The world’s most dynamic economy is governed by a communist party, whereas its previous capitalist stronghold is under the misrule of a man whose companies have gone bankrupt six times. With leading countries and institutions, they did not respond to global warming and climate change, but instead accelerated their production of greenhouse gas emissions.

The Global Cooling Prize, launched in 1999, could have five times less climate impact than standard AC units. Top Runner also bolsters investment confidence. Traditionally, capitalists have argued for decentralization as the way to market signals. But in the 1990s, they argued for a currency based on labor.

Klaus Schwab, the founder of the World Economic Forum, denounces neoliberalism and free-market fundamentalism, and British Conservatives and US Republicans have taken to condemning the abuses of managerial capitalism – many of whom whose companies have gone bankrupt six times.

In the United States, President Donald Trump and his fellow Republicans contend that only they stand between the American dream and a socialist revolution. Although Trump’s Democratic challenger in November’s election, Joe Biden, advocates no such thing, he does support putting “an end to the era of shareholder value.” In any case, capitalism and socialism are once again front and center in the contest for public opinion and voters’ support.

But, unlike in past decades, the world is not in a state of convergence. Nevertheless, the Global Cooling Prize to identify a residential room air conditioner that uses dramatically less energy and contains refrigerants with little to no effect on the climate.

Targets maximum efficiency in this way worldwide would decrease the lifecycle cost for consumers of owning an AC unit by a factor of two to three and eliminate the need for over 300 gigawatts of electricity generation capacity globally. It would also avoid 157-345 gigatons of carbon dioxide emissions over the next four decades.

Establishing policies based upon the benefit the most commercially available AC products to existing consumers and provide some protection to consumers that they would be at the bottom of the technology rollout, instead of just above the market.

This significant change would not only protect consumers; it would also considerably reduce the lifecycle costs of owning and operating air conditioners. At the same time, it would allow significant and sufficient room for new competition, thereby bringing down the purchase price of more efficient units.

Such a policy could emulate and build on Japan’s Top Runner program, launched in 1999, which effectively advances the country’s AC market while delivering energy savings and reducing environmental costs. The scheme encourages consumers to purchase the best-performing available units through a labeling program, which in turn increases economies of scale and lowers costs. And by demanding more efficient AC technologies from the market, Top Runner also bolsters investor confidence.

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Capitalists and Socialists of the World, Unite!

By Harold James

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wireless connectivity enables on-the-go business, it allows information
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Addis Ababa’s 4G network offers mobile users with faster data speeds,
today's consumer demands a seamless online experience across all
what consumers want
keeping #AfricaInMotion.

Ericsson is devoted to support Ethiopia’s telecom industry development,
years - since the sales of telephone receivers commenced in 1894.
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4G Advancement in Ethiopia: a milestone
in the country's telecom landscape
By Abiye Yeshitila
Account Manager of Ericsson Ethiopia

Ethiopia is approaching massive digital transformation, as one of the fastest growing economies in Africa. The ICT market is constantly evolving, and telecommunication providers have to offer products and services that meet their customers’ demand for high-speed data connectivity.

In Ethiopia, access to mobile communication has expanded rapidly. Mobile phones have moved from a communication-centric device to a multi-purpose smart personal companion. Smartphones will witness growth and more data-centric offerings are forecast to enter the market.

4G brings improvements in coverage and capacity, offering download and upload speeds much greater than those of earlier technologies. Additionally, support for Machine-Type Communications (MTC) and Internet of Things (IoT) in cellular networks is improving with the launch of 4G.

Ericsson’s portfolio enables the telecom industry and other sectors to conduct better business, increase efficiency, improve user experience and capture new opportunities. We have done business in Ethiopia for 152 years - since the sales of telephone receivers commenced in 1894.

Ericsson is devoted to support Ethiopia’s telecom industry development, leveraging our global expertise and technology leadership. We are working together with service providers to ensure rewarding new user experiences for Ethiopian consumers in the new connectivity era as part of our mission to empower Africa’s technology-enabled economies and keep #AfricaInMotion.

What consumers want
Today’s consumer demands a seamless online experience across all fronts from a smartphone, a tablet, to other devices. Addis Ababa’s 4G network offers mobile users with faster data speeds, high-quality video conferencing and faster response times. It also helped service providers meet demand for mobile data, as customers adopt data-hungry smartphones, mobile modems and tablets.

The mobile industry in Ethiopia is a key contributor to the country’s economy and enables new economic activity in other sectors. As wireless connectivity enables on-the-go business, it allows information and services to be omnipresent.

JOB OPPORTUNITY
AMERICAN EMBASSY
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

The US Embassy Addis Ababa, Human Resource Office is pleased to announce that we no longer accept paper applications for advertised jobs. To view a current list of all available positions and to apply online, please visit https://et.usembassy.gov/embassy/jobs/

Please see the below Vacancy announcement on the Embassy Website and apply online.

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT NUMBER: Addis-2020-049
POSITION: Public Health Specialist (Prevention)
OPENING DATE: September 28, 2020
CLOSING DATE: October 12, 2020
WORK HOURS: Full-time (40 hours/week)
SALARY: Ordinarily Resident (OR): Position Grade: FS-13, -33, 350.00 USD per year.
Not Ordinarily Resident: FP-03
*Final grade/step for OIs will be determined by Washington.

Duration of Appointment: Indefinite subject to successful completion of probationary period.

NOTE: For ordinarily resident employees, salary will be paid in local currency using the established exchange rate.

Basic Function of Position:
The incumbent serves as the HIV Prevention Branch Chief for the HHS/CDC Ethiopia office and has primary responsibility for managing all technical, administrative, and fiscal aspects of prevention activities under the President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). Responsibilities include program development, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and reporting. The Branch Chief’s work substantially contributes to prevention programs and policies that impact public health activities at the national level. HIV prevention programs and interventions overseen by the incumbent will include HIV testing and linkage to care and treatment services, HIV services provisions to special populations such as key populations and adolescents; biomedical interventions such as Voluntary Medical Male Circumcision (VMMC) and Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP). The incumbent will be responsible for ensuring prevention program design and implementation are aligned with current scientific evidence, and that the introduction of innovative prevention interventions and expansion of best practices are adequately supported. The Branch Chief supports close collaboration with other US Government agencies as well as partners such as host government ministries, international organizations (IOs) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Job holder is HHS/CDC’s lead prevention advisor to the host country Ministry of Health, implementing partners, Global Fund Partners, and NGOs.

The incumbent’s responsibilities include supervision of HIV prevention branch staff, including both short- and long-term workforce planning and capacity building; liaison and collaboration with HQ prevention staff to support prevention program development and implementation. The incumbent will actively identify and support prevention staff in collaborating with staff from other branches for cross-cutting program efforts. The incumbent will collaborate and support prevention and other aspects of grants, contracts and cooperative agreements. Incumbent ensures that branch activities contribute to measurable results in accordance with agency and PEPFAR strategic objectives priorities and international standards for public health. Supervision is provided by the HHS/CDC-Ethiopia Country Director; the Branch Chief serves as the Country Director’s senior principal prevention expert and advisor. The Branch Chief represents HHS/CDC at the highest levels including at national and international meetings of technical strategy and policy groups.

1. Required Education: MD specializing in infectious diseases, tropical medicine, or doctoral degree (DPhM, PhD or host country equivalent) in nursing, public health, epidemiology & required.

2. Required Experience: Minimum of five years’ experience at the mid- to senior-level in the field of medical specialty and public health and practical involvement in national and/or international project development, coordination, monitoring and evaluation is required. Two years of additional experience at the managerial level with supervisory responsibilities is required.

3. Language Requirement: Level IV (Fluent) Reading/Writing/Speaking English is required.

Level IV (Fluent) Reading/Writing/Speaking Amharic is required.

(You are required to pass the English Placement Test (EPT) that is conducted by the Human Resources Office).

4. Skills and abilities: Comprehensive knowledge and experience in prevention is required. Excellent oral and written communications skills to develop and maintain effective working relationships with national and international health partners are required. Multi-disciplinary project teams and advanced skills in management, analysis and use of program data are required (This may be tested).

Note: How to Apply: For more information on ERA and to view current job opportunities, please go to https://et.usembassy.gov/embassy/jobs/
showed, both approaches become destructive when they produced excessive confusion in the political landscape. Against this historical backdrop, the search for a new decentralized framework looks like a revolution to the earlier dream pursued by u-socialists and u-capitalists. Yet with today’s technologies, one can imagine the dream actually being realized under a hybrid system. Do you think it once took months or years to make accurate assessments of the volume of economic activity or trade? These data are increasingly available in real time.

But data can be problematic. Whereas some is managed by governments and international institutions, some is managed by universities, including at universities (Johns Hopkins in the Center for Systems Science and Engineering COVID-19 data), individuals (as in the Harvard University economist Raj Chetty’s compliance with IRS data), and companies (which keep it as a commercial asset). Clearly, the case of governments and companies especially, there is a constant tendency to suppress data as inconveniences or uncomfortable.

Moreover, the COVID-19 pandemic has shown a harsh light on the ways health outcomes are linked to social and economic disparities, and this realization has contributed to the politicization of other data, such as that relating to crime incidence, incomes, and ethnic identities.

The early nineteenth-century struggles were fights over the ownership of the means of production, but we can now be much more specific about what that concept implies. What is most needed today is a broad-based movement to secure ownership of data, following the model of early nineteen-century workers’ demands to own their own labor. Can data be shared in ways that maximize the benefits without compromising society’s interests, individuality, or privacy? Capitalists and liberals believe that the world must unite to answer that question. They have nothing to lose but their data.

The Reporters

Ethiopia for Permanent . . .

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Capitalists and Socialists . . .

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which won the battle of Adwa in the fight against the Italian colonial power in 1896 secured the sovereign status of the country. Against the Italian forces invaded the territory in 1896. After five years of struggle Fascist Italy was defeated to the combined forces of Ethiopian patriots, Britain and France military officials in 1941. In 1945 almost all African countries were colonized by European countries. At a time the new Nations establishment, Ethiopia was an independent country that gave right to sign. Ethiopia could be part of the global history because she’s an independent and was on the side of winners of the Second World War.

Ethiopia Supported the Struggle for Independence in Africa

As a sovereign country, Ethiopia was supporting many African countries in their fight for independence. Before the independence of the United Nations, Ethiopia could get an opportunity to be voice of colonized countries and regions under Apartheid. In 1966 Ethiopia and Liberia was the first African countries to demand the rights for self-determination, to be free from colonialism. In 1969 the African countries under Apartheid; Nelson Mandela who was the leader of the freedom fighter in South Africa also got military training in Ethiopia.

Since Ethiopia got its independence through fierce struggle, the color of its flag (Green, Yellow and Red) became popular. Twenty nine African countries adopted these three colors as their national’s flag color.

Ethiopia Hosts Largest Refugees

Currently (2020) there are 36 million refugees in the world. Because of volatile situation in the Horn of Africa there is immigration of peoples from neighboring countries to Ethiopia. In this year there are about 750,000 registered refugees and asylum seekers that make Ethiopia one of the largest refugee hosting countries in the world. The refugees will 24 countries, with the majority from South Sudan, Somalia, Eritrea and the Sudan. Ethiopia is praised in handling these peoples. This shows her commitment to implement and integrate the international conventions of the United Nations.

Gender Representation in Ethiopia

Ethiopia is party to many international conventions that focuses on gender. She is expected to fulfill its commitments. The present government of Ethiopia is preoccupied with one of its priorities. Women are getting highest political posts in the country. The current president of Ethiopia is Ms. Sahlewerk Zewde. Women in Cabinet Ministers are women. It is difficult to get such gender balance in political spheres in almost all countries of the world. Similarly, about forty percent of the members of parliament in Ethiopia are women. Even if those measures are commendable, there is a long way to go to make men and women equal in the political, administration and economic arena in Ethiopia.

Ethiopia and Nobel Peace Award

Ethiopia is working for world peace. Prime Minister Dr. Abiy Ahmed of Ethiopia won the 2019 Nobel Peace Award. This award made him the 100th winner of the Nobel Prize. According to the Nobel Committee he got the award “for his efforts to achieve peace and international cooperation, and for his decisive initiative to resolve the border conflict with neighboring Eritrea.”

He broke the no peace no war situations between Ethiopia and the neighboring Eritrea that continued for the last twenty years. The prime minister said that he accepted the award on behalf of Ethiopians and Eritreans. Recognizing Ethiopia as the cradle of modern civilization, the Nobel Committee underlined that “we are all Ethiopians”.

In Africa very few prominent persons have got this prestigious award. He has been praised by the United Nations Secretary General for “creating a pathway to stability in the Horn of Africa.” The government has also established Ministry of Peace that shows the commitment of Ethiopia to have peace in the country, the region and the world at large.

Ethiopia as ancient Country

Ethiopia has an ancient history. During the reign of King Menelik in Ethiopia, there were only four “great powers” in the world: Rome, China, Persia and the Jewish empire. Ethiopia was also mentioned in the Bible for more than 40 times. Unlike other African countries, Ethiopia has its own script for writing system called Geez. Ancient Ethiopia also had a written constitution. In the late third century, the kings of Aksum minted gold, silver, and bronze coins. During this time there were few governments in the world.

Ethiopia and Religious Tolerance

More than 56 percent of Ethiopians are followers of religions mainly Christianity and Islam. In the fourth century Ethiopia adopted Christianity during the reign of King Ezana. The first followers of Prophet Mohammed who had been persecuted by the ruling Quraish in Mecca came to Ethiopia and sought refuge in the Christian Kingdom of Aksum, present day Ethiopia. This historical fact has also given Ethiopia a lot to establish religious tolerances in the current Ethiopia.

Conclusion

So far the Security Council is not reformer so as to be inclusive to many nations in the world. Africa which has about one billion people is not represented. In the Security Council as permanent member. This injustice should stop in celebrating the 75th anniversary of the UN. There are many reasons to consider Ethiopia as permanent member of the Security Council of the United Nations.

Ed.‘s Note: Melkas Mulsalem is an associate of the Institute of Strategic Affairs, based in Addis Ababa, writing on a personal capacity. The views expressed in this article do not necessarily reflect the view of The Reporter.

Universal Social . . .

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solidarity and better social protection for all, not just those who already afford it. It was ignored this message, we risk condoning future situations that endure more than the immense suffering we see today. We risk ignoring this prospect.

Ed.‘s Note: Michelle Buchanan, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights; Olivier De Schutter, UN Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights, Guy Ryder, Director General, International Labour Organization, among others. The views expressed in this article do not necessarily reflect the view of The Reporter.
Inter Aide French NGO
INVITATION FOR BID

Inter Aide Ethiopia invites interested and eligible bidders for the supply of fast wearing spare parts for Toyota Landcruiser

Lot 1: genuine fast wearing spare parts for Toyota Landcruiser

Lot 2: genuine fast wearing spare parts for Suzuki motorcycles TS DR 185

Lot 3: genuine fast wearing spare parts for Bajaj motorcycles Boxer BM 150 and Bajaj motorcycle Pulsar 180cc

Lot 4: lubricants

Lot 5: car tyres

1. Items list for the 1 year Framework contract

The complete set of Bidding Document can be obtained from Inter Aide office team at the following address: Ethio-China Road Kirkos sub city, woreda 03, house/House number 1299 Addis Ababa, Ethiopia or Inter Aide Soddo-Wolaita office, Aorda subcity, Geoga village, Wolaita Sodo or by email: tendereinteraide@gmail.com

Language Requirement

Minimum of five years' experience in data management, programming and analysis position in the health field and in advanced analysis of epidemiologic studies and analysis of complex survey data using SPSS, SAS or any other statistical software is required. Experience in HIV/AIDS is required.

2. Tender offers have to be submitted to IA office and must reach it before closing date and time: 28th of October 2020 – 5.00 pm to Following address: Ethio-China Road Kirkos sub city, woreda 03, house/House number 1299 Addis Ababa, Ethiopia or Inter Aide PO box 100.231 Addis Ababa, Ethiopia or by email: tendereinteraide@gmail.com. Bids received after the closing date & time won’t be considered.

3. Copy of company registration and TIN certificate are required while submitting the bid document.

4. Bids shall be valid for a period of 1 month

5. Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information from Inter Aide office during working hours (8.00am to 5.00pm), by email at tendereinteraide@gmail.com, or by phone: 0115159914.

6. Inter Aide tender committee reserves the right to reject any and all the bids.

JOB OPPORTUNITY
AMERICAN EMBASSY
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

The US Embassy Addis Ababa, Human Resource Office is pleased to announce that we no longer accept paper applications for advertised jobs. To view a current list of all available positions and to apply online, please visit https://et.usembassy.gov/embassy/jobs/

Please see the below Vacancy announcement on the Embassy Website and apply online.

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT NUMBER: Addis-2020-033 (RA)

POSITION: Public Health Administrative Specialist /Senior Statistician

OPENING DATE: September 21, 2020

CLOSING DATE: October 5, 2020

WORK HOURS: Full-time (40 hours/week)

SALARY: Ordinarily Resident (OR) Position Grade: FSN-11, ~22,927.00 USD per year.

*Final grade/step for NORs will be determined by Washington.

Duration of Appointment: Indefinite subject to successful completion of probationary period.

NOTE: For ordinarily resident employees, salary will be paid in local currency using the established exchange rate.

Basic Function of Position:

Provides direction and advice to and supervises the Statistics Section of the Strategic Information Branch. Incumbent works in collaboration with the Branch Head for Strategic Information and the Associate Director for Strategic Information.

Utilize appropriate software programs for data analysis and reporting, such as Epi Info, SPSS, SAS, EPP, SPECTRUM, ARCGIS, etc. Perform other duties as assigned by the Branch Head for Strategic Information and the Associate Director for Strategic Information.

1. Required Education: Master’s degree, or host country equivalent, in the field of Statistics, Demography, Biostatistics is required.

2. Required Experience: Minimum of five years’ experience in data management, programming and analysis position in the health field and in advanced analysis of epidemiologic studies and analysis of complex survey data using SPSS, SAS or any other statistical software is required. Experience in HIV/AIDS is required.

3. Language Requirement: Level IV [Fluent] Reading/Writing/Speaking English is required.

How to Apply for more information on ERA and to view current job opportunities, please go to https://et.usembassy.gov/embassy/jobs/
Members of the Federal Police have displayed their training and equipment in a parade held on Wednesday, September 30, 2020, at the Meskel Square, Addis Ababa. The event was attended by PM Abiy Ahmed (Ph.D.), Peace Minister Muferyat Kamil, and Federal Police Commissioner General Endeshaw Tasew. In his message to the members of the police force, Abiy said that the police should be appreciated for maintaining peace in the country. On his part, commissioner Endeshaw stated that the police forces are ready to execute any order that comes from the government.
Ethio telecom to . . .

privatize Ethio telecom. The ministry hired Deloitte Consulting as its transaction adviser to look for a strategic partner that would acquire 40 percent stake from Ethio telecom.

Participants said that foreign firms are not allowed to engage in mobile money service but the international firm that would acquire Ethio telecom’s stake would indirectly engage in the mobile money business. “If mobile money service is reserved for only Ethiopian nationals how do you see the engagement of your future strategic partner?”

Frehiwot said the issue is being reviewed and a policy decision has not been made yet. Frehiwot told The Reporter that Ethio telecom would launch the mobile service as soon as possible. “I wish we could have started it two years ago,” she said.

A study conducted by Ethio telecom projects that the country can generate USD 13 billion from mobile money by 2035.

Meanwhile, Balcha Reba (Eng.) director general of the Ethiopian Authority told The Reporter that the regulation of the mobile money services has to be reviewed properly. “Mobile money service involves two sectors—both the telecom and banking sector. Since it is a financial service it has to be regulated by the NBE. But, it also involves the telecom sector. Companies would provide the service using the telecom infrastructure; so ECA should also look at the telecom side. So ECA, NBE and Ethio telecom have to discuss the matter,” Balcha said.

With regards to the prohibition of foreign firms from venturing into mobile money service, Balcha said the financial sector is closed to international firms for the time being. “But, there will be a financial reform program after three years and I hope the problem will be addressed by then,” he said.

Local IT and start-up companies acknowledged the reform program Ethio telecom has been undertaking in the past two years under the stewardship of Frehiwot. The participants appreciated the leadership for bringing a change in service delivery. “Ethio telecom is reborn. We are witnessing a new company on the rise,” a participant said.

Some of the participants complained about internet down time and delay in maintenance service and weak mobile signal.

The local IT companies who were delighted to be invited to the consultative meeting by Ethio telecom expressed commitment to collaborate with the national telecom companies. “We want to partner and work with you. We need to have more similar forums,” they said.

However, some participants expressed their fear that the two international telecom firms that will soon join the market will lure away customers and employees of Ethio telecom. “They are coming to share your market and make profit. By delivering better service with lower tariff rates they could lure away your customers,” a participant said. “We do not want to see Ethio telecom disbanded we rather want it to continue operating in the competitive environment,” they added. They also asked why Ethio telecom has never gone out of Ethiopia and operate in other countries.

Frehiwot said that Ethio telecom has been preparing itself for competition in the past two years. She said the objective of the reform program is not to disband national telecom company which is 126 years old. “We have outlined a three year business strategy—dubbed BRIDGE that would enable us to make Ethio telecom a competitive, preferred and profitable operator that would continue to thrive,” she said.

Frehiwot said that for the first time Ethio telecom is eying foreign markets. “We are working on a business strategy that would enable us to operate in foreign markets and we will make it public when we finalize the strategy,” she said.

Levi Girma, CEO and founder of BRAVOCOM, asked if the money that would be generated from the sale of Ethio telecom’s stake would be used to recapitalise Ethio telecom or if it goes to the state coffers. “Is it going to be a cash infusion or cash injection? If the money is used to expand Ethio telecom the company can be more competitive,” Levi said.

One of the most debatable issues in the telecom liberalization program is the “infrafram.” The international telecom firms will have two options— to set up their own telecom infrastructure or lease mobile towers and optical fiber lines. Telecom infrastructure companies (infrafram) are vying to tap into Ethiopian market by building and leasing mobile towers to the new entrants. However, Ethio telecom does not want the infracom to enter the local market.

“So much has been said about the telecom infrastructure. But we would like to hear from Ethio telecom about its infrastructure,” Levi said.

According to Frehiwot, Ethio telecom has 7,213 mobile towers and 22,000 km of optical fiber cable line. “With some enhancements, we would be able to lease our telecom infrastructure to the two operators. They could join the market swiftly if they lease our infrastructure. If they want to build their own infrastructure it would be capital intensive and it take longer time to reach out to the market. But, if they use our infrastructure it will give them an advantage on the time to market factor,” she said.

Fikru Yefert, representative of ISON Tower, furiously protested the idea of barring foreign infrastructure companies. “When the government launched the national telecom reform program we were very optimistic but now it is protecting the market,” Fikru said. “Ethio telecom has a limited capacity. Most of the mobile towers are roof top towers which cannot serve other operators. These days, telecom firms have sold out their telecom infrastructure to telecom infrastructure companies and they focus on only their core business. If you liberalize it liberalize it fully,” he added.

Frehiwot said when the telecom market is liberalized there are certain rules and regulations attached to it. “There are guiding policies and directives. We are not opening up completely,” Frehiwot said.

According to Frehiwot, the Ethiopian government has invested heavily on telecom infrastructure in the past years and should recover the investment cost. “We have established a department that will deal with the infrastructure business. There was a debate on whether the service and infrastructure divisions should be separated legally or if they should operate as business units. And we decided to keep them as business units—separated structurally.”

According to Frehiwot, the government could earn up to ETH 1.6-1.8 billion from the lease of telecom infrastructure.

IT and start-up companies, privatization advisory council members and board members of Ethio telecom have participated in the consultative meeting. The meeting was organised to the request of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD). The feed backs would be compiled and presented to the prime minister in the coming few days.

Ethio Telecom has 1027 partners that provide value added services and 249,000 SIM card and voucher card distributors. Ethio telecom has 45.8 million mobile voice subscribers, 38.3 million internet and data, 246,000 fixed broadband 984,000 fixed line subscribers. The government has instructed it to eliminate entry barriers, the company annually spends up to USD four billion to avail affordable devices.

Frehiwot urged local IT companies and start-ups to partner with Ethio telecom and develop local content. “Mostly, our customers use the internet to interact on social media. I strongly encourage you to develop local value adding services. Our headache is job creation,” she said.

Tele density has reached 47 percent and coverage in terms of population 95 percent and geography 85.4 percent. The company earned 47.7 billion birr revenue in the 2019-2020 Budget Year. The company made a net profit of 28.7 billion birr. It generated 147.7 million dollars from international services. The foreign currency earning has been dwindling in the previous years due to telecom fraud. But the company managed to revive the foreign currency earning by taking measures on telecom fraud and making tariff reductions.
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Crossword puzzle

ACROSS
1. Of the cheekbone
5. Past tense of Leap
6. Full moon
10. Outbuilding
14. Without company
15. Portent
16. Unit of pressure
17. Wall painting
18. Bones on your sides
19. Graphic symbol
20. Mitigate
21. Give a speech
22. Daughter of Zeus and Demeter
23. Baby's bed
24. Bigotry
25. Stake
26. Tastes
27. Bigger than a teaspoon
28. Absent Without Leave
29. Palm starch
31. Explosive
32. Hawkeye State
33. Pigeon-___
34. A Freudian stage
35. Astringent
36. Curse
37. At the peak of
38. Dispatched
39. 7 member group
40. Not more
41. French for “Room”
42. Synagogue scroll
43. Museum piece
44. Not closed
45. Get worse
46. Tastes
47. A tart spicy quality
48. 7 member group
49. Mistake
50. Of the cheekbone
51. Hogfish
52. French for “Room”
53. Spanish for “Friend”
54. Foliage
55. Civet-like mammal
56. Rope fiber
57. A toy that fires pellets
58. Alleviate
59. Not closed
60. A tart spicy quality
61. Sea eagle
62. Back
63. Buckeye State
64. Faunus
65. Surplus
66. Ringworm causia
67. Existence
68. Stabilize your own position by locking up your savings. Be an observer before getting involved. This is a wonderful day to look into courses or hobbies that interest you. Do not jump as quickly as you usually do. Don’t be afraid to say what’s on your mind. Sign up for courses that will help you understand yourself better.
69. Black, in poetry
70. T’T’T
71. Choler
72. Astringent
73. Old stories
74. Mom
75. Functional
76. Absent Without Leave
77. Of which person
78. Money owed
79. Demeter
80. A tart spicy quality
81. Absent Without Leave
82. American Sign Language

DOWN
1. Mother
2. Anagram of “Sneer”
3. Old stories
4. A Freudian stage
5. Museum piece
6. Perturbing
7. Kind
8. Money owed
9. Enclose
10. Functional
11. Nymph
12. Anagram of “Sneer”
13. Nightmare
14. Without company
15. Portent
16. Unit of pressure
17. Wall painting
18. Bones on your sides
19. Graphic symbol
20. Mitigate
21. Give a speech
22. Daughter of Zeus and Demeter
23. Baby's bed
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Kuncho Komments

May be yes, dad.
Don’t you think remedies could be found anytime soon?
Don’t take sides if you wish to remain on good terms with partners. Your practical approach to life may charm someone who has been observing you. You can find out valuable information and knowledge. Matters pertaining to your home environment will be favorable if you are direct. Do not invest in ventures that only appear to be lucrative.

Your Zodiacs

Aries
- Much knowledge can be obtained through the experiences you have. Don’t jump as quickly as you usually do. Don’t be afraid to say what’s on your mind. Sign up for courses that will help you understand yourself better.

Taurus
- Put your energy into behind the scenes activities. Limitations at work might set you back. Pamper yourself for a change. You can make career moves that will bring you a much higher income. If you can mix business with pleasure much can be accomplished.

Gemini
- Knowledge can be acquired if you listen. Your moneymaking opportunities will flourish. Do something constructive outside. You could be emotional if you didn’t take care of problems with loved ones.

Cancer
- Your high energy should be spent pleasing your mate. Your ability to talk circles around your colleagues will help you forge ahead in the workforce. Your partner will be emotionally unable to cope.

Leo
- This may not be the time to lend or borrow. You will have a great deal of work that will put demands on you. You may have a problem with someone you live with if you don’t include them in your gathering.

Virgo
- You can come into money that you don’t necessarily work for. You will have a great day if you just say what you feel. Don’t torment yourself. Disharmony in the home will be extremely stressful.

Libra
- Read between the lines before you sign your name. Do not react too hastily when dealing with partners. Your practical approach to life may charm someone who has been observing you. You can find out important information if you listen to friends and relatives.

Scorpio
- You can come into money that you don’t necessarily work for. You will have a great day if you just say what you feel. Don’t torment yourself. Disharmony in the home will be extremely stressful.

Sagittarius
- You will not be pleased with family members who try to put demands on you when you just don’t have the time. You may need to lend an ear to an old friend.

Capricorn
- Get out and have some fun. Your family may not be pleased with your decisions. The experience will be good. Plan events like camping or white water rafting.

Aquarius
- Entertain those who can provide you with valuable information and knowledge. Matters pertaining to your home environment will be favorable if you are direct. Do not invest in ventures that only appear to be lucrative.

Pisces
- Stabilize your own position by locking up your savings. Be an observer before getting involved. This is a wonderful day to look into courses or hobbies that interest you. Go out with friends and avoid the situation on the home front.

Can you spot the 12 differences between the two pictures?

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The three-time Olympic champion from Ethiopia was expected to go head to head with Kenya’s Eliud Kipchoge at the elite only race on Sunday.

One of the pre-race favorites Kenenisa Bekele has withdrawn from the 2020 London Marathon on Sunday October 4, 2020 with a calf injury.

The three-time Olympic champion, who was expected to be Eliud Kipchoge’s biggest threat as he seeks an unprecedented fifth London marathon title, suffered the injury in training.

“This race was so important to me. My time in Berlin last year gave me great confidence and motivation and I was looking forward to show that again, I have worked so hard for it,” Bekele said.

The Ethiopian missed Kipchoge’s world record by two seconds when he won in Berlin in 2019 in two hours one minute 41 seconds.

“My time in Berlin last year gave me great confidence and motivation and I was looking forward to show that again, I have worked so hard for it. I realize many people around the world have been looking forward to this race and I am sorry to disappoint my fans, the organizers and my fellow competitors,” he said in a statement.

In April 2020, Bekele, the holder of 17 world titles over cross-country, track, and road, told the Olympic Channel that he was eager to make up for that world record miss with another fast run, as he feels he’s still in top form.

“To run against Eliud Kipchoge, the two of us, having prepared well. I’m sure something could have happened on that day.” He arrived in London, on Monday, September 28th, with the rest of the athletes and has been staying with the other elite athletes and teams in the bio secure hotel bubble.

Bekele, second at the 2017 edition and third in 2016, was hopeful that he would recover from the injury he picked up while training with his teammates in Addis Ababa, in late September.

“I am feeling well and happy to be back in London to run for my fifth title,” he said at Wednesday’s press conference. “I think the race will be a really fruitful one for us on Sunday and a fast race.”

Bekele could possibly race at the Valencia Marathon that will also hold an elite Edition marathon and half marathon on December 6, 2020.

Boston and Chicago marathon champion Lawrence Cherono of Kenya and Ethiopia’s 2019 World Champion Lelisa Desisa are among some of the top names confirmed for the marathon in the Spanish city.

Source: Marathon Channel