

The Ethiopian Herald

FRIDAY Edition

Vol. LXXVI No 284 7 August 2020 - Nehasse 1, 2012 Price Birr 5.75



GERD reduces risk as Sudan faces unprecedented flood every year

A dam upstream means less flooding downstream: Experts

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Killing two birds with one stone

BY ADDISALEM MULAT

Ethiopians have been planting millions of trees in the left, right, and center of the country intending to put Prime Minister Abiy's initiative into effect and curb the effects of climate change as well as deforestation in the shortest possible time.

In the same vein, Ethiopians have been pulling out all the stops placing importance on sustaining biodiversity and revamping green and climate-resilient growth. Nothing makes them happier than putting their all into the national Green Legacy Initiative that has been winning the hearts and minds of all and sundry residing under Ethiopians

skies.

Nowadays, fellow citizens regardless of age, sexual category, ethnicity, political point of view, and other related aspects have been planting seedlings of various species on a national scale. Every so often, they give priority to their motherland, and thus

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Ready for Tomorrow!

Egypt, Sudan lose the most over unnecessary GERD tripartite delay

- *Their recent behaviors sharply contradict previous interest for speedy deal*

BY DESTA GEBREHIWOT

It would be Egypt and Sudan that will lose most if the resumed tripartite talks continue to be extended unduly due to the two countries' frequent change of mind, said experts as the latest AU-led negotiation GERD put on hold after Egypt asked the postponement of to make internally consultation.

Talks on the GERD resumed on Monday
Egypt, Sudan ... Page 3

MoFa says U.S. pressure on Ethiopia likely to damage GERD talks

BY DESTA GEBREHIWOT

ADDIS ABABA - Ministry of Foreign Affairs said the U.S. and the World Bank's attempt to pressure Ethiopia into signing lopsided agreement is only going to damage the resumed Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) tripartite negotiation among Ethiopia, Sudan and Egypt.

Ministry Spokesperson Dina Mufti told *The Ethiopian Herald* that Ethiopia has been consistent on its message on its bilateral relations with the U.S. The country gives

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A product of Ethiopian taste and a foreign skill: Melange Coffee

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The Nile drama and the quest for fair meditation

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Let us unite with love; surpass in forgiveness!

News

GERD reduces risk as Sudan faces unprecedented flood every year

• A dam upstream means less flooding downstream: Experts

BY DESTA GEBRHIWOT

On July 30, 2020 Sudan was hit by an unprecedented flood which resulted in a collapse of a dam that destroyed hundreds of homes while inundated others and experts argue that upstream dams like GERD would reduce the country's vulnerability to flooding.

The recent incident is not the first tragedy that Sudan was hit by flooding; heavy downpour often hit the country between June and October, resulting in a significant flooding.

The dam in Sudan's Blue Nile state in the district of Bout, in the southeastern state, burst after heavy rain. The collapse of the small dam destroyed more than 600 homes while flooding others reported, AFP. Local media said the dam held five million cubic meters of water, used for both agriculture and drinking.

For years, Sudan has been facing over flooding endangering cities and towns. Semi-arid and arid countries are more prone to climatic variability than temperate ones. And, droughts and flooding in Sudan are most likely to be caused by climate change. Water infrastructure development of upstream countries including reservoir construction is the best alternative to mitigate extreme hydrological events, including the alteration

of and flooding, most likely to be caused by climate change.

And, experts see the construction of the GERD in Ethiopia would help minimize risk of flooding in Sudan by regulating the natural flow of the Abay River while also providing the country with regulated and sustainable minimum flow levels in the dry season.

Ethiopia's dam will help mitigate Sudan's risk and cost of flooding through managing the natural flow of the Nile River. That is why Ethiopia has been saying GERD could not be a bone of contention but a source of win-win cooperation.

Sudan faces an unprecedented flood every year due to the over flow of Blue Nile and heavy rain to which the combination of both bring huge socioeconomic crises in the country. Usually, the excessive water flow in the Nile River triggers intense flood in Khartoum. It claims lives, destroys livelihoods, says Fekahmed Negash, Chief Executive Manger of Eastern Nile Technical Regional Office (ENTRO).

The sole and permanent way to reduce and prevent flooding in Sudan is building dams and other infrastructural facilities upstream of the Nile, he opines, adding that, "the recent flooding though a small incident, we believe the fact that GERD started to hold water is helping

the country to avoid more risk of flooding. And, when GERD comes to finalization and operates at full capacity, flooding will be reduced significantly in Sudan."

"Sudan could benefit much from GERD. And there is an enormous window of opportunities over the Nile if the countries work closely and in partnership."

GERD will prevent over flooding in the Sudan's dam of Rosaries. Upstream dams such as GERD will make a bigger difference as it hold more water during the rainy season ultimately reducing over flooding in Sudan, says Yilema Seleshi, Associate Professor of hydrology at Addis Ababa University.

"Sudanese experts also have studied the issue and are very much aware that building dams and similar infrastructural facilities in the Blue Nile will help reduce risk of flooding in Sudan."

Khartoum and other parts of Sudan are vulnerable to flooding and spends billions of USD every year for counter flooding works. However, if more dams are built in upstream countries, Sudan's risk of flooding could go down and when GERD is completed, Sudan will receive regulated water flow from the Blue Nile. This will also help minimize the country's cost of prevention works.

According to a study entitled *Benefit of Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam Project*

(GERDP) for Sudan and Egypt by Belachew Chekene, University of Huddersfield, UK, GERD will allow for regulated and sustainable minimum flow levels in the dry season. It will regulate the steady water flow throughout the year and it will avoid unexpected flooding to downstream countries. Regarding energy and power production, GERD will allow underperforming downstream hydropower schemes to perform more effectively as there will be more reliable sediment free, and regular availability of water throughout the year. Indeed, GERD will benefit Sudan and Egypt immensely by delivering steady water flow throughout the year.

According to Abay and Yebaedan Tekareno, a book written by Selabat Manaye, Khartoum spends over 50 million USD to prevent flooding. Hence, a dam upstream means less cost to Sudan flood prevention works.

Besides reducing floods in the downstream countries, projects like GERD are also vital for connecting the region with electric grid. This week, Ethiopia announced that it saw uptick on its power sales to the neighboring countries supplying power to Sudan worth 29.3 million USD. Its supply is expected to boost when GERD starts power generation and Sudan and Egypt will be on the top of the list to benefit from the project.

German gov't donated COVID-19 protection equipment's to CDC, Africa

BY LEULSEGED WORKU

ADDIS ABABA - The German Epidemic Preparedness Team, on behalf of the Government of Germany, has donated SARS-CoV-2 extraction and test kits, capable of conducting 1.3 million tests, to the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC) last July 29. On the press release sent to The Ethiopian Herald it is mentioned that, the first batch of the test kits was handed over today to the Africa CDC by Heiko Nitzschke, Chargé d'Affaires a.i., at Bole International Airport in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

The donation is to support implementation of the Africa Joint Continental Strategy for COVID-19, which aims to prevent severe illness and death from COVID-19 infection in African Union Member States and to minimize social disruption and the economic consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic. It is part of a €10 million worth of non-monetary support by the German Government for COVID-19 pandemic response by the African Union.

"The donation of COVID-19 test kits is a concrete example of Germany's close partnership with the African Union and its solidarity with the African continent. As the current Presidency of the Council of the European Union, Germany is happy to complement the efforts of TeamEurope in supporting partner countries in tackling this pandemic," said, Heiko Nitzschke.

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, African Union Member States

have been providing testing services to individuals suspected to be infected with the disease. However, there is an urgent need to rapidly scale-up testing at the community level. Through the Partnership to Accelerate COVID-19 Testing (PACT): Test, Trace, Treat, Africa CDC seeks to build partnerships to increase access to testing across the continent.

"Testing is the cornerstone of response to any pandemic, and providing test kits is one way African Union Member States can quickly scale-up testing. As a continental body we are working with several partners to unlock the testing space and ensure that countries have predictable access to test kits. The donation by Germany is very critical in achieving the goals of PACT," said, Dr Ahmed Ogwell Ouma, Deputy Director of Africa CDC.

The kits donated by the Federal Republic of Germany are being delivered in three installments and contribute directly to the implementation of PACT by providing essential diagnostics needed to scale-up testing services.

In addition to the donation, Africa CDC and the German Epidemic Preparedness Team will jointly conduct an external quality assessment at selected reference laboratories in Africa, using the test kits for bench marking and accreditation of quality and effectiveness of testing.

The African Union and Germany have maintained long-term partnerships in addressing global public health, climate change, peace and security, and economic challenges affecting Africa.

One Ethiopian killed, nine injured in Lebanon explosion

• Consulate assisting injured citizens

BY STAFF REPORTER

ADDIS ABABA - Ministry of Foreign Affairs said that its Consulate General in Lebanon, Beirut, is trying to offer assistance to Ethiopians in the country, who were injured by the explosion that left hundreds killed injuring thousands of people. Ten Ethiopians were injured in the Lebanon explosion in what many are describing as the worst destruction in the history of the country.

Ministry Spokesman Dina Mufti told *The Ethiopian Herald* yesterday that a total of ten casualties have

been confirmed so far. One Ethiopian was killed and nine have been injured by the disaster, Dina said.

Ethiopian Consulate General in Lebanon is also offering assistances to the injured citizens and is making sure that they receive humanitarian and medical supports."

Over 130 people were killed and over 5000 others were injured when a warehouse that said to contain Ammonium Nitrate exploded in the port city of Lebanon. The number of casualties is expected to rise as more searches have been made.

Israel partakes in Ethiopia's COVID-19 response

BY BILAL DERSO

ADDIS ABABA - The Embassy of the State of Israel announced that it has donated humanitarian aid kits of food and bars of soap to 250 families of St. Yared School in Addis Ababa in a view to supplementing the Ethiopian Government's efforts to contain the spread of coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19).

Handing the aid kits here Wednesday, Israeli Embassy Deputy Head of Mission Or Daniely stated that the act of solidarity symbolizes the strong and long-lasting people-to-people relations of the two sisterly countries which are demonstrated during normal and challenging times, such as COVID-19 pandemic.

The deputy head of mission said that apart from the unprecedented medical implications of the virus, there are also economic affects, mostly faced by the disadvantaged. As a result of the world economic slowdown, many people lost their jobs and face significant decrease of income. "In light of this global crisis, the Israeli Embassy reaffirms its unwavering support to the Ethiopian Government in its efforts to fight the spread of COVID-19 and to contain the medical and economic implications of the pandemic, by

exploring ways to extend necessary assistance to governmental and civil organizations."

In this framework, Israeli Embassy collaborated with the local St. Yared School and funded 250 aid kits to the families of the students. Each kit includes rice, pasta, oil and bars of soap and it will provide each family with sufficient food for a month thereby easing theirs and the school's day-to-day challenges.

Daniely stated that his country will continue its support for the Ethiopian Government's engagement to arrest the spread of the virus by providing medical and humanitarian aid via its development cooperation agency, MASHAV.

Co-founded by Jacqui Gilmour, an Australian national and Yared Wolde, who was an orphan of war and disease as a child on the streets of Addis, the School of St. Yared provides integrated education, health and livelihood programs, suited to meet the needs of its surrounding communities. Israel and St. Yared School have collaborated several times in the past few years and during his 2018 visit to Ethiopia, Israeli President Reuven Rivlin visited the school and donated books for the schools' library, according to a press release the Embassy sent to *The Ethiopian Herald*.

News

Killing two birds with...

the country is reaping the fruits of success time and time again.

At present, the general public has been planting trees successfully all over the country sticking to the Coronavirus dos and don'ts and pieces of advice being showered by health professionals again and again.

Be that as it may, this past week, following the first round filling of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam, and the successful tree planting the inhabitants of Addis Ababa managed to express their feelings, ideas and thoughts in a wide spectrum of ways. The streets of Addis Ababa were inundated with its inhabitants reciting slogans revolving around the success journey of the Abay River. It means a great deal to Ethiopians. To cut a long history short, everybody was feeling on top of the world.

Likewise, aside from singing various patriotic songs and other lyrical rhythms revolving around the Nile River and patriotic songs, the inhabitants were adorning themselves head to foot with the tri-color Ethiopian flag. Everybody was honking their cars to express their infinite happiness.

Most of them were singing a patriotic song entitled 'Ethiopia' performed by the renowned Ethiopian singer *Tewodros Kassahun*.

You are my pride to be grand,
Being alive or pass away,
You are the only way,
to be intact or to sway.
You are my pride to be grand,

Being alive or pass away,
You are the only way,
To be intact or to sway.

Many departed this life,
Protecting your dignity,
Endeavoring to provoke you,
Crossing your boarder
Country of heroes and,
Adam's peak,
When your name 'Felege Ghion'
called
Flying your flag high,
Nobody turns a blind eye
When your name called
Adorning the sky itself with your
rainbow,
And your enemies ready to bow.

The land of origin
The creatures' margin,
Whenever mosaic of color seen
It belongs to you but nobody else
Going around the universe
You hereafter take the lead,
Though regarded as a tail,
All the time fertile.

Let me call motherland,
Recurrently and loud.
Ethiopia my blood
Though minor gaps witnessed
No compromise with your pride
And no desperate feeling to ride.
No one does have in return
Equate with your pattern.

Ethiopia my motherland
Ethiopia my motherland

Last Sunday, this writer approached, Bereket Assefa, one of the participants on the occasion. He said, "I have the nerve to say, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed's Green Legacy Initiative is heading in the right direction. Everybody has been actively partaking in planting seedlings in various parts of Addis Ababa and its environs from time to time. If Ethiopians continue on the same path, I do believe Ethiopia will break a new world record beyond doubt,"

"I am here today to express my happiness concerning the filling of the first round of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam. Ethiopia is getting on the right track given that the premier has been making the impossible possible. In this fashion, Ethiopia can achieve the intended target down the road with no trouble," he added.

"In the same way, the premier is placing emphasis on the Addis Ababa Riverside project. Whenever I take a walk, I sometimes pay homage to the attention-grabbing project. Without exaggeration, it is out of this world." he wrapped up.

Mofa says U.S. pressure...

due value to its relations with the U.S., he added.

Ethiopia and the U.S. enjoy historical and amicable relations. They have also longstanding and elevated ties. And, Ethiopia seeks that the relations be elevated time after time. However, Dina said that any attempt or activities that go against the relations prove damaging to the bilateral ties. And, U.S.

pressure on Ethiopia in the GERD tripartite talks negatively impact the bilateral relations between the two countries.

"Not only do the U.S. and World Bank's acts' hurt the bilateral relations, they also damage the ongoing trilateral talks. No pressure would halt the construction of the dam, Ethiopia's resolve to realize its flagship project," the Spokesman stated.

Egypt, Sudan lose the most over...

after the negotiation which had started on 27 July 2020 was put on hold following Sudan's request. Talks were adjourned for the second time after its resumption.

And, experts see Egypt and Sudan's recent behaviors as self-damaging ones and achieve nothing due to unnecessary extension.

Delaying the negotiation and accusing Ethiopia for it has been the years of Egypt's mischief character. It has been there and the recent trends are the continuation of its self-damaging behavior, say Fekahmed Negash, Eastern Nile Technical Regional Office.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs Spokesman Dina Mufti also told *The Ethiopian Herald* that the two countries' recent tendencies to unjustifiably prolong the negotiation are a sharp contradiction previous stand. It was Egypt and Sudan that were seeking a speedy agreement on the filling and operation of the

dam.

This time, the losers will be Sudan and Egypt as Ethiopia is continuing the construction of the dam. The countries have now nothing to do now that Ethiopia has started the dam filling. In fact, their actions are an indirect approval of this hard fact, Dina added.

Ethiopia this week announced that it is committed to reach a speedy and win-win deal on the outstanding issues of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam.

The Ministry of Water Affairs of Ethiopia, Egypt and Sudan continued the tripartite negotiation under the African Union framework via video conference, according to a press released by the Ministry.

Eng. Seleshi Bekele, Ministry of Water, Irrigation and Energy has reiterated Ethiopia's resolve to expeditiously finalize the process with a win-win outcome and noted the progress made since the AU led process has started.

The Nile ...

Ethiopia that entails strict obligation (in the form of a binding treaty), high precision (in the form of minimum guaranteed water discharge), and high delegation (through a binding, external dispute settlement). With increasing upstream water consumption and climate change, the flow of the Nile could well decline from natural causes below the minimum guaranteed release stipulated in the agreement. Ethiopia's negotiators complain that the agreement will force Ethiopia to bear the full burden of future droughts, and, under some scenarios, leave the country in the odd position of owing water to Egypt.

The flow restrictions will also make a future project on the Nile impossible, potentially making the GERD Ethiopia's last major dam on the Nile. Changing that could require visiting international courts for a binding legal decision in favor of a new water allocation scheme. For proud Ethiopians, subjecting a dam they built with their own coins to such an intrusive Egyptian oversight is extremely unpalatable.

The Nile Basin Initiative

There are currently no legal mechanisms that govern sharing the Nile waters between Ethiopia, Egypt, Sudan, and the remaining eight other riparian countries. In the absence of a pre-existing legal ground for water allocation, Egypt is effectively using the GERD to institutionalize a binding minimum guaranteed flow that will protect its long-term water access.

Ethiopia insists that this type of water allocation scheme should be made through an institutionalized, multilateral approach that involves all riparian countries. The Nile Basin Initiative, which was formed after extensive dialogue by 10 riparian countries in 1999, provides such a durable institutional framework for governing water use in the Nile. Its cooperative framework mechanism, however, has been stalled by Egypt's insistence to maintain veto power on all future upstream projects.

Ethiopia was right to have walked away from the Washington negotiations since no agreement is better than a terrible one. Had it signed this agreement, it would have been forced to request a revision at some point in the future when its water demand increases or supply falls below the pre-specified figures. This would leave it at the mercy of a complex and potentially futile process of external arbitration effort to change existing stipulations.

A war of water

Egypt's reliance on the Nile is undeniable, but its approach for securing access for its waters has been excessively zealous. It should be remembered that Egypt had sent military expeditions during the scramble for Africa to occupy the headwaters of the Blue Nile in Ethiopia.

Isma'il Pasha, who was the Khedive of Egypt and Sudan before the British stepped up their influence in the country, harbored the ambition of expanding his realm across the entire Nile basin and the whole African coast of the Red Sea. Having occupied the garrison

town of Massawa on the Red Sea, which was then within the borders of Ethiopia, his army, which was led by European and American mercenaries, ventured into the better-defended Ethiopian highlands. It was met by the army of Emperor Yohannes IV, under the command of his famed general Ras Alula Engida, who repulsed the invading forces at the battles of Gundet in 1875 and Gura in 1876. Having safeguarded its independence so zealously over centuries, Ethiopia is hence unlikely to give away its sovereign rights over the Nile – a river endearingly called Abay in the country.

A renewed negotiation

It is not without reason that the then Prime Minister of Ethiopia, Meles Zenawi, chose the grandiose-sounding adjectives of Grand Renaissance as prefixes to the dam's name. He knew that Egypt would test Ethiopia's resolve in all fronts, and adopted the name to underscore the centrality of the project to Ethiopia's aspiration to extract itself out of poverty. It has become one of the most important unifying forces in the country, as epitomized by the flood of the twitter hashtags #itismydam that appeared in response to Egypt's demand to postpone the dam's filling until an agreement is reached.

The discussions are now taking place under the mediation of the African Union. Egypt did not trust the African Union, which is the reason why it preempted its involvement by going directly to Washington and then the United Nations. But if the goal is to reach a fair resolution, there are fewer alternatives as sound

as the African Union. Under the principle of "African solutions to African problems", this regional body has a better chance of providing a more institutionalized approach for the Nile dispute.

This is hence a trying time for Ethiopia, as it was during the Italian occupation. By late 1940, as the Second World War was raging in Europe, the British Middle East Command initiated the East African campaign to free the region from Italian occupation. Haile Selassie, who waited in exile in Bath, England, finally got the military support he requested five years before. He returned to Addis Ababa triumphantly on May 5, 1941 backed by the British Gideon Force under Colonel Orde Wingate. To the emperor, patience paid off and his plea for help in his fight against colonialism was heeded. Time will tell if Ethiopia will be fortunate enough to find another friendly nation that can help broker a fair deal with Egypt over this age-old dispute over the Nile.

The author, Addisu Lashitew is a David M. Rubenstein Fellow in the Global Economy and Development program at the Brookings Institution. He has previously held postdoctoral researcher positions at Erasmus University Rotterdam (The Netherlands) and Simon Fraser University (Canada). Lashitew maintains teaching and research affiliations with the African Economic Research Consortium (AERC) in Nairobi, and the School of Commerce of Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia. The article was originally published on July 15, 2020 on: <https://www.weaspire.info/>

Parliament

Meeting the constituency

BY ABDUREZAK MOHAMMED

In modern democratic society, parliament is a group of peoples' representatives who are elected to make a country's laws and discuss overall national affairs. Similarly, in modern politics and history, it is a legislative body of government that plays an important role in the general life of a nation.

Scholars categorize the functions of modern parliament into three main parts: a) making new laws, changing existing laws and repealing laws which are no longer needed, b) representing and articulating the views and wishes of the citizens in decision making processes c) overseeing the activities of the executive bodies via hearings and inquiries (scrutiny).

According to a study conducted by United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), achieving good governance requires the existence of a strong, effective and efficient parliament. This is because parliament plays a crucial role in evaluating, collating and presenting the views and needs of the people, articulating their expectations and aspirations in determining

the national development agenda.

Parliament also helps to identify problems and policy challenges that require attention and assist in overcoming bureaucratic inertia.

The Ethiopian parliament comprises 547 members, elected for five-year term. When the House takes a three-month long recess, July, August and February of course, MPs engage in important activities that benefit the society in their respective constituents. For parliamentarians recess does not mean sitting idle, it has become a time to collect information from the grassroots firsthand.

In her previous exclusive interview with *The Ethiopian Herald*, Almaz Mesele, an MP, said that being a representative of the electorates is a great responsibility that needs greater commitment and determination to well identify the problems and strong sides of the society to take appropriate measures at a wider level. The society represented is also duty bound to speak out the activities that need to be corrected. MPs should get in touch with the electorate to get actual information on issues regarding governance and other

social, political and other related aspects.

They also pay visits to government projects, she said, adding that visiting government projects is the main goal of MPs. In so doing, they also entertain public demands in relation to peace and security, good governance, and issues related to infrastructural development.

In addition, government officials, community representatives – youths, women, farmers, pastoralists, urban dwellers, and operators of small and micro enterprises can participate in the discussion to come up with a difference, she noted.

According to her, in addition to the discussions with lower government structure, discussions also take place at zonal and regional levels.

Abebe Godebo, an MP, on his part told *The Ethiopian Herald* that MP of each woreda (district) hold discussions with their electorate and executive bodies at all levels to understand how the government institutions are serving the public and in what way corrective measures can be taken. He also said that the main targets of MPs are

examining the progresses of government projects and bringing together peoples' requests to urge the concerning executive bodies to reexamine the way they did their jobs and the way forward, too.

According to him, in each region, peoples' requests that can be resolved by woreda (district), zonal, and regional level are sent to the concerning government structures of the region.

He also reiterated that MPs submit all the issues that are raised by the people from different parts of the country that cannot be resolved at woreda, zonal, and regional level to the House of Peoples' Representatives. Then, the house compiles those requests and sends them to the concerned federal government body.

In addition to overseeing the activities of executive bodies of all levels, MPs focus on creating public awareness about COVID-19 pandemic to help protect themselves from the virus this year, and mobilizing the public to participate in planting of seedlings better than what they did last years, he noted.

Ethiopians Overseas Public euphoria that reverberates overseas

BY ADDISALEM MULAT

Back in the day, whenever Ethiopians overheard about the Nile River, something that they could not put across in words was pinching them in the corners of their hearts for failing to make use of the river by the book. In this regard, the general public was expressing their disappointment in a wide spectrum of ways.

Of late, Dr. Eng. Tilahun Erduno had a short stay with *The Ethiopian Herald*. According to him, Egypt has never attempted to solve its problem related to the Nile peacefully with Ethiopia or any other upper basin countries. Rather it strived to fulfill its interest destabilizing Ethiopia. Since ancient times the issues of Nile and Ethiopia have been means of solutions to the problems of internal politics in Egypt.

"Today's government of Egypt is politicizing the Nile issue and attempting to cover the face of its people by instigating "water war" against Ethiopia. As always, today Egypt is trying to use Ethiopia and its river as first aid for its internal political disease. It should be noted that Egypt and Sudan experienced no democratic election. Most of the time the government officials of both countries come from military coup one after the other," he continued.

By the same token, Egypt strived to invade

Ethiopia for considerable number of times. Fought so many unjust wars directly and indirectly, destabilized its peace, organized and supported anti-Ethiopian guerrilla fighters and radical religious extremist groups. Worked hard to destroy the unique classic harmony between Muslims and Christians in Ethiopia.

Some years back following the laying of the cornerstone for the construction of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam, Ethiopians residing at home and abroad managed to express their happiness in myriads of ways again and again. The issue turned out to be the talking point of everyone residing in the length and breadth of the world in the twinkling of an eye.

Last Sunday, following the first round filling of the dam, Ethiopians residing at home and abroad managed to express their infinite happiness in various ways. They were feeling on top of the world. Subsequently, they set in motion standing by the side of the government with a view to making their dream become a reality.

In the same way, the left, right and center of streets of Addis Ababa were flooded with a wide spectrum of cars honking their horns. Most of them were chanting slogans revolving around the victory of Ethiopia over the Nile River time and again. Some of them were shaking with laughter forgetting the past. Furthermore, they were decorating themselves head to foot the tri-color Ethiopian flag.



አያት አክሲዮን ማኅበር

የቤት ሽያጭ ማስታወቂያ

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The Ethiopian Herald

Established in 1943
Published daily except Mondays
By The Ethiopian Press Agency



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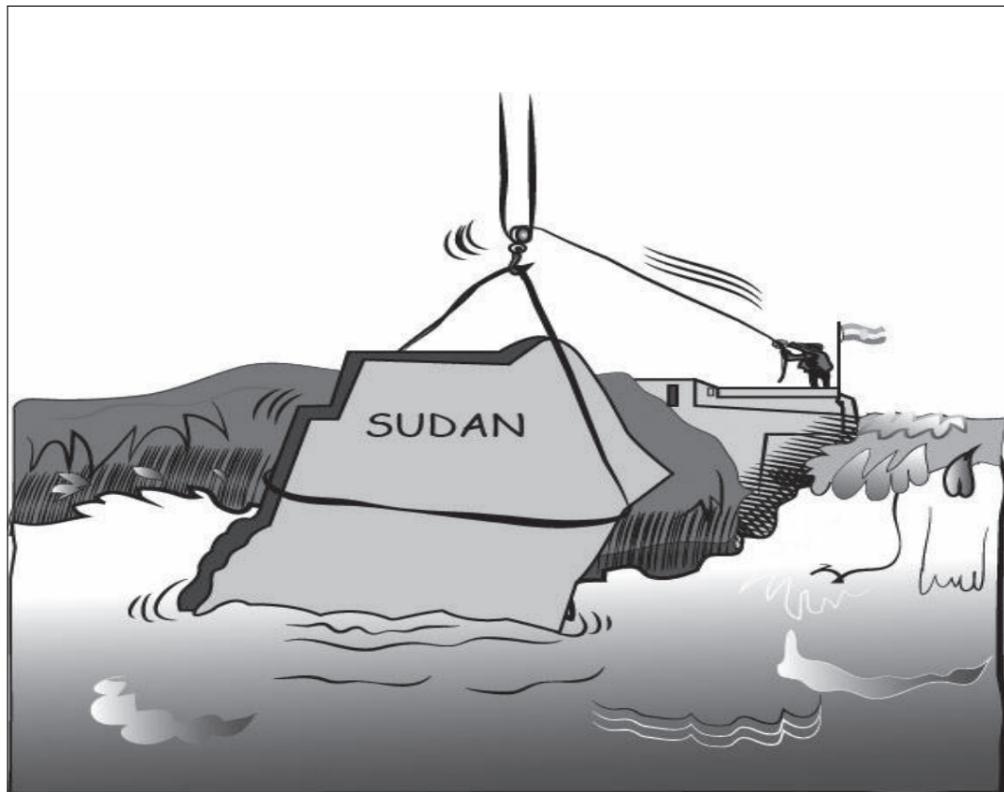
Editorial

Our Dam is your safety!

A country downstream of Abay or the Nile, Sudan, is always prone to high risk of flooding with lives and livelihoods razed year in, year out. Among the solutions pertinent experts suggest included is putting in place dams in upstream countries for it profoundly curtail the risk of flooding.

The suggestion perfectly resonates with what Ethiopia has been doing and saying. The Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD), Ethiopia's flagship hydropower project is a massive infrastructure that exists to the rescue of Khartoum and other Sudanese towns from the dangerous risk of flood.

Even recently lives were lost and property was turned to wreckage in Sudan due to flood. Unless it had been to the first filling of the GERD which started to regulate the flow of the Nile, the scale of the devastation could have been even worse. A dam in Sudan's Blue Nile state in the district of Bout, in the southeastern state, burst after heavy rain. The collapse of the small dam destroyed more than 600 homes and flooding others



reported, AFP. Local media said the dam held five million cubic meters of water, used for both agriculture and drinking.

Such catastrophic hydrological unfolding is preventable or at least its impacts can be reduced significantly. Not only Ethiopia has made clear the fact that the GERD benefits

Sudan in many ways, but it also provided various documents that prove this same reality. The GERD is an energy facility, reserve water to sustainable agriculture, a defense structure against flood and a cause of good health to Sudanese ailing Dams that suffer from silt and sedimentation.

Our voice is consistent and coherent in that the GERD will cause no harm to downstream countries. Sudan in particular must continue with its stance that the GERD is a source of cooperation rather than confrontation and is a safety structure to its people that suffer from the risk of flooding.

Editorial

Ethiopians won't start what they do not finish

The hands and the spirit that built Aksum obelisk and Lalibela Monolithic Church are still strong and vibrant to finalize GERD. Ethiopians are showing commitment in several ways to finalize the GERD. This commitment is not a superficial. It is tangible. Ethiopians and Ethiopian born Diasporas are showing their commitment to finalize the Dam in several ways-morally as well as financially. This enthusiasm towards building GERD was further stimulated when the first phase of water filling was successfully accomplished.

This strong support and zeal to see the final stage of GERD was clearly seen last Sunday when residents of Addis dancing and shouting on the streets of Addis Ababa to manifest their commitment for the successful accomplishment of the Dam.

GERD is different from other dams that are found all over the world for several reasons. The first and the most important one is, it is a dam that Ethiopians are building out of their blood and sweat.

Despite the fact those international monetary organizations and others have turned their back on Ethiopia and we have several economic and political challenges our hands are still busy to finalize the Grand Dam that is the icon of Ethiopiansim.

GERD is not simply a dam for Ethiopians.

It is beyond that. It is our life, our identity and symbol of unity. GERD is our testimony to show the world our promise. When it comes to GERD, we have passed through crooked lands to arrive where we are now. We have also crossed the valley of death to be where we are now.

Though Ethiopia is a major contributor of the river Nile, it had been an observer for centuries. It had no any chance to taste the fruits of river Nile. However, lately, the combined hands of Ethiopians are making miracles. The betrayal Abay is tamed. The impossible has become possible.

GERD may have faced various resistances locally as well as externally. Internally, corrupted individuals had tried to usurp the resource allocated for the dam. Externally, Cairo was a serious threat Ethiopia's effort by putting all the stumbling blocks. However, none of them have stopped Ethiopian spirit from realizing their vision.

Ethiopia is a land of heroes and heroines. Ethiopians won't start what they could not finish. There was no time where Ethiopians gave up their hands before they finalized what they started. The history of the nation is full of this testimony. The great obelisk of Aksum, Lalibela and the Battle of Adwa are a good indication to this. GERD is a new battle; a new battle for every Ethiopian. We do not sleep till we realize it.



"I appreciate the delivery of 250 state-of-the-art ventilators and other critical care equipment by the U.S. Government to assist Ethiopia with our COVID-19 response. The delivery of these items is timely as we experience an upward surge in positive cases. While effective response measures are taken, let's also address complacency. Wash your hands. Wear your masks. Keep your distance!" Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed

Friday Exclusive

A product of Ethiopian taste and a foreign skill: Melange Coffee

BY MISGANAW ASNAKE

Melange Coffee Roasters Factory Owner, Solomon Kassa had recently a stay with The Ethiopian Herald.

Solomon had been to overseas over 34 years of which for 26 years he lived in Holland and for 8 years in UK.

He worked in different industries and drawn a range of experiences in running industries like coffee related works during his stay in the aforesaid two countries. He had worked in UK in certain coffee industry, a giant company called star bucks. Staying for about 34 years outside his homeland, he came back home to invest and has opened new business recently.

He has now become the owner, with his wife of course, of Melange Coffee Roasters Factory.

Following government's invitation of the Diaspora to return home and invest in their homeland, he came back and started business with a small machinery. Later, he has developed the business into large scale machinery and named it Melange Coffee Roasters. This step grows into a better level and started to produce, process, pack coffee for local consumption, but predominantly produces value added coffee for exportation. It commenced the process a year before in Addis Ababa.

Excerpts:

Thank you for your willingness to conduct this interview with *The Ethiopian Herald*.

Thank you for deciding to stay with me.

HERALD: When did you start the business in relation with roasted coffee?

Solomon We have started Melange Coffee Roasters in 2013. We started the business with very small machine, which was capable of preparing 15 kgs. Five years ago, our plan was to establish a big machinery to facilitate the process of roasting. We indeed attained what we planned earlier last year. As far as its commencement is concerned, the first small scale one was launched in 2013 and the other with the biggest capacity a year before and the capacity is 700 kg an hour in roasting of raw coffee. This facility was launched in August 2019.

Obviously, the current market condition around the world is entangled by the serious impact of the COVID-19. What do you think could be devised to resist such ups and downs in relation to the business arena?

The world has been affected by COVID-19, undeniable. So has our country; the domestic market has so far principally affected by the pandemic. Our main customers are hotels, restaurants and cafés. As these bodies are seriously susceptible to the epidemic, the business is getting down. However, we formulated a number of strategies for the export market last month. In so doing, we have managed to well act on the export

market especially to close to four or five countries namely Japan, UK, Netherlands and US. We have witnessed a very good result along this line and are capable of exporting value added coffee products. We are expected to work hard to find the lucrative way to improve our export market especially for value added ones. That is our cardinal goal.

HERALD Is your product accessible to the society, companies or customers abroad? Do you think this is so enough and enumerated, if possible?

Solomon With regarding to export to overseas, we have been trying to enjoy online markets. That one is our goal. Besides, there is some kind of chance that can potentially expose us join foreign markets, which is organized by Ethiopian Tea and Coffee Authority in Addis Ababa. Using this opportunity, we have found some customers especially from Russia. Of course, as Russia is one of additional market and recently we have received order and pay for it, but the problem we have faced in connection with Russia is now due to COVID-19 and even the Ethiopian airlines has cut its destination of cargo ship.

HERALD: How do you process the raw coffee into final one and make ready for sale?

Solomon There are two ways to get green coffee: One, from Ethiopian Commodity Exchange (ECX) especially for the local market. The good thing is now the government has launched a new way of buying the green coffee from the source, which is a fair chain. Second, we can buy the green coffee directly from the cooperative unions, which is mainly used for export. Kata Muduga Multi-purpose farmers' cooperative union is a case in point in this regard, with whom we are working which is found in Jimma.

So we have two sources for getting coffee. Once we have garnered the green coffee, we will take it to be processed. Then we make it avail according to the customers' needs. Once we purchased raw coffee from the farmers, the process we have pursued to make an agreement between us and farmers is conformed by Ethiopian Tea and Coffee Authority.

HERALD: Do you have additional destinations for products?

Solomon We are fundamentally targeting at local customers round the country. And gradually we have started exporting our products to US, Japan and Russia and now we are waiting to air cargo ship to Netherlands and UK, which is a very good start regarding the value added products.

HERALD: How do you get customers' reaction to your value added products?

Solomon The feedback we are getting from the countries we have been exporting our products is very promising one. And more orders are coming because our quality



We are fundamentally targeting at local customers round the country. And gradually we have started exporting our products to US, Japan and Russia and now we are waiting to air cargo ship to Netherlands and UK, which is a very good start regarding the value added products.

products and unique facilities have attracted many. They also give us feedback that helps us to improve our products. The positive response and other important supports enable us to penetrate the market. We are trying to buy the organic coffee and sell the value added ones as we have secured an organic certification. We are also registered in a certain drug administration in the US which helps us to sell our coffee products and export them.

HERALD: How much did you invest to commence the company? Was it by your own capital or have you secured a loan from the government or other bodies?

Solomon The business was started with an outlay of 40 million Birr. Of which, we have borrowed some 16 million Birr from the Development Bank of Ethiopia and it has supported us well, and we have started paying the loan back.

Has the government created market connection for your company so far, with whom you have got market connection?

The market connection has so far mainly been created by ourselves. But luckily right now we are working with Ethiopian Chamber of Commerce and they have fed us with a piece of information regarding the buyers. The connection is really expected to be established by ourselves, as a company. "If you are dependent on the government

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or any other organization, so the results may not be the same. It is as the company, Mélange Coffee Roasters; we have really carried out our part very well.”

HERALD: Can you enumerate the job opportunities the company has created?

Solomon The company has so far created job opportunity for over 38 fellow citizens. We have planned to double the number of employees, but due to COVID-19 we have determined to restrict the number as it is. We will double it when the COVID-19 comes to an end.

HERALD: Do you have a plan to expand the company to other parts of the country?

Solomon The production we do have right now is sufficient to quench the local demand. But in the long term we have planned to roast coffee products in different ways and we can probably double our capacity in two years time.

HERALD: How do you see the environment for Diaspora community to invest?

Solomon As to me, as a Diaspora, the community has to come to home and invest as the place and the many opportunities are opened by the government. As Diaspora, our participation is very big and essential. As it is difficult to come up with a change overnight, we have to develop patience and work in determination and dedication to attain the desired goals.

HERALD: How long have you stayed overseas?

Solomon First, I have lived in Holland for about 26 years and then 8 years in UK totally I have been to overseas for about 34 years.

HERALD: Do you think that the government creates favorable circumstances for investors? Is the sole effort of the government enough without Diaspora efforts to well exploit the green pasture the atmosphere has granted them with?

Solomon In the first place, investors themselves have to come up with diligent to effectively use what they have had. The government is always trying to do its best, but as investors they have to come up with an idea and set goals. The potential investors have to identify their need, set ultimate goals and frame how to achieve the goals they put. Then the government will act up on their demand. In so doing, the government has to be more efficient in a less bureaucratic red tape to successfully serve the diaspora or investors. What is stipulated on the paper regarding investors should be translated into practice as much as possible.

HERALD: What type of challenges have you encountered in due course of running activities so far, and opportunities you have had, if any?

Solomon The biggest challenge at this moment is the COVID-19. Though there are ups and downs in doing business, the government has played its role in properly supporting the investors and the business community to encourage work more on the area as we are currently undertaking. Taking the problems into account, the government is devising possible solutions to the problems witnessed so far. Such



Facilities are also well needed as they are instrumental in coming up with improvement because we are doing our best to introduce Ethiopian roasted value added coffee for export market.

a promising move help investors and concerned bodies discharge their respective responsibilities accordingly.

HERALD: Have you contributed your share in tax paying, if so, how fair is it?

Solomon As we work, we have contributed our share to the development of nation. However, not only are we paying taxes but we are also creating a number of job opportunities for many fellow citizens. This would help us generate foreign currency for our country. An investor has to look into any activity from different directions, in terms of paying tax, creating job opportunities, improving products, and timely supplying them to the market. The higher the tax we pay, the greater the number of citizens to be engaged in various job opportunities. These are the things we have focus on.

HERALD: Would you explain what type of government support have you got right now and in future?

Solomon The very support we need is wider area to run great deal of business from the government or from the Ethiopian investment commission. The other support is the requirement of working capital as it is dwindled due to COVID-19. Facilities are also well needed as they are instrumental in coming up with improvement because we are doing our best to introduce Ethiopian roasted value added coffee for export market. We are really doing all our best and we have found the market we really need. We have to thank the government facilitating conditions along that line.

HERALD: Can you cite the processed and readied coffee a day?

Solomon We might not roast coffee day by

day. However, we can put it in a monthly approach. We have roasted five tones for local market and four tones for export market a month.

HERALD: Any message you would like to convey?

Solomon The message I would like to pass to, as an Ethiopian, all concerned is we have to move in unison in all aspects to make a difference. We have also to create a peaceful country. As peace is very essential for the country's overall progress, we have to value it and capitalize on it. Using the opportunity following the prevalence of peace, we can change everything into production with a fertile idea of business. We are expected to work in collaboration with the government.

Regarding the Diaspora community, I would like to advise them to be reasonable in anything whatever they come across. Yes, the Diasporas have known the inside out of the world. Recognizing this, we can contribute a lot to our country. Surprisingly when we live abroad, we may experience and develop both the positive, and the negative spectrums.

However, we have to sow and nurture the former as the latter does have a devastating repercussion on the society.

Let me exhort may case urging the diaspora to come home and invest here as no one can come and act accordingly for the prosperity and development of the nation. For sure, the combined effort of all of us from abroad and home helps the country seize the ladder of success in every aspect.

Between you & me



Ephrem Endale
Contributor

Mind for some 'tej'

A year or so back this childhood chum of mine living in England comes home for a long-delayed visit. Having been away for more than a decade and a half he was bursting with emotions and expectations. We had good times over coffee, talking about old times, a rare experience these days. I mean talking about yesteryears however unholy they might have been serving as some sort of anesthesia. We're in real dire straits; no doubt about that. "Yes times were real horrendous, but we still smiled a lot!"

So we talked about everything and anything with this chum of mine. As we were parting, he says.

"Don't forget Saturday night, OK!" What was that? We raised nothing about a Saturday or any other night. He came to my rescue; well, in a way. "I'll pick you up at six and we are going to have a memorable night."

Wait a minute! Yes, by some strange machinations of nature you have started forgetting more and more things. But not things you talked about a few minutes back! Who said anything about a memorable Saturday night!

One common thing about our Diaspora brethren flying back for vacation is that nightlife seems to top the agenda of their vacation! It's about night clubs, 'whiskey houses' where the legendary madams of the city are found, the red light spots where girls barely into their teens are there for the taking... I mean aren't those things found in abundance in the places they came from!

"So how was your vacation?"

"You wouldn't believe the night clubs

they have. And the ladies! I'm going back next year." was that the vacation all about! The dance floor and the 'sins of the flesh!' I mean they don't have to spend the pounds and the dollars on airfare for that! Well, who am I to tell those guys what to do with their vacations! If those are the things that make them happy, let it be!

Now don't you think that I am some hermit in worldly clothes! But when my chum draws the 'Saturday night' card the warning bells bellow; "Don't you be tempted to do what you don't like doing!" Night out! No way! I simply was not 'a night person,' whatever that means. Strange, isn't it? A guy who claims to some sort of writer or something doesn't like going out at night! 'He must be weird!' 'He must be living in another age!' 'He must have some screws missing upstairs!' "Your honor, guilty as charged, except for the last claim." hmmm!

Now, I was really in a difficult situation. My outright refusal would offend my dear friend, and that is the last thing I want; Going out Saturday would be a major reversal of my principle and it would be the last thing I'd do to myself. So, I try my hand at being the nicest person since the last nicest person on earth;

"I'm afraid I can't make it, Saturday night."

The reaction was, well, explosive! Coming out of the blue, it really messed with a few of my nerves.

"What do you mean you can't make it?"

What do I mean! "Well, I just don't do

that!" The words couldn't just come out.

"We meet after so long and you tell me you can't make it!"

He was in 'Nuke Mode.' Look, he probably had all his program worked out to make me happy and what do I do? I splash cold water on his Good Samaritan action.

The problem is I'm not a night owl as you might say, let alone a night club person. Never danced! Really? Yes, really. All my life I lived in the center of town where the world seems to have started and would eventually end, and also where everything and anything happened and I never danced! For many coming from abroad such things are weird. "How can he say he doesn't go to a nightclub? The guy must be sick!" Thanks for the compliment.

Well, it happens there're personal lines we never cross no matter the situation. No exceptions. I have to tell my chum the truth. The irony of it all is that while he was here he never as much passed by a nightclub's door! I told him I don't do night outs, and don't go to nightclubs. Well, it was tough on him. We parted with him looking as if he just learned some horrible news. A couple of days later, however, having had thoughts of our brief spectacle he laughed about it saying he shouldn't have tried to push me into it. That is my chum!

Still, there are those who really are offended because you politely decline some invitation. Take for example "Hey, tomorrow lunch is on me. I'll invite you the best raw meat in town."

"Thanks, but I don't at raw meat."

"What do you mean you don't it raw meat!" That is the paraphrased version of, "You're an Ethiopian and you say you don't it raw meat!"

"I don't eat raw meat, never did."

You're given that really creepy look, "I knew something was very wrong with this guy!"

It is like you just committed an unpardonable crime and he was thinking of calling the Interpol guys!

Say, you are in this restaurant with a few guys.

"What will you have?"

"Make it beer, a cold one."

"Beer! Come on, that's nothing but pure water! Get something stronger. Make it double gin."

"No!" You almost jump out of your seat. Gin! The last time you heard about gin some friend had too much of it and ended up in a ditch a few steps from his home! "I don't drink gin."

"What!"

Believe me the "What!" is all over the place.

At times the guys are so determined to get your consent they put you in a very tight corner. Look, sometimes you might be forced to do something you don't like because the situation demands it. But going as far as replacing gin for beer! I don't think that's a good idea.

Hey, how about some *tej* this evening? I'll be thinking about you! Ha!

'Hate' the job, 'Love' the check

It shows on his face; it shows on his actions and gestures; it shows on his 24/7 frown... the guy doesn't like his work! He is at his desk for only the monthly paycheck. Well, he has a family to feed!" And he also has to liquefy his internal anatomy every evening. Sometimes you are forced to ask who really likes their work these days. Most places you go, most office doors you knock you see it... people not interested in their work and who make no effort to hide it.

I think one reason nothing is done on time, or only very few reports for work on time is too many of us hate our jobs! So much 'time' is left to the winds around here that you wonder how on earth any job could be accomplished.

Incidentally, speaking of time, maybe a groundbreaking proposal would work... Export it! Yes, why not! Package it some way or another and load it on the cargo planes... A couple of years later we might say "'Time' has become the biggest foreign exchange earner for the country!" wouldn't that be nice?

"It's not nice, it's crazy!" Well, many wonderful things in this would be initially 'crazy' ideas. Since we've so much of 'time' unused and since there are parts of the world

where time is in short supply, no harm in being entrepreneurial! And also, we need those bills on which George Washington seems to be saying... "What in the world is going on in my country? I barely recognize it!" Politics, Dear George, politics is what is happening in your country. All other things are just the byproducts.

By the way 'exporting time' would mean almost all of us will enjoy the piece of the cake. After all 'time' is one product which no one could take away from us! With the prices of almost everything skyrocketing we need the money, and we need it ASAP!

"My price is ten thousand grinds for an hour."

"It's a deal." Not bad idea at all!

Sometime back we were with this guy who said he was a chef in some grand hotel. The pay? "Wonderful!" Working conditions? "Great!"

So, why all that heavy frown clouding his face? Well, he "...didn't like the job!" Familiar, isn't that? The 'question to end all questions' was why he became a chef if he didn't like it. "My family talked me into it." Oh; that must have been a magnificent family! Hadn't they talked him into it where

would he have ended? Just out of curiosity, what did he want to be?

"I wanted to be a pilot." So, a job with good pay, good working conditions... and he is still complaining! Especially at a time when tens of thousands of properly trained young people are unemployed! Look, what really amuses me about this guy was that he actually blamed his family for convincing him to be a chef! "Had they not pushed me to be a chef I'd have been a pilot." Oh! And every time some plane roars across the blue sky the family would look up and say, "That's our kid is flying that plane."

We're talking about a guy who owns his own home, drives a good car and sends his two children to an expensive school. Who said he'd have been made it as a pilot! Blaming his family for allowing him a comfortable life is as rude as one can be.

"So, what do you do for a living?"

"I am a clerk at a private bank."

"Really! That's nice. I hear the banks pay handsomely, and all the benefits..."

"You could say that."

"You don't seem to be very happy

about it."

"I hate the job!"

What's wrong with people these days! Hating the job but loving the pay and all the benefits thrown our way! In a country like ours with thousands equally qualified out of work that, dear readers, is a luxury.

"What was your choice?"

"I should have taken up medicine."

"Then how did you need up behind the bank counter?"

"It was my girlfriend; she convinced me to pursue accounting."

The perfect girlfriend, wouldn't you say?

"You must be a very good science student for wanting to be a pilot."

"No." No what! "I hated science subjects."

He hates science and still wants to hold the scalpel and mess with our bodies! Thanks to the girlfriend who managed to keep him away from the medical world.

'Hate' the job 'Love' the check...that seems what's happening these days.

Opinion

Correcting misinformation

Repeated assertions by some groups that the government of Ethiopia postponed the election indefinitely without valid legal processes or practical justifications warranting the postponement are simply intended to spread misinformation and represent a denial of the constitutional processes duly followed.

Disagreement is part of a healthy democratic culture, whereas misrepresenting facts because the true narrative does not fit into individual opinions and expectations is a deliberate attempt to misinform the public and members of the international community. Due caution needs to be paid to pseudo intellectuals and their misinformation spree. While they posture as champions of democracy and human rights, what they do is sow seeds of division and animosity among a society that has lived for so long harmoniously.

The government was making full-fledged preparations for several months to hold the

first fair and free election in the country. It was with this commitment that the National Electoral Board of Ethiopia (NEBE) was made to be independent and capable of conducting a free and fair election. With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, NEBE's declaration that it cannot hold the elections as scheduled, was met with resistance from the ruling party, which insisted to proceed as planned.

Nevertheless, in the context of the current public health emergency, the government will be in serious breach of its constitutional mandate and responsibility to safeguard public health and welfare if it pursued a national election as initially scheduled or when the situation has not improved. With the current increase in number of positive cases and new deaths being reported daily, disregarding this painful fact will be fostering complacency in a situation where the pandemic is stressing health care systems and stretching resources.

In response to this global pandemic, the Government followed the constitutionally most plausible alternative by seeking a constitutional interpretation to address the legal lacuna. Legal experts, political party and civil society consultations held by the Government and the process that led to the final rendering of a decision on the matter by the House of Federation (HoF) was considered by many as being a watershed moment in nurturing a culture of constitutionalism in the country.

The Council of Constitutional Inquiry engaged all relevant experts on the matter and received expert opinion even from those that took part in the constitutional design. It then sent a unanimous recommendation to the HoF to postpone the election until after the health impact of COVID-19 is mitigated. It is this decision-which was rendered to the letter and spirit of the constitution – that gave the basis for the temporary postponement of the election. The Government continues

to monitor the situation to ensure that the date for the election is scheduled as soon as circumstances warrant it, no later than between 9-12 months.

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed remains deeply committed to the democratization process despite temporal and intermittent attempts by belligerent forces and their proxies, to undermine the reform process. Reforming established inequitable systems and entrenched attitudes, propped up by invisible networks of unearned privilege and benefits takes time to dismantle. Nevertheless, political will and foresight at the highest level exists and will move forward!

Ed's note: This piece of article was originally twitted by Billene Seyoum who is International Media Spokesperson of the Press Secretariat at the Office of the Prime Minister (PMO).

Ethiopians celebrate progress on 6,000 MW dam construction

BY GERALD TENYWA

KAMPALA - Ethiopians on Sunday gathered in Addis Ababa and their embassies in different countries including Uganda to celebrate the progress on the construction of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD). The 6,450 MW dam once completed will become Africa's largest Hydro-Electric Power dam and also the eighth largest dam globally. The construction of the GERD which started in 2010 on Ethiopia's Blue Nile also referred to as Abay and is currently getting into the final bend. The filling of the dam with water which is expected to take four to seven years has started. By July 21, the first year of filling had contributed 4.9 billion cubic metric tons of water out of the total 74 billion cubic metrics needed. "This filling happened in a few days due to better hydrology in the basin and it enables the country to test two of the turbines in order to generate electricity in the coming year," according to a statement from the Ethiopian Embassy in Kampala. "The country planned to fill the reservoir from four to seven years based on the hydrology of the basin in order not to cause any significant harm to the downstream countries."

In a two page statement from the Ethiopian Embassy, Ethiopians and Ethiopian origins at home and abroad are celebrating the completion of the first year filling of the reservoir with the motto of "One Voice for our Dam" across the world. This took place on Sunday (August 2, 2020) at 4:00 P.M on the same day and time.

Kampala celebration

At Kololo where about 100 Ethiopians living in Kampala stood in honour of the Ethiopian national anthem and also waved the Ethiopian flag. This was voicing out Ethiopia's right to utilize the Nile equitably, reasonably



and with the principle of international laws. The Ethiopian Government is also mobilizing the community to plant trees in the catchment of Abay to reduce silting of the river, according to the documentary. "We have completed 74% of the dam," said Alemtsehay Meseret, the Ambassador of Ethiopia to Uganda, adding that their effort to build the GERD is exemplary because they did not rely on grants or loans to build the dam. "It is a dream come true and a lesson that countries can mobilize their own resources to fund large-scale initiatives including dams."

Ethiopia considers the Dam as a source of cooperation and integration in East Africa as well as in the downstream country-Egypt. In addition to the electricity, the

Dam will have benefits to the downstream countries (Egypt and Sudan) in that it will regulate water flow that will enhance water management for irrigation, help to manage sediments thereby reducing the cost of dredging irrigation canals, reduces flooding, strengthens socio-economic integration and increases energy in dams in Sudan.

Shared river, benefits

The Nile belongs to all the Nile Basin countries; Ethiopia, which contributes 86% of the river, expresses that it has every right to harness its natural resources in proper observance of recognized international transboundary water principles.

An equitable water sharing and reasonable

utilization could be maintained in the Nile Basin through the negotiated outcome of the Nile Basin Initiative -Cooperative Framework Agreement (CFA) among Nile riparian countries. The agreement stipulated the need to establish a Nile Basin River Commission to serve as an institutional framework for cooperation among riparian countries and for the use of the Nile river basin and its water.

The establishment of the commission needs six riparian countries to ratify the CFA. While Ethiopia, Uganda, Tanzania and Rwanda ratified the CFA; Kenya and Burundi signed the agreement.

Source: New Vision Thursday, August 06, 2020

Local media review

U.S. continues partnership with east African nations, Ethiopia to combat terrorism

ADDIS ABABA (FBC) – Commander of U.S. Special Operations Command Africa Major General Dagvin R.M. Anderson stated that the US continues partnerships with African nations to reduce extremism, combat terrorist organizations.

In a press conference held to brief media on efforts of the U.S. to combat terrorism in Africa, Major General Dagvin R.M. Anderson remarked that the United States strengthens efforts to bring about peace and prosperity throughout the African continent.

“Youth brings energy; that energy needs to be harnessed, and that energy needs to be – you need to give them education and opportunity,” said Major General Dagvin R.M. Anderson.

“Africa is resource-rich and there are

opportunities for international investment there, so how do we do that that benefits – that’s mutually beneficial as we go forward as a global community,” he noted.

The U.S. has continued to stay engaged and partnered with AMISOM and the Somalia national army in order to continue the fight against Al-Shebab.

“All U.S. partners have been fully engaged: Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, as troop-contributing countries to AMISOM, have been engaged in combating extremism along with Somali partners,” he underlined.

The U.S. will stay engaged against the violent extremists, and remains committed to removing that threat from the region, the General added.



Association calls for mechanization of oilseed crops

ADDISABABA(ENA)–Ethiopia’suntapped oilseed crop production requires mechanized agriculture in order to sustainably increase export volume and foreign currency earnings from the sub-sector, according to Pulses, Oilseeds and Spices Exporters Association.

Association General Manager, Assefa Yohannes told ENA that mechanization is crucial to increase production of oilseeds and foreign currency earnings that have been dwindling for many years.

According to him, the country earned about 348 million USD last Ethiopian fiscal year by exporting 237, 636 tons of oilseed crops.

He blamed the unsatisfactory foreign currency earning on mainly low productivity and COVID-19.

As Ethiopia exports oilseeds to China, Israel, India, United Arab Emirates, Turkey, Jordan, Saudi Arabia and Vietnam, the spread of COVID-19 pandemic has negatively affected export.

Post-COVID-19, however, situations will change. Thus Ethiopia has to boost oilseed crops production.

“The country has huge tracts of land. So, if we develop these our idle lands through commercialized farming, we can maximize the volume of production and foreign currency earnings,” Assefa noted.

The lack of productivity could partly be solved through mechanization in areas with irrigation potentials, expanding and cultivating new farm lands.

He pointed out that “a good example is sesame. We export about 300,000 tons of sesame annually. But the country has the potential to produce 1 million tons of sesame in a year, by increasing productivity, expanding production areas and discovering new farm lands.”

Sesame productivity per one hectare is low in Ethiopia when compared to other countries producing sesame, the managing director said.

There are undiscovered huge tracts of lands for sesame production in such places as Somali Regional, Assefa stated, adding that mechanized farming in these areas with irrigation potential could increase sesame production by three-fold.

He said the issue of quality product and value addition should also be considered to enhance market competition internationally.

According to the general manager, the export contract registration and performance directive introduced last Ethiopian year is helping address recurring export fraud and micro-economic imbalance.

Addis Ababa to commence land audit and registration to tackle grab

ADDIS ABABA (FBC) – Addis Ababa City Administration has announced the commencement of Land Audit and Registration Scheme in a bid to tackle land grab.

Deputy Mayor Takele Uma has discussed with various stakeholders on activities to be carried out pertaining to the land audit and registration process.

It is stated on the occasion that the land audit and registration works include landholdings ranging from central parts of the city to the

outskirts, lands owned by farmers.

The City Administration will give title deeds to lands owned by farmers after they are registered because they are prone to be affected by land grab.

The land audit and registration drive will be backed by technological advancements in partnership with Ministry of Science and Innovation, according to Mayor’s Office.

The registration of lands owned by farmers will be completed till coming October 10, 2020.

Commission utilizing 4 billion Birr to improve access to potable water, sanitation

ADDIS ABABA (ENA) – Water Development Commission has reportedly allocated four billion Birr budget this Ethiopian fiscal year to improve access to clean water.

Water Development Commissioner, Beshah Mogessie told ENA that the commission will utilize the budget to improve access to clean water in the country.

Provision of clean water has been low despite the efforts being exerted to increase availability of potable water to the public.

Out of the total four billion Birr budget, half would be allocated by the government and the rest remaining sum by development partners, it was learned.

The budget would help to finalize big projects and start new projects in the water sector.

According to the commissioner, some 41 projects that enable to improve provision of potable water in rural area are included in the plan.



Beshah Mogessie

A study has also been finalized to enhance sanitation in 22 cities, including Addis Ababa.

Art & Culture

From motherhood to servitude The beauty of character and the imposed challenges

BY JOSEPH SOBOKA

We are all born of a father and a mother. The phrase 'the mother land implies' the true love of the country like the love and kind heartedness a mother has for her child. Without the matrimonial union of the husband and wife, there is no other way for the birth of a child to happen. Even though a father, due to cultural precept, is given the title as the head of the family, without the participation of the mother, the whole issue virtually loses its essence. Being a female parent, in fact, the mother, lays a firm foundation for the continuity of the stability of a family and the generation as she predicates the responsibility or the duty of the family by virtue of producing a child which herself and her husband equally claim the ownership. On top the nine months painful and tiresome pregnancy period and the excruciating pains of delivery still the greater responsibility of rearing the child fully falls on the mother alone. It does not mean that the father has no share in the whole process.

A mother is considered patient and resilient in facing hardship and difficulties during her married life. She has the quality of quickly recovering from crushing experience unlike her husband. She is often, after the incidence, even if it is harmful, she still becomes buoyant in her disposition. The very quality required to shoulder the heavy tasks of the household. Coupled with what she does for the benefit of her child, she is also engaged in the food preparation, cleaning and laundering clothes for the members of household- things that are not done by the male partner in Africa, more so in Ethiopia. In Ethiopia, the husband is considered, until recent years, as the bread earner of the family. He is responsible for making money to purchase food and clothing for his children and for the family as a whole. If he is a farmer, he makes it his bounden duty to till the land to produce food, buying other utensils by the money he earns from the sale of the surplus agricultural product.

It is the responsibility of the mother to properly manage the money provided by her husband for the household expenses. Her husband, after having done his part keeps clean hands for the food the mother puts on the table, without even caring to know the troubles she has been through in the process of the preparation; he simply embarks on the eating without appreciation. On the other hand, she expresses her love for her husband by the delicious food she prepares to wet his appetite and at the same time expecting a reciprocating appreciation from him as sheer indication of the magnitude of his love for her. Abreast

of this, it is her desire to make sure that her child is well fed to grow healthier and stronger. When her husband realizes her efforts to make her family protected both physically and emotionally, he draws closer to her more than ever. This circumstance proves the mother to be a binding chord for sustainability of the marriage. An authentic mother, seasoned by kindness, devotes herself to the wellbeing her child and to the family at large. She spends her time, energy and interest for the sake of her beloved husband and child. As a general rule, she devotes her whole being to the welfare of the family. She is up to creating conditions of good health and comfortable living, by

feeding them a balanced diet and cheerful disposition. This view is based solely on Ethiopian context, which has its own unique characteristic, and which the mother cherishes for her family. She tenderly cares for those she believes are undoubtedly her own. She keeps alive feelings, hope and conditions in an effort to fuel love to prevail under any circumstance whatsoever. A sane husband echoes the sentiment. To him, she is the taste of chocolate and chocolate is the taste of independence from the suppressed love in Africa.

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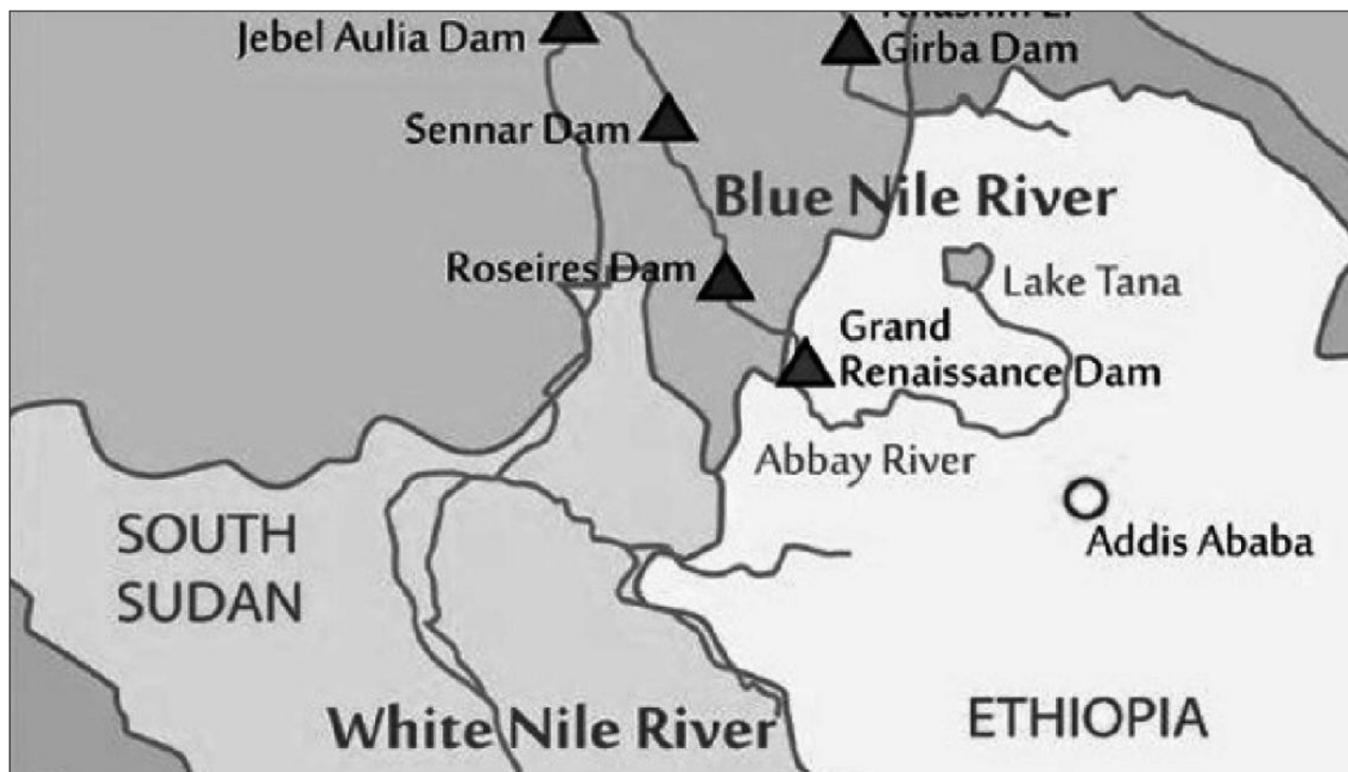
Juxtaposed with this, there are nominal mothers whose intention is to gain appreciation without fulfilling the precepts of mother-hood. The rule or the guide that she has to fulfill is little exhibited in her. The writer observed such a mother while walking in the street with her two or three year old child was dragging the baby and when the baby fails to keep pace, it fumbles and stumbles, she vigorously snatches him by the arm barking at him, can't you see? For the sake of justice, who is blind? Her loud shout scared the baby and made him cry; her irrational fury escalates even more. Lack of compassion is not an inherent quality of a true mother. A true mother is noted for her pity for the suffering of her innocent baby. The mother who is least concerned for the safety of her child is not worth calling a mother. Such mothers do not take time to understand their children why they behave like they do. Obviously, a child is innocent and does not know what to do when affected by circumstances. He is at the mercy of his mother and she should understand him better and do what is necessary to appease his sorrow, anger or discomfort. She should know the three conditions that make a child cry: hunger, illness and being wet. Such things, a bad mother does not realize its importance and neither is she willing to understand. Yet, the blessed and the edifying status of the mother is lowered to the level of servitude.

In many other African countries, a mother, rather than being an object of affection, is only demanded to produce bountiful crop of children, who can help in the fields and can eventually take care of their parents in old age. This particular situation reduces her human value to machine. The role of an African woman, a person whose physical and spiritual strength is nothing short of being commended, should be accorded special attention. In the rural areas, as it is obviously noted, the mother is uneducated, barefoot and stoop shouldered. Her comforts are few, her burdens many. According to the United Nations, the African woman produces 70 percent of the food grown on the continent. She works harder and longer hours into the night and has more responsibilities than her husband. She is the economic backbone of the rural community, the maker of family's decisions, the initiator of social change, the harvester of crops. She is the hub around which the spokes of the society turn. Walking down almost any country road you will see a procession of women padding along the shoulder, their back parallel to the ground under the weight of huge piles of firewood or jar of water. The outdoor marketplaces, the most important source of economic activity in any village, are run and staffed exclusively by mothers (women) like in Gurage land. On top of the household tasks, in the fields, it is only women you see with hoes and sickles.

How about the men? The elderly ones are apt to be sitting in the shades of trees, drinking tella (homemade beer), discussing their cattle. The younger ones are either in the school, in the city or in the local beer hall. Daughters, the future mothers, are more important to African parents. African mothers feel frustrated that they remain second-class citizens despite their contributions to family and the community. Lately, except few who have escaped through instrumentally of education, mostly in the rural, are expected to remain sexually faithful, while their spouses are permitted, even expected to have as many wives and girlfriends as they can support. This, of course, differs from culture to culture. The writer, during his post graduate studies in Kenya, was told by one of his university batch, that the husband can come home in the evening with a strange woman; calls the wife to meet her new friend and the children their new mama. The hope, the woman tries to prove herself a genuine mother to her child and faithful wife to the husband shatters at this point. The value of the mother that is capable of sustaining the marriage vanishes. The bright light of love wanes, the mother becomes just a woman of servitude. What a pity!!

Politics/global development

ADDISU LASHITEW



The Nile drama and the quest for fair meditation

BY ADDISU LASHITEW

Some 85 years ago, in 1936, Emperor Haile Selassie I stood before the General Assembly of the League of Nations in Geneva to make a speech that would make him an icon of the struggle against fascism. At the time, the emperor had been driven out of his country by the forces of Mussolini, who exterminated his poorly armed defense forces, thus bringing to an end the only standing, the independent nation of Africa. During the speech, Haile Selassie started by describing the gruesome way Mussolini's fascist army exterminated civilian and military targets using the poisonous mustard gas, which was banned under the Geneva Protocol, of which both Ethiopia and Italy were signatories.

Haile Selassie beseeched for help, arguing that the League's promise of a collective security rested upon "the confidence that each State is to place in international treaties. It is the value of promises made to small States that their integrity and their independence shall be respected and ensured." By abandoning its weaker members in times of their need, he argued, the League of Nations was sacrificing its "international morality."

But the League of Nations was in no mood to take a moral high ground and protect small states like Ethiopia. The emperor's words landed on deaf ears as the European powers of the time, France and Britain, were keen to appease Mussolini to avoid his inevitable alliance with Hitler. Three years down the line, the Second World War erupted as the League of Nations, having lost its credibility, failed to avoid further escalation. European states, including France, started to crumble under the joint forces of Fascism and Nazism.

A dam dispute at the U.N.

There is an unavoidable parallel between that decades-old event in Ethiopian history, and what happened at the United Nations Security Council meeting on June 29, 2020. The Security Council convened the open hearing to discuss the Grand Ethiopian

Renaissance Dam (GERD) on the Blue Nile, under an agenda of "Peace and Security in Africa". It was an unusual meeting, perhaps the first-ever assembled over a dispute over a transboundary river. Although reaching an agreement has remained elusive for years now, peaceful negotiations were ongoing with renewed impetus under the auspices of the African Union.

It was hence a puzzle how a development project like the GERD ended up becoming an agenda for the world's highest organ of international peace and security. Egypt had apparently used the force of American diplomatic power to summon a hearing at the Security Council, through a process that contravened established practices for virtual meetings during the COVID-19 lockdown.

It was only when Egypt's Foreign Minister, Mr. Sameh Shoukry, made his speech that the security grounds of this meeting became apparent. In a blistering speech that betrayed desperation, he underscored his country's serious dependence on the Nile waters. The Foreign Minister depicted Ethiopia's Blue Nile dam as a malicious project that is set to ignite regional destabilization, undermine Egypt's stability and wreaking socio-economic havoc from crime to mass migration. He painted "a looming threat ... on the horizon" that was set to unleash "an ominous peril". He said that Egypt will make sure to take measures to "uphold and protect the vital interests of its people".

It was thus through a veiled threat of war at the pulpit of the United Nations Security Council that Egypt transformed what has been a peaceful negotiation on the operation of an innocuous hydropower project into an issue of international peace and security.

The disadvantages of a late-comer

To be sure, the negotiations over the Blue Nile dam have been daunting and slow, but it is far from true that the GERD would reduce Egypt's water use. The hydropower dam in fact does not consume any water at all:

it needs to let water through its turbines to be able to generate power. It is also only 20 kilometers away from Ethiopia's border with Sudan, and in a mountainous location without any promise for future irrigation. If anything, it will reduce water losses from evaporation as its reservoir will rest on a highland area with deep gorges. By contrast, Egypt's massive reservoir at its Aswan High Dam in the Sahara loses more than 10 percent of the Nile's annual water flow to evaporation.

Ethiopia's permanent representative at the UN, Ambassador Taye Atske Selassie, responded that his country did not ask too much of Egypt. It only asked for a fair share in the use of a river body that canvases the vast majority of its territory, and towards which it contributes 86% of the annual water discharge. Indeed, the GERD should be supported by the UN, which has embraced a global agenda for sustainable development. Enshrined in 2015, these UN goals aspire to achieve, among other things, universal access to electricity by 2030. By doubling Ethiopia's power generating capacity, the GERD will extend access to affordable and renewable electricity for more than 60 million Ethiopians who still live in darkness.

An unfair mediator

Once again, much like during the times of Haile Selassie, this was a confrontation between David and Goliath, between the weak and the powerful. The indignation of Mr. Shoukry could not have been for lack of understanding that the GERD will not lead to an appreciable decline in the amount of water that will flow to Egypt. He very well knows that this project is within the acceptable range of equitable water use by Ethiopia, which he acknowledged is a principle acceptable to Egypt. His passion has most likely to do with the fact that a "small", poor African country like Ethiopia dared question the wisdom and authority of his own country and that of Washington.

Under President Trump, the U.S. has played the role of Egypt's right-hand in the effort to

cement an Egyptian hegemony over the Nile. In November 2019, Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi called on U.S. President Donald Trump to help broker an agreement on the Nile. This was done unilaterally by Egypt, and outside the negotiation, procedures outlined in the Declaration of Principles signed between Ethiopia, Egypt and Sudan in 2015. President Trump is a friend and close ally of Al-Sisi and has been overheard calling him his "favorite dictator" during the G-7 summit in Biarritz, France.

A self-proclaimed dealmaker, Trump wants to garner recognition for a successful brokering role. He may also have an ulterior motive in resolving Egypt's burning concern on the Nile dam. He badly needs the unequivocal support of Egypt in his "Deal of the Century" program for the Middle East, which has been roundly rejected by Arab nations.

The Foreign and Water Ministers of Egypt, Ethiopia, and Sudan have held a series of meetings in Washington since December 2019, and met Trump at the White House. In February 2020, however, these negotiations broke down when Ethiopia temporarily suspended its participation, requesting more time to deliberate on the draft agreement.

Will the GERD be Ethiopia's last dam?

In the absence of Ethiopia, Egypt signed the agreement, which has been apparently drafted by the United States with the help of the World Bank, while Sudan refused to do so. Ethiopia's Foreign Ministry expressed a disapproval of the draft agreement, which it considered unfair. Instead of helping resolve these differences as would befit a neutral mediator, the U.S. Treasury, which was in charge of these negotiations, openly stated that the draft agreement "addresses all issues in a balanced and equitable manner" and warned Ethiopia that "final testing and filling [of the GERD] should not take place without an agreement." This unhelpful, partial role of the U.S. has been widely criticized by many former American diplomats.

Ethiopia fears that the draft agreement will effectively reduce the GERD to a mechanism of smoothing water flows to Egypt. It will lower the size of the reservoir by about a third, allowing for its filling by a maximum of 49 billion cubic meters (BCM) out of its full capacity of 74 BCM. In drought years, the GERD is to release ever greater amounts of water to compensate for the decline in the river's flow, which could further reduce the dam's generating capacity. Ethiopia was required to provide daily data on the river's flow at the dam. Lack of compliance was to be independently investigated and resolved through an independent and binding arbitration.

This levels an onerous legal demand on Ethiopia that entails strict obligation (in the form of a binding treaty), high precision (in the form of minimum guaranteed water discharge), and high delegation (through a binding, external dispute settlement). With increasing upstream water consumption and climate change, the flow of the Nile could well decline from natural causes below the minimum guaranteed release stipulated in the agreement. Ethiopia's negotiators complain that the agreement will force Ethiopia to bear the full burden of future droughts, and, under some scenarios, leave the country in the odd position of owing water to Egypt.

The flow restrictions will also make a future

In Pictures



“An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.”
The ministerial committee chaired by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed overseeing prevention activities meet to discuss the current status where the Ministers of Health and Education presented on the international and domestic trends of the pandemic.
Source: Office of the Prime Minister-Ethiopia



“When we heal the earth, we heal ourselves.”
“Addis Ababa environment heroes have come out today from all parts of the city to meet the Green Legacy challenge. We’re halfway through the planting season and I commend you for rising to what the next generation demands of you. I encourage all throughout the country to exceed the annual goal set. We can do it together!” **Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed**



“Deeply saddened by the tragic explosion in Beirut. My thoughts and prayers with the people of Lebanon. I encourage Ethiopians living in Beirut to get in touch with the Consulate as you help one another amidst such an ordeal,”
Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed



“The reward for work well done is the opportunity to do more.”
On August 4, 2020 the Addis Ababa City Council gives a recognition award to Engineer Takele Uma, Deputy Major of Addis Ababa for registering fruitful achievements since he has taken office.
Source: Addis Ababa City Press Secretary Office



On August 4, 2020, the city council winds up assembly endorsing the 2013 year annual Ethiopian budget and appointing officials.

Source: Addis Ababa City Press Secretary Office

