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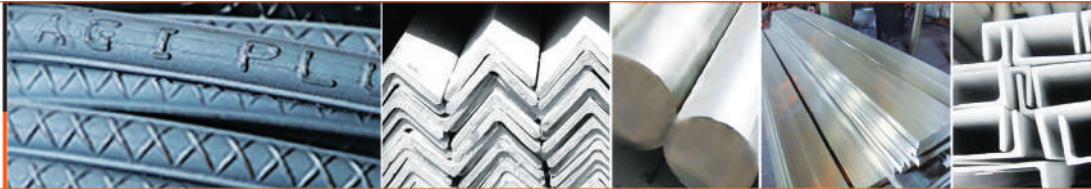
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Public projects plagued by over 17 billion birr in mismanagement, waste

By Eyasu Zekarias

A recent audit report by the Office of the Federal Auditor General (OFAG) has uncovered widespread financial mismanagement, delays, and inefficiencies in the country's public projects, resulting in losses exceeding 17 billion birr (approximately \$121.4 million) in road construction and university

developments alone.

The report details systemic issues affecting government-funded projects, with over 180 road projects incurring more than 13.26 billion birr in cost overruns in addition to their initial budgets. This means that more than 75% of these projects have faced significant additional costs caused by delays, overbudgeting, and

poor management practices.

The problem extends beyond infrastructure to other vital sectors such as electricity generation, irrigation, and higher education projects. The audit found that many projects were not completed on schedule, leading

► Page 6

Regulatory hurdles delay distribution of approved GM Maize

By Muluken Yewondwossen

A dispute has emerged between a regulatory body and a national research institute regarding the conditions for releasing recently approved genetically modified (GM) maize, as seed companies begin planting.

Ethiopia made a historic decision in March to approve the commercial release of insect-protected TELA maize varieties after seven years of rigorous research and testing.

The National Variety Release Committee (NVRC) granted approval for these genetically modified varieties, which are designed for insect resistance and drought tolerance.

However, Tesfaye Disasa, PhD, the TELA Maize project country coordinator at the Ethiopian Institute of Agricultural Research (EIAR), has voiced significant frustration over delays in making the seeds available to farmers.

"Every new technology requires a vital testing period, but in our experience, we are often slow to adopt them," he told Capital. While the seven-year approval process for the GM maize was thorough, he believes such a lengthy delay is unnecessary.

Tesfaye pointed to protracted procedures in agencies outside the agricultural research institute as obstacles to the timely distribution of this potentially transformative seed variety.

"This farming season, we had planned to use 120 agricultural demonstration plots to showcase the technology for farmers. Unfortunately, this was impossible due to very limited seed multiplication," he explained.

He identified the main challenge as the restrictive terms and conditions imposed by the Environmental

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Inclusive Growth

Poverty remains one of Ethiopia’s most pressing challenges, as it does for many developing countries. But like India—which has recently showcased remarkable success in reducing poverty—Ethiopia has an opportunity to accelerate its own progress by adopting inclusive, data-driven policies that deliver growth and welfare gains for all segments of society. The story of India’s fight against poverty offers valuable lessons on the role of sustained economic growth combined with targeted social programs, transparency, and political commitment. As Ethiopia strives to realize its developmental ambitions, these insights can help shape policies that uplift millions from deprivation while fostering social cohesion and democratic accountability.

At its core, poverty is more than a lack of income or access to basic needs. It is an affront to human dignity, obstructing social mobility and preventing marginalized populations from participating fully and equally in civic and economic life. Reducing poverty is, therefore, not only a moral imperative but also a critical metric of good governance and democratic responsibility. Ethiopia’s elected leaders must recognize that inclusive development is fundamental to sustaining peace, political stability, and long-term prosperity.

India’s recent progress has been extraordinary. After over a decade of rapid economic growth, the country has witnessed a dramatic decline in both rural and urban poverty. According to a rigorous new metric developed by experts led by former Reserve Bank of India Governor, India’s extreme poverty rate dropped from nearly 30% in 2011-12 to under 4% by 2023-24. In absolute terms, over 300 million people escaped extreme poverty within this timeframe—a staggering achievement that dwarfs progress in many other countries.

Ethiopia, too, has made important strides. Over the past two decades, the country has reduced poverty rates significantly through agricultural reforms, expanded social protection programs, and infrastructure development. However, challenges remain, particularly in rural areas, where poverty is often intertwined with limited access to education, health services, and markets. To build on its momentum, Ethiopia must deepen reforms that ensure economic growth translates into tangible welfare gains for vulnerable populations.

One key lesson from India is the importance of nuanced, multidimensional metrics that capture not only income poverty but also deprivations in nutrition, education, and living standards. Ethiopia must continue investing in data collection and analysis to better monitor poverty’s various dimensions and tailor policies accordingly. Transparent, reliable data foster accountability and help governments allocate resources to the most pressing needs.

Another insight is the impact of inclusive welfare policies that reach disadvantaged groups across social and religious divides. India’s experience demonstrates that well-designed universal and targeted programs can benefit marginalized communities—such as Scheduled Tribes, Scheduled Castes, and religious minorities—reducing inequalities and narrowing poverty gaps. Ethiopia’s diverse population demands similarly inclusive approaches that address historical inequities while promoting cohesion and opportunity for all.

Vocational skills development and education have also proven vital. India’s progress partly stems from programs that enhance human capital and link citizens to emerging job markets. Ethiopia faces a youth bulge and structural transformation that require a workforce equipped with relevant skills. Expanding technical and vocational training, aligned with evolving industry needs, can improve youth employability and increase incomes, helping break cycles of poverty.

Furthermore, urbanization and rural-urban linkages play a key role. India’s decline in urban poverty parallels rapid city economic growth and improved social safety nets. Ethiopia’s urban centers can become engines of inclusive growth if they expand affordable housing, infrastructure, and services, and channel rural migrants into productive employment opportunities.

Ethiopia’s government must commit to maintaining macroeconomic stability while fostering an enabling environment for private sector investment and entrepreneurship. Poverty reduction depends on creating jobs, driving productivity, and expanding markets where disadvantaged groups can participate meaningfully.

Importantly, political leadership must uphold democratic principles beyond elections—ensuring that all citizens, especially the marginalized, have voice and benefit from economic progress. Poverty reduction is both an outcome and a driver of democratic legitimacy, social peace, and nation-building.

Ethiopia currently confronts complex challenges, including conflicts and climate shocks, which threaten fragile gains in development. But these hurdles also underscore the urgency of adopting integrated, evidence-based policies that marry economic growth with social protection, human capital development, and environmental resilience.

By learning from global examples—embracing transparency, inclusiveness, and data-driven planning—Ethiopia can craft a poverty reduction strategy that is both ambitious and achievable. The fundamental goal is clear: ensure that no Ethiopian is left behind as the country advances toward sustainable prosperity.

In doing so, Ethiopia will honor its democratic mandate and fulfill a historic opportunity to improve the lives and dignity of millions—transforming poverty from a permanent condition to a temporary challenge resolutely overcome.



■ By Shamika Ravi

COMMENT

India is winning the fight against poverty

Contrary to popular belief, democracy is about far more than holding elections or ensuring the peaceful transfer of political power. At its core lies the duty of elected representatives to respond to the fundamental needs of all citizens – especially the marginalized and vulnerable – regardless of their political or religious affiliations. Reducing poverty and fostering inclusive development are critical to fulfilling this democratic responsibility.

It is important to recognize that poverty is not merely a lack of income and access to basic necessities. It denies individuals dignity, blocks social mobility, and prevents full and equal participation in society. Viewed from this perspective, poverty reduction is a useful metric for evaluating a government’s accountability.

India offers a striking case study. During Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s 11 years in office, the country has experienced rapid economic growth. But has that growth been truly inclusive? Has it meaningfully improved the lives of the most disadvantaged?

In 2014, an expert group led by former Reserve Bank of India Governor Chakravarthi Rangarajan introduced a new metric for measuring poverty, providing a valuable tool for assessing the Indian government’s progress. Known as the “Rangarajan line,” it incorporates three features that make it a reliable benchmark. First, it uses the Modified Mixed Recall Period (MMRP) method, which relies on detailed expenditure data across a wide range of goods and services to yield an accurate overview of actual consumption patterns.

Second, the food component of the Rangarajan line is based on the Indian Council of Medical Research’s dietary guidelines, ensuring that the poverty threshold reflects basic nutritional needs. Lastly, Rangarajan’s urban poverty line gives appropriate weight to essential non-food costs such as education, housing rents, transportation, fuel, and health care. We use the state-level Consumer Price Index data for each component, to account for both food and non-food inflation, to estimate poverty levels over time. The consumption data is based on the robust and nationally representative data of the Household Consumption Expenditure Surveys from 2011-12 and 2023-24 conducted by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation.

The analysis reveals a dramatic decline in poverty over the past 12 years, with the rural, urban, and national rates all converging around 3.9% in 2023-24 – down from 30.4%, 26.4%, and 29.5% in 2011-12, respectively. In absolute terms, 302 million people have been lifted out of poverty in India over the past 12 years. Even when looking at the intensity of poverty, there has been a significant improvement, with the poverty gap narrowing from 18.4% in 2011-12 to 10.2% in 2023-24. That means the average poor person is now much closer to the poverty line than they were a decade ago, implying a meaningful improvement in well-being even among those still living below it.

These figures also reveal substantial reductions in poverty across religious communities, particularly among India’s two largest groups, Hindus and

Muslims. In rural areas, the poverty rate among Muslims was 31.7% in 2011-12, slightly higher than the 30.9% rate among Hindus. By 2023-24, this trend had reversed, with poverty among rural Muslims plummeting to 2.4%, while the rate for Hindus stood at 4%. The shift has been similarly pronounced in urban areas. In 2011-12, 39.4% of urban Muslims lived below the poverty line, compared to 24.4% of Hindus. By 2023-24, the poverty rate among urban Muslims had fallen to 5.7%, while the rate for Hindus decreased to 3.7%, narrowing the gap between the two groups from 15 percentage points to just two.

There has also been a marked improvement in poverty rates across social categories, such as Scheduled Tribes (STs), Scheduled Castes (SCs), and Other Backward Classes (OBCs) – groups recognized as socially or educationally disadvantaged – as well as the General category, which includes communities that do not fall under these classifications. In rural areas, the ST community had the highest poverty rate in 2011-12, at 49.5%, followed by SCs and OBCs. By 2023-24, the poverty rate among STs had declined to 12.2%. For the General category, it fell from 20% to 1.6%.

As a result, the ST-General gap narrowed from 29.5 percentage points in 2011-12 to 10.6 in 2023-24. Likewise, the poverty gap between SCs and the General category fell from 17.4 percentage points to 2.6, indicating greater economic inclusion.

Here, too, urban areas experienced similar improvements. In 2011-12, SCs had the highest urban poverty rate, at 39.6%, while the rate for the General category was 16.7% – a gap of nearly 23 percentage points. By 2023-24, the poverty rate among SCs in urban areas had dropped to 6.6%, compared to 2.5% for the General category. Over the same period, poverty among urban STs and OBCs fell from 38.2% to 9.9% and from 30.4% to 3.6%, respectively.

The decline in poverty across all religious and social groups over the past decade reflects the combined effects of sustained economic growth and targeted welfare interventions. Despite episodes of political polarization and persistent identity-based tensions, the data point to a more inclusive development trajectory than is widely recognized.

The reduction in poverty among Muslims – one of India’s most disadvantaged urban communities – is particularly notable. It indicates that government policies, both universal and targeted, have benefited people across religious lines. Similarly, the narrowing of poverty gaps between historically marginalized castes reflects meaningful progress toward greater equality.

All of this suggests that the Modi government’s policies have benefited all segments of Indian society, not just select political constituencies or groups. The data support the view that its economic policies have been broadly inclusive, resulting in widespread welfare gains. By ensuring that all segments of society enjoy the benefits of growth, India is upholding the dignity of every citizen and fulfilling a fundamental responsibility of democratic governance.



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Customs Commission's delay on origin verification guideline causes revenue losses, operational inefficiencies

By Eyasu Zekarias

The Ethiopian Customs Commission's prolonged failure to approve the Origin Verification Guideline (OVG) has led to significant government revenue losses and reduced operational efficiency, according to a recent audit report. The draft guideline, designed to streamline customs procedures and ensure appropriate tariffs are applied by verifying the country of origin of imports, has remained pending for over a year without formal approval or implementation.

The absence of a clear framework for origin verification has disrupted tariff reforms, causing procedural bottlenecks that resulted in both uncollected taxes and inflated tax burdens. The Tariff Classification and Country of Origin Directorate completed the draft OVG in the 2023/24 fiscal year and submitted it to the Customs Operations Sector. However, despite the elapsed time, the directive has neither been reviewed nor disseminated to branch offices for enforcement.

The audit highlighted how this inaction has impaired the efficiency of tax collection in key sectors such as agriculture, directly affecting the national treasury's revenue intake. While Commission officials cited the need to incorporate recent African

Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) implementation rules into the guideline as justification for the delay, the Federal Auditor General's office rejected this rationale. The auditors argued that pending improvements should not have stalled the immediate approval and implementation of the directive.

Questions about the Commission's internal processes were further raised, as officials claimed to have verified the authenticity of 212 origin certificates between fiscal years 2014 and 2016 EC but failed to provide documentary evidence to substantiate these claims.

The report also criticized the Commission's failure to fully leverage technology and improve inter-agency collaboration. While plans exist to link Ethiopia's electronic single-window customs system with counterparts in Kenya, Djibouti, and other COMESA member states, progress remains limited to preliminary contract negotiations, with no tangible results achieved.

Moreover, the Commission has yet to fully implement its electronic tariff book system or integrate its single-window platform with key government bodies such as the Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Industry, and the Investment Commission—missing critical opportunities for streamlined and



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Audit uncovers 22-year gap in Environmental Regulation Implementation

By Eyasu Zekarias

An audit by the Federal Auditor General has revealed a critical two-decade-long gap in the implementation of Ethiopia's environmental protection laws, raising concerns about the country's ability to safeguard its natural resources. The report highlights significant shortcomings in the legal framework that have hindered effective enforcement and oversight since the enactment of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Proclamation No. 299/2003.

Environmental impact assessments are vital tools globally used to evaluate the potential effects of development projects on the environment and communities before work commences. Their purpose is to prevent or mitigate harm to ecosystems, public health, and local populations.

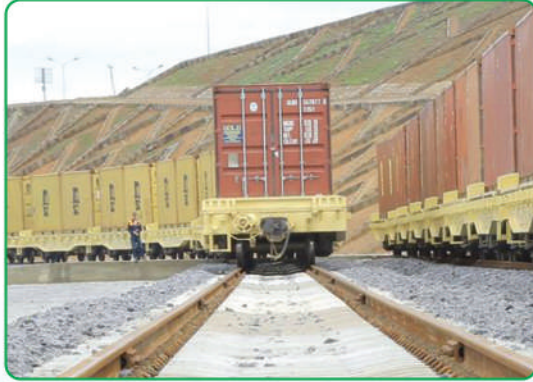
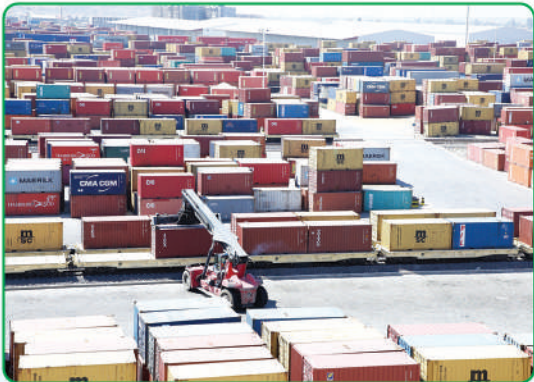
However, the audit found that due to the absence of necessary supporting regulations, Ethiopia's EIA law has failed to achieve its intended impact for 22 years. The report points to serious deficiencies stemming from this regulatory void, including the lack of official guidance on how EIA reports should be prepared, reviewed, and evaluated. This absence of a standardized legal process has led to confusion, overlapping responsibilities, and ineffective assessments.

Public participation, a cornerstone of effective environmental oversight, is also inadequately addressed. The audit notes that there are no clear guidelines defining when and how local communities and other stakeholders should be involved in the EIA process, undermining

efficient customs operations. The audit concluded that these unfulfilled technological initiatives have rendered Ethiopia's customs processes technologically outdated and inefficient, hampering trade facilitation and revenue generation.

The Ethiopian Customs Commission now faces mounting pressure to expedite the approval and operationalization of the Origin Verification Guideline and to embrace digital modernization to support economic growth and ensure effective tariff collection in line with regional trade commitments.

AUCTION RESULT Thursday, August 21 st , 2025		The 30 th OMO auction result for Liquidity-Absorbing Open Market Operation	
Auction No.	OMO-Auction No.30	Total allotted amount (in Millions of Birr):	99,500.00
Date of Auction	August 21, 2025	Fixed Interest Rate	15%
Type of Operations	2-Weeks-Deposit Taking Operation	Start date of the operations	August 21, 2025
Total amount of bids submitted by participants (in Millions of Birr)	99,500.00	Maturity date of the operations	September 4, 2025
Number of bidders	11	Settlement Date	August 21, 2025



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Goh Betch Bank:	Hibret Bank:	Hijra Bank:	Lion Int'l Bank:
912	54.5	4.8	27.3
(255%)	(20%)	(264%)	(5%)

Major road project enhances Djibouti's strategic role

By our staff reporter

The strategic significance of Djibouti's ports for landlocked central Ethiopia is set to be strengthened by a major new road project that has just begun.

In 2023, the World Bank approved full financing for the highly anticipated 144 km expressway connecting Mieso to Dire Dawa in eastern Ethiopia.

This project is a game-changer for the Ethio-Djibouti Transport Corridor, a key logistics route, and has been in the works for some time.

Construction will be undertaken by two Chinese companies: the China Civil Engineering Construction Corporation (CCECC), known for its major infrastructure projects in Ethiopia, and the Sichuan Road and Bridge Group, according to the Ethiopian Roads Administration.

The project will be divided into two sections: a 73 km stretch from Mieso (294 km east of Addis Ababa) to Beki, and a 71 km section from Beki to Dire Dawa, which will connect to the existing Dire Dawa-Dewale expressway leading to the Djibouti border.

Financed by a 62.4 billion birr fund from the World Bank's International Development Association (IDA), the project is expected to be completed within 48 months.

Currently, the 144 km road between Mieso and Dire Dawa is a gravel track adjacent to the Addis Ababa-Djibouti railway line.

Its poor condition fails to accommodate the heavy truck traffic that is essential for accessing Ethiopia's primary port in Djibouti.

As a result, many drivers are forced to take a 200 km detour via Dengego, a route through the Hararge highlands that is also unsuitable for heavy trucks.

The new Mieso-Dire Dawa expressway will significantly reduce the distance to Djibouti, with logistics experts estimating it will cut at least 146 kilometers from the journey compared to the longer Galafi-Mille alternative.

Upgrading this route to a four-lane expressway will decrease transport time, improve road safety, lower fuel and vehicle maintenance costs, and reduce pollution.

This upgrade is crucial for supporting Ethiopia's economic growth and social development by enhancing the efficiency and capacity of this vital trade artery.

Experts emphasize that the new road will strengthen the connection between Mieso and Dire Dawa, the largest city in eastern Ethiopia and a key logistics and industrial hub, cutting the distance to the port from Addis Ababa by over 100 km.

“The project, which aligns with the railway network, will solidify Djibouti as Ethiopia's nearest sea outlet,” they stated.

While some experts point out that the port of Assab in Eritrea is roughly 20 km closer to central Ethiopia than the route to Djibouti via Galafi, the railway linking Addis Ababa

to Djibouti measures only 750 km.

An expert in cargo movement stated, “The new road from Mieso to Dire Dawa aligns with the railway line, and its upgrade will significantly shorten the effective road distance. This makes the Djibouti route the most viable option for Ethiopian truck drivers and enhances the strategic importance of Djibouti's ports for Ethiopia.”

Ethiopia currently connects to Djibouti through three main routes: Belho, Galafi, and Dewale. Users of the Galafi route frequently express concerns about the poor condition of the road network within Djibouti, which the Djiboutian administration attributes to climate change

and has pledged to improve. Over 95% of Ethiopia's import-export trade by volume depends on the Addis-Djibouti corridor.

The World Bank reports that the project will also create opportunities for private sector involvement in operating freight truck terminals. The Addis-Djibouti Regional Economic Corridor project is a priority for international partners in the Horn of Africa, aiming to connect hinterlands to ports and markets to boost regional trade.

Another segment of the Ethiopia-Djibouti Transport Corridor Project, which includes the 125 km Adama-Awash and 72 km Awash-Mieso roads, is expected to be implemented under a different approach.

CSO's struggle despite conflict and funding challenges

By Eyasu Zekarias

Ongoing conflicts in Ethiopia over the past four years have severely impacted the operations of civil society organizations (CSOs), hindering their ability to work effectively in many regions. The country's precarious security situation was underscored in the recently released 2025 Global Peace Index (GPI), which ranked Ethiopia 138th out of 163 countries, identifying it as one of the least conducive environments for peace and highly at risk of conflict.

One affected organization is the Beza Posterity Development Organization (BPDO), a longstanding civil society group operating in Ethiopia for 25 years. Founder and CEO Sehidi Ahmed described the persistent security challenges, especially in parts of the Amhara region, as major obstacles to fulfilling their mission. “Being physically present is critical for effective project implementation and evaluation, but in conflict-affected areas such as North Wollo and West Gojjam, this is often

impossible,” he explained.

The disrupted operations have also hampered efforts to monitor human rights violations. Ahmed highlighted how the lack of peace prevents CSOs from controlling abuses and noted that educational activities have suffered, with many students unable to return to school in some conflict-affected areas.

CSOs face severe constraints in contributing to peace-building and human rights oversight. The 2025 GPI report pointed out that exclusion from legitimate peace processes diminishes the impact of civil society. Furthermore, widespread mistrust from both governmental authorities and conflict parties, coupled with ongoing insecurity, limits the capacity of organizations to monitor violations and advocate effectively.

Ahmed expressed frustration with the current conditions, stating, “It remains a challenge that we do not have the environment necessary for our work to be as effective as we desire,” emphasizing that physical presence—essential for success—is frequently unattainable in

volatile zones.

Beyond security challenges, budgetary constraints are crippling many CSOs, including BPDO's sister organization, the Redemption Generation Development Organization. This group is actively seeking new funding sources amid cuts that have forced the discontinuation of some tuberculosis (TB) programs, although it continues its HIV prevention efforts in 116 districts across the Amhara region.

Founded in 2000 by a youth group in Kombolcha, Amhara region, BPDO began as an HIV/AIDS club and has since evolved into a prominent local NGO dedicated to addressing a wide range of health, socio-economic, and development issues throughout Ethiopia.

Operating under the banner “Do Your Part,” BPDO remains committed to confronting the country's pressing challenges despite operational hurdles. The organization's experience encapsulates the broader struggle CSOs face in Ethiopia—balancing resilience and commitment against security risks and dwindling resources.

War's devastation leaves Tigray's textile industry struggling to recover

By Eyasu Zekarias

The once-thriving textile and garment sector in Ethiopia's Tigray region, which served as a major economic backbone, has been severely devastated by the conflict in northern Ethiopia over the past two years. While the physical destruction and supply chain disruptions have been widely reported, a new study reveals that the greatest challenge facing investors and businesses attempting to rebuild is a chronic lack of capital.

The study, titled “Rebuilding Tigray's Textile and Garment Industry: The Role of Vocational Skills Development,” documents extensive financial losses and infrastructural damage across the region's industries. It reports that approximately 60 factories and over 6,300 small and

medium-sized enterprises were destroyed during the war.

One prominent example is the Almeda Textile Factory, which before the war employed 5,300 permanent workers. Post-conflict, it has restarted operations but with a drastically reduced workforce of 1,800. Gebretsadik Gebru, a lead researcher on the study, shared with Capital that the factory's monthly revenue plummeted from 70 million birr pre-war to just 5.5 million birr in 2024. Their production equipment and raw materials were entirely looted or destroyed, compounding recovery efforts.

The study, based on interviews with industry leaders, identifies financial constraints as the primary obstacle to business revival. The Almeda factory's manager noted that out of 51 vehicles

previously owned in Mekele, only one remains functional—the rest were damaged or stolen—forcing the company to rent transport at additional cost.

Beyond funding shortages, the war has triggered a severe skills gap. Thousands of skilled workers fled the region, forcing companies like MAA Clothing Factory to replace them with low-skill labor, thereby incurring extra expenses for training. The study emphasizes vocational skills development (VSD) programs as critical to rebuilding a capable workforce for a modern and resilient textile industry.

VSD programs would enable retraining of displaced workers and develop new talent attuned to the industry's specific needs. However, the report highlights a disconnect between general technical and vocational education and training

institutions (TVET) and the specialized requirements of the textile sector. While most TVET programs focus on trades like metalworking, Tigray's textile industry demands specialized training on machinery such as ring frame and knitting machines.

To address these gaps, the study recommends close collaboration between TVET institutions and industry stakeholders to ensure that training matches both traditional textile skills and emerging technologies.

Gebretsadik called for coordinated actions by government, investors, and international organizations to support comprehensive recovery. He urged the creation of special economic zones and tax incentives to attract investment. Additionally, the study called for accessible low-interest loans, wage subsidies for rehired workers, and grants to support small businesses.

Crucially, there were appeals for the federal government to establish a development fund in partnership with local authorities to catalyze the sector's revival.

BANKS ASSET IN BILLION ETB AS OF JUNE 30, 2024

Oromia Bank:

68

(4%)

Ramis Bank:

2.3

(64%)

Shabelle Bank:

3.8

(2.6%)

Sidama Bank:

2.6

(98%)

Siinqee Bank:

60

(72 %)

Regulatory hurdles delay . . .

Continued from page 1

Protection Authority (EPA) as part of the approval process. Tesfaye argued that the requirements regarding specific growing zones, reproductive isolation, and the use of isogenic maize lines as a "refuge" are impractical.

Experts in the sector agree, stating that these conditions unnecessarily limit seed distribution and infringe upon farmers' rights.

They contend that enforcing such agricultural regulations falls outside the EPA's mandate and is more a matter of personal opinion than legal authority.

They argue that once the EPA grants environmental release approval, subsequent issues of seed multiplication and distribution should be managed by the Ministry of Agriculture in alignment with farmers' interests.

"Unless the EPA changes its conditions, it may delay the adequate availability of seeds for farmers by another year," the experts cautioned.

Tesfaye noted that such restrictive practices are not present in the 35 other countries that have adopted similar GM technologies. "We are currently working to persuade the authority and other relevant government bodies to lift these

preconditions. I remain hopeful that they will amend them," he said.

EIAR is currently conducting demonstration farming to showcase new seed technology to seed companies and farmers, rather than implementing full-scale multiplication.

Several organizations, including MIDROC, Luna, the International Livestock Research Institute, and Ethio Vegfru, are testing the new seeds on their own plots.

"Our goal is to expand seed access to farmers in the near future," Tesfaye stated. EIAR is also conducting demonstrations at its research sites in Melkasa, Dera, and Mieso.

The approved varieties—WE3106B (insect-protected) and WE7210B and WE8216B (insect-protected and drought-tolerant)—were developed through the public-private TELA Maize project.

These varieties are designed to protect against destructive pests like stem borers and fall armyworms, which have long troubled Ethiopian farmers.

These new varieties offer a yield advantage of up to 60% over conventional maize. Experts emphasize that the transgenic maize improves grain quality, reduces



the reliance on chemical insecticides, lowers production costs, and minimizes environmental and health risks.

Tesfaye described the commercial

approval as a significant milestone for Ethiopian agriculture. The TELA maize seed will be available to smallholder farmers royalty-free through local seed

Public projects plagued . . .

Continued from page 1

to wasteful spending and stalled development efforts.

Officials from the Ministry of Planning and Development (MoPD) attributed these challenges to several factors, including difficulties in land acquisition and boundary enforcement, ongoing security concerns, disrupted financial flows, design changes, inflationary pressures, foreign exchange shortages, and the limited capacity of contractors.

Further compounding the issue, the audit revealed that funds disbursed between 2020 and 2024/25 were sometimes allocated to projects that either failed to commence or should have been completed earlier, highlighting glaring gaps in project monitoring and management.

Significantly, the report exposes grave financial irregularities and embezzlement at several universities, including Addis Ababa University, Dire Dawa University, Wolaita Sodo University, Wachemo University, and Haramaya University.

For instance, Addis Ababa University received over 437 million birr for 13 projects—such as a student dormitory, renovations at the Yared School of Music, and a café upgrade—that never started and for which funds were not returned. Similarly, Dire Dawa University was allocated nearly 603 million birr for various construction projects from 2021 to 2024, including an 11 million birr advance for a guest house, yet work had not begun.

The situation is echoed at Haramaya University and Wolaita Sodo University, with allocations of 90.4 million birr and 333.6 million birr, respectively, for

incomplete projects.

Moreover, the audit found that more than 2.9 billion birr was paid for projects at universities that had already been completed—1.4 billion birr at Wolaita Sodo and over 1.8 billion birr at Wachemo University—representing funds spent without proper justification or return.

The report also highlighted over 1.11 billion birr allocated for five universities' projects that were diverted for purposes other than their original intent, underscoring a lack of accountability.

In total, the audit identified around 4.74 billion birr disbursed for either completed or unstarted projects across multiple universities, funds which have yet to be reimbursed.

The Federal Auditor General has urged urgent reforms to establish a robust project management and monitoring system to safeguard public resources and improve efficiency. Recommended measures include implementing a modern, technology-driven information system to track projects from initiation to completion, ensuring mandatory environmental and research assessments before project commencement, and improving oversight to prevent misuse of funds.

The Auditor General further emphasized the need for stringent accountability mechanisms targeting individuals responsible for financial mismanagement and called for sustained capacity building and technical support for project implementers across all levels.

companies, potentially saving farmers at least USD 750 per hectare in pesticide costs.

Additionally, the NVRC has approved the release of Bt-GT cotton, engineered to withstand bollworms, a major pest affecting cotton crops. This approval is crucial for Ethiopia's textile sector, which is projected to demand 200,000 metric tons annually within two years—far exceeding the current domestic production of 50,000 metric tons.

Field trials indicate that the GM cotton yields between 48-57 quintals per hectare, significantly higher than the 32

quintals from local varieties.

The adoption of these GM crops aligns with Ethiopia's 15-year National Cotton Development Strategy, aimed at producing 1.1 million metric tons of cotton and generating up to USD 125 million in annual export revenue. This initiative is part of a broader effort to position Ethiopia as a leader in Africa's textile industry and to combat the issue of illegally imported unregulated seeds.

Experts believe that the commercial release of TELA maize and Bt-GT cotton marks a transformative moment for Ethiopia's agricultural sector.

ECMA issues new directive to enhance transparency in Pooled Investment Funds

By Eyasu Zekarias

The Ethiopian Capital Market Authority (ECMA) has introduced a draft directive aimed at boosting investor confidence and strengthening oversight within the country's emerging capital market. The new guideline focuses on improving transparency and regulatory standards for Collective Investment Schemes (CIS),

including Money Market Funds, Mutual Funds, and Real Estate Investment Funds.

As part of a broader effort to foster capital market development, the directive sets clear rules governing fund operations and mandates detailed disclosure requirements designed to protect investors and promote market integrity. It applies to any entity seeking to establish or operate investment

schemes in Ethiopia or provide securities representing units in such schemes.

Under the directive, investment schemes must be registered as joint stock companies, private limited companies, limited partnerships, or investment companies recognized by ECMA. The guideline defines a scheme as any securities-based fundraising operation involving the management of assets to enable participation or profit-sharing among investors.

A key feature of the policy is its emphasis on comprehensive information disclosure. Public funds offering units to investors are required to prepare a general promotional document approved by ECMA. This document must provide clear, accurate details on the fund's investment policy, capital structure, issued securities, dividend distribution policies, and methods for determining distributable profits.

To ensure ongoing transparency, the directive mandates regular disclosure of

financial results, performance metrics, risks, and other material information necessary for informed investment decisions. Funds are required to submit mandatory annual and semi-annual reports detailing portfolio composition, asset valuations, net asset value changes, and updates on exposure to risks including concentration, foreign exchange, and liquidity risks.

The regulation also addresses potential conflicts of interest, obliging fund operators to act honestly, fairly, and in the best interests of unit holders. Operators must implement clear policies to manage conflicts, especially concerning related-party transactions.

By imposing higher standards of accountability and transparency on pooled investment schemes, ECMA aims to attract a wider pool of investors, stimulate financial innovation, and underpin Ethiopia's economic growth with a robust and well-regulated capital market.

ICO Indicator prices (US cents/lb) 21-Aug-25

I-CIP

325.07

2.89%

↑

Colombian Milds

396.86

2.93%

↑

Other Milds

399.08

2.91%

↑

Brazilian Naturals

368.25

3.10%

↑

Robusta

220.77

2.54%

↑

*1lb=0.45kg



China-Africa strengthen partnership focused on vocational training

By Eyasu Zekarias

To enhance Africa's industrial development and workforce skills, China, the African Union (AU) and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) have launched a new training seminar in Addis Ababa. The initiative, which is part of the "Luban

Workshop" program, aims to address the worsening youth unemployment problem the continent is facing and meet the demand for skilled labour. The "Overseas Seminar on Vocational Education Management Capacity Building for the Luban Workshop", is a practical step taken by Chinese President Xi Jinping to fulfill his commitments at the China-

Africa Cooperation Forum (FOCAC). The seminar is based on the African Union's Agenda 2063, which prioritizes workforce development. In his opening remarks, Amb. Jiang Feng, Head of the Mission of China to the African Union, explained that the main driver of competition and development in the new era is human resource skills and technology.

Ambassador Feng said, "The friendship between China and Africa has been tested in practice," and said, "Our practical cooperation in the areas of industrialization, agricultural modernization and talent development is producing continuous fruitful results." Feng, who noted that China has trained more than 100,000 people from Africa through various programs, emphasized adherence to the principle of "it is better to teach fishing than to give fish." Sophia Ashipala, Head of Education Division of the African Union Commission, explained in detail the worsening demographic problems on the continent. Ashipala said, "About 10-12 million young people join the African labour market every year, but only 3 million formal employment opportunities are created." She noted that by 2025, approximately 121 million African youth will be unemployed or unable to access NEETs ("Not in Education, Employment, or Training"). Ashipala, emphasized that partnerships such as the Luban workshop are critical to creating a workforce equipped with green, digital and technical skills necessary to sustain innovation and sustainable development. Luban Workshop, named after Luban, the famous carpenter from ancient China, is an international professional education platform. Combining educational and practical training, it provides advanced equipment and highly qualified instructors. The program aims to share China's professional education models and technologies, develop top technical experts and increase the independent development potential of African countries, and there are currently 17 such workshops in Africa, with 10 more planned to be built.

Attacks on aid workers surge in Ethiopia amid global humanitarian funding crisis

By Eyasu Zekarias

A new report, the "Aid Worker Security Report 2025," reveals a dramatic increase in attacks on humanitarian aid workers in Ethiopia, positioning the country among the top 10 most dangerous places for aid personnel worldwide last year. The surge in violence makes 2024 the deadliest year on record for humanitarian workers globally, with Ethiopia accounting for 35 fatalities.

The report highlights a particularly alarming rise in attacks on aid vehicles and workers traveling by road, especially in the Amhara region. Armed groups have frequently targeted and intercepted vehicles and facilities marked with humanitarian aid symbols, resulting in a troubling increase in kidnappings, injuries, and deaths caused by small-arms fire. This pattern of violence is spreading to other parts of Ethiopia in new and varied ways, diverging from previous years' trends.

Beyond direct physical attacks, humanitarian operations in Ethiopia are grappling with administrative obstacles and what the report terms "hostility from host governments," which have forced many international aid organizations to scale back or suspend activities. Consequently, local aid groups, often lacking sufficient resources, bear the growing burden of ensuring security for their staff.

The escalating violence correlates closely with a severe global funding crisis affecting the humanitarian sector. The report warns that a significant disruption in U.S. government aid—the world's largest donor—by 2025 has slashed nearly a third of total humanitarian funds. This sudden shortfall has compelled many organizations to close programs and reduce staff, exacerbating operational vulnerabilities. Funding cuts have also intensified security risks, in some cases triggering attacks by disgruntled former employees or communities adversely affected by service reductions. The reduction in financial resources has diminished many agencies' capacity to mitigate risks, leaving aid workers exposed to higher dangers.

Sumitomo Corporation secures political risk insurance for its Safaricom Ethiopia Investment

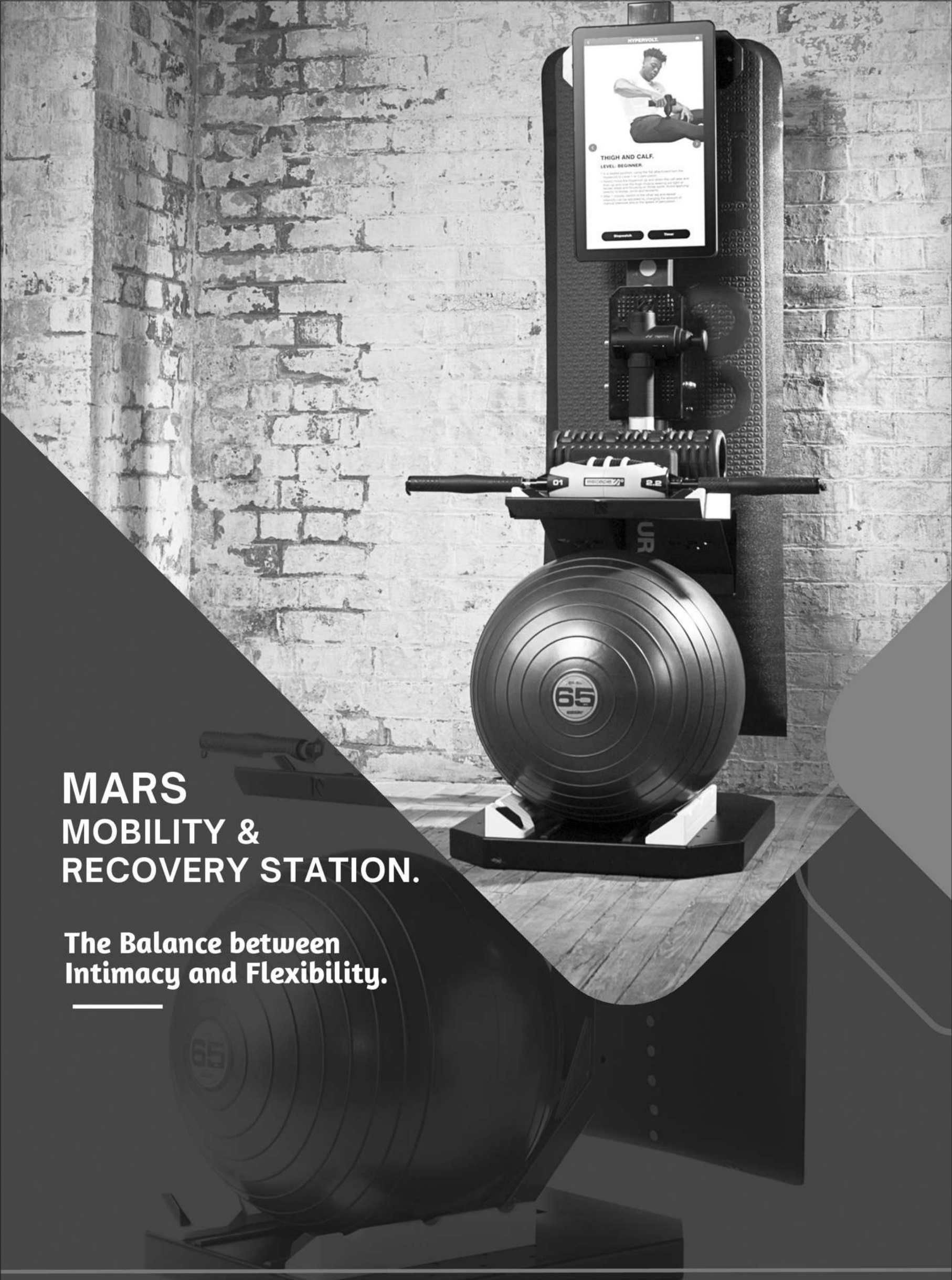
By Eyasu Zekarias

Sumitomo Corporation, a major Japanese investor in Safaricom Telecommunications Ethiopia Plc, has obtained political risk insurance to safeguard its significant investment in Ethiopia's telecom sector. The insurance coverage, provided by the African Trade and Investment Development Insurance (ATIDI), is supported by Japan's Nippon Export and Investment Insurance (NEXI) and marks a historic agreement aimed at reducing risks for foreign investors in Africa. The ten-year insurance policy is a critical element of the largest foreign direct investment (FDI) ever made in Ethiopia and one of the largest Japanese-backed projects on the continent. Safaricom Ethiopia, which secured its first mobile network license in 2021, counts Sumitomo Corporation, Vodacom, Vodafone Group, and other founding members among its key stakeholders. This coverage protects against multiple political

risks, including government confiscation of assets, currency inconvertibility, and breach of contract. Such financial guarantees are essential for mitigating uncertainty in complex infrastructure projects, thereby strengthening investor confidence. The announcement was made during a high-level side meeting at the Ninth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD9) themed "Unlocking Japan's Private Sector Investment in Africa." Manuel Moses, CEO of ATIDI, emphasized the importance of innovative partnerships and risk mitigation solutions in unlocking Africa's vast investment potential. He noted that collaboration to support projects like Safaricom Ethiopia ushers in a new era for Japanese private sector participation across the continent. NEXI, set to become an ATIDI shareholder in 2023, is actively expanding its support to Japanese companies venturing into African markets, using the Ethiopian telecom project as a flagship example.

In a related development, ATIDI and Mitsubishi UFJ Financial Group (MUFG), one of the world's leading financial institutions, signed a Memorandum of Understanding to enhance cooperation in providing risk mitigation solutions for Japanese investors across Africa. MUFG's role focuses on mobilizing international and Japanese capital, while ATIDI offers insurance and guarantees to foster investment. Ankit Khandelwal, Director for Africa sovereigns and development finance institutions at MUFG, stated that these initiatives align with TICAD9's objectives of improving quality infrastructure, accelerating energy transitions, and strengthening public-private partnerships. This expanding network of strategic partnerships between African and Japanese institutions symbolizes a shared commitment to transforming Africa's potential into long-term sustainable prosperity through targeted investment and collaboration.

In response to these challenges, humanitarian groups are consolidating resources by sharing office spaces and leveraging new technologies such as artificial intelligence to improve operational efficiency. Additionally, many have integrated their security and aid operations units to better address mounting threats. However, experts caution that such strategies can only partially alleviate the impact of shrinking budgets. On the diplomatic front, the report notes some progress, particularly with the adoption of United Nations Security Council Resolution No. 2730 (2024). This resolution calls for accountability and justice for attacks on aid workers and is expected to strengthen political pressure and support for protective measures. Despite the unprecedented difficulties facing the humanitarian sector, the report underscores the urgent need for sustained international commitments to safeguard aid workers in Ethiopia's conflict-affected regions and to ensure the continued delivery of life-saving assistance. As violence and funding shortfalls threaten to cripple aid efforts, renewed global solidarity and action remain critical to protecting those risking their lives to support vulnerable communities.



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Spotlight

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Ethiopian Startup launches first-ever bilingual AI Assistant Supporting Amharic and English

An innovative Ethiopian technology company, artificialintelligence.et, has announced the launch of the country’s first bilingual AI assistant capable of fluent conversation in both Amharic and English. This groundbreaking AI aims to transform customer services in sectors like banking and telecommunications by providing instant, multilingual support across popular platforms including WhatsApp, Telegram, and web.

Unlike conventional chatbots that rely on fixed scripts, this AI uses advanced large language model technology to understand and respond naturally in Amharic, addressing a critical language gap in digital services. Founder and CEO Natnael Zeleke, a self-taught coder who began his journey with limited resources, emphasized the assistant’s role in enhancing accessibility and modernizing essential services throughout Ethiopia.

Key features include answering common questions, calculating loans, locating ATMs, and real-time information delivery, supported by an admin panel for service providers to monitor and optimize interactions.

The company plans to initially focus on Ethiopia’s high-demand financial and telecom markets, where efficient multilingual support can greatly reduce operational costs while improving customer satisfaction.

Artificialintelligence.et’s launch marks a significant step in Ethiopia’s digital transformation, showcasing local talent’s ability to meet unique language and service needs with cutting-edge AI technology.

GERD Completion Marks New Era for Wider Nile Basin Region: Expert

The completion of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) stands as a historic milestone, ushering in a transformative era for Ethiopia and the broader Nile Basin region, a senior water resources expert affirmed.

Recently, Ethiopia officially announced the completion of the GERD, the largest hydropower project in Africa, which is set to be inaugurated soon.

Widely regarded as a game-changer, the GERD has drawn global attention for its immense potential to reshape the region’s economic future, accelerate social development, and influence the environmental landscape.

In an exclusive interview with ENA, Senior Water Resources Engineer Getu Biftu said the GERD’s completion brings substantial environmental, economic, and social benefits to Ethiopia and the broader Nile Basin region.

IFC Launches Initiatives to Address Gender-Based Violence and Harassment in Workplaces

IFC has unveiled two key initiatives, the Gender-Based Violence Center of Expertise and the Respect@Work Program, to address gender-based violence and harassment (GBVH) in workplaces around the globe. These initiatives aim to create safer, more inclusive business environments, recognizing that eliminating GBVH is essential to advancing gender equality, improving business performance, and unlocking the full economic potential of women and other marginalized groups.

The Gender-Based Violence Center of Expertise will serve as a global knowledge hub, supporting IFC clients and private sector actors with toolkits, training, and provide advisory support to better prevent and respond to GBVH. The Center will also help companies worldwide implement policies and practices that contribute to safer, more resilient work environments and communities, fostering a culture of respect and accountability.

BOYS AT WORK



PHOTO: Anteneh Akilu

NICE GLASSES



PHOTO: Anteneh Akilu

NO COMMENT



PHOTO: Anteneh Akilu

Yango helps car owners via its advanced rental program

Yango Ethiopia, part of the international tech company Yango Group is giving car owners a new way to maximize income from vehicles they currently rent to drivers with a daily rental model. By registering their cars with one of Yango’s franchise partners in Ethiopia, car owners gain not only the potential to earn up to 120,000 ETB per month but also the tools to directly manage drivers, track trips, and monitor financial performance in real time.

Unlike traditional daily rental arrangements, where car owners receive a fixed fee with little visibility on how their vehicles are being used, Yango’s model keeps owners in control. Yango will support vehicle owners in hiring and onboarding qualified drivers, optimizing trip volumes, and reducing operational costs. Through the Yango platform, owners receive detailed reports on completed trips, total revenue, and expenses, ensuring full transparency and better decision-making.

EZEMA, media association demand disclosure of whereabouts of two disappeared journalists

The Ethiopian Citizens for Social Justice (EZEMA) party and the Ethiopian Media Professionals Association (EMPA) have urged the government to disclose the whereabouts of two journalists, Abdulsemed Mohammed and Yonas Amare, who they allege were taken in an “extra-legal manner.”

Abdulsemed, host of the program Kidame Gebeya on Ahadu Radio 94.3, was reportedly apprehended on 12 August, in the Haile Garment area of Addis Abeba by unidentified individuals. Four days later, security forces allegedly raided his office, leading to reports that government forces were responsible for his disappearance.

Similarly, Yonas, a journalist with Reporter newspaper, was reportedly taken from his home in the Koye Feche condominium area of Sheger City on the night of 14 August by masked individuals, according to local security guards.

Both organizations said the whereabouts of the two journalists remain unknown. Family members told media they had searched all 11 sub-city police stations in Addis Abeba and the Federal Police Commission but were informed the journalists were not in custody.

DNDi awarded the prestigious Hideyo Noguchi Africa Prize for developing new treatments for neglected diseases

The global not-for-profit medical research organization Drugs for Neglected Diseases initiative (DNDi) has been awarded the fifth Hideyo Noguchi Africa Prize in the medical services category in a ceremony held today in Tokyo in the presence of Their Majesties the Emperor and Empress of Japan, and hosted by Shigeru Ishiba, Prime Minister of Japan.

This prestigious prize, awarded every three years, is the highest medical honour from the Government of Japan. It was established in honour of the medical scientist Dr Hideyo Noguchi (1876-1928), who devoted his life to bacteriological research and died while studying yellow fever in Africa. DNDi has been recognized for its work in developing and delivering new treatments for neglected diseases.

‘This recognition is proof of the power of a model for medical innovation driven purely by patients’ needs, where African scientists are leading the charge against diseases that have long burdened our communities,’ said Prof Samuel Kariuki, DNDi Continental Lead Africa & Eastern Africa Director. ‘DNDi was founded with the vision that Africa should not have to wait for others to solve our health challenges. We remain committed to ensuring that no disease is overlooked simply because it affects the poorest and most vulnerable.’

Capital

NEWS

IN BRIEF

South Sudan's President Appoints Daughter as Envoy

South Sudanese President Salva Kiir has appointed his daughter, Adut Salva Kiir, as Senior Presidential Envoy for Special Programmes, a move seen by analysts as part of a broader trend of consolidating power within the ruling elite. The position was previously held by Dr. Benjamin Bol Mel, who was elevated to vice president in February. The reinstatement of the post, now occupied by Adut Kiir, has drawn criticism over perceived nepotism and concerns about growing political dynasties within the country's leadership. Adut Kiir, who has recently been engaged in humanitarian work through her non-profit, the Adut Salva Kiir Foundation, has not held a formal government position before. Her new role places her among the president's closest aides. The appointment comes amid a wider pattern of children of prominent liberation-era figures being placed in senior government positions...James Boboya, a senior policy analyst, told Radio Tamazuj Wednesday that the trend reflects a move toward what he described as "inheritance governance." "When political power is perceived to be slipping, leaders begin transitioning influence to close family members or relatives. This centralizes power and redistributes state resources within a narrow inner circle," Boboya said.

Radio Tamazuj

South Sudan, Djibouti Sign Deal to Develop Trade Corridor

South Sudan and Djibouti signed an agreement Monday to develop a major trade corridor along

the White Nile River, a project aimed at giving the landlocked East African nation new access to sea routes and boosting regional commerce. The memorandum of understanding, signed by the Djibouti Ports and Free Zones Authority and South Sudan's government, focuses on building river and dry ports in several South Sudanese towns, including Juba, Bor, Malakal and Renk. South Sudan's Transport Minister, Dr. Lam Akol Ajawin, called the signing a "significant milestone" for cooperation with Djibouti. He said the project would boost trade, advance logistics and foster economic growth in the Great Lakes region once implemented. The initiative is part of the White Nile Corridor development plan, which will use two main logistics routes to connect South Sudan to Djibouti's ports, according to a statement from the Djibouti authority. One route will move goods by road from Djibouti through Ethiopia to Nasir in South Sudan, and then by barge along the Sobat and White Nile rivers. A second corridor will connect to Port Sudan, with road transport to Kosti, Sudan, before transferring to barges on the White Nile heading south. The Djibouti authority said the corridors will also be supported by air cargo solutions for high-value shipments from Asia.

Radio Tamazuj

IGAD Sets Sights on Peace and Prosperity in New 2026–2030 Strategic Plan

The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) has unveiled its 2026–2030 Strategic Plan, setting out a renewed vision of peace, resilience, and prosperity for the Horn of Africa. The plan builds on lessons learned from the outgoing 2021–2025 framework, a period defined as much by ambition as by unprecedented challenges. Speaking in Kampala during the launch, Dr

Willa Anthony Willa, IGAD's Director for Planning, Coordination, and Partnerships, said the new blueprint is as much about continuity as it is about recalibration...The outgoing strategy was designed to strengthen governance, food security, infrastructure, and integration, but it unfolded against a backdrop of turbulence. The pandemic disrupted economies and strained fragile health systems, while conflicts in Ethiopia, Somalia, and South Sudan diverted attention and resources from development priorities. Compounding matters, donor funding declined as traditional partners faced their own domestic pressures, slowing critical projects in agriculture, resource management, and infrastructure... The 2026–2030 plan will prioritize climate adaptation, sustainable agriculture, biodiversity protection, and renewable energy expansion. It will also emphasize food and nutrition security, strengthening regional value chains, and improving storage and distribution systems to safeguard livelihoods.

Monitor

New Bitcoin Institute to Focus on Africa

Human rights activists and technology leaders in Africa are working on developing original research into rising bitcoin usage on the continent as they seek ways to both boost financial inclusion and counter digital restrictions by authoritarian leaders. Anaïse Kanimba, the daughter of Paul Rusesabagina, the political activist whose story inspired the film Hotel Rwanda, is leading the new Africa Bitcoin Institute, which is being supported by organizations including the Human Rights Foundation and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Bitcoin use has grown on the continent in response to unstable local currencies, difficult and high-cost cross-border transactions, and as a store of value in the face

of rising inflation. But as much of the research on bitcoin has come from outside the continent, Kanimba told Semafor she is building a team to address a gap in the global bitcoin and digital currency narrative with African voices, data, and leadership: "We have a problematic cycle where African policymakers rely on global precedents rather than African realities when crafting digital currency policies," she said.

Semafor

Term of the Day

LEVERAGED BUYOUT

Definition

A leveraged buyout (LBO) involves one company acquiring another by financing most of the purchase through borrowed funds, typically by issuing bonds or securing loans. In this process, the company being acquired often has its assets used as collateral, alongside those of the acquiring company.

LBOs enable companies to make substantial acquisitions while preserving their capital, relying instead on the expected cash flows of the acquired firm to repay the debt. Noteworthy examples include the 2006 acquisition of Hospital Corp. of America and the 2021 Medline buyout, highlighting the resurgence of large-scale LBOs in the early 2020s.

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Feminist Government and Feminist Economics

■ Alazar Kebede

Feminist government and feminist economics are interconnected frameworks that challenge traditional political and economic systems by centering gender equity, dismantling structural inequalities, and redefining the goals of governance and economic organization. While traditional systems have often been built on patriarchal assumptions and gender-blind policies, feminist approaches aim to create inclusive, justice-oriented, and participatory structures that benefit all members of society.

A feminist government is one whose policies, decision-making structures, and institutional cultures are explicitly informed by feminist values. It does not merely include more women in leadership but actively works to dismantle systemic power imbalances and address how gender intersects with race, class, sexuality, disability, and other axes of identity.

Key principles include the following - Intersectionality: Recognizing that gender inequality interacts with other forms of oppression. Participatory democracy: Ensuring broad-based input from marginalized communities in policymaking. Care-centered policy: Valuing unpaid care work and social reproduction as central to societal functioning. Preventing gender-based violence: Embedding protections and prevention strategies into governance. Transparency and accountability: Making governance processes open and inclusive.

A feminist government might adopt: Gender-responsive budgeting: Assessing how fiscal policies impact different genders and allocating resources to reduce disparities. Parental leave equality: Encouraging shared caregiving responsibilities between genders. Violence prevention infrastructure: Strengthening legal systems to combat domestic and workplace abuse. Inclusive urban planning: Designing public spaces that are safe

and accessible for all.

There are examples in practice. Some countries have explicitly declared themselves feminist in governance: Sweden introduced a “Feminist Foreign Policy” in 2014, integrating gender equality into all diplomatic and development work. Canada has adopted a Feminist International Assistance Policy focusing on empowering women and girls globally. Iceland has consistently implemented policies addressing pay equity, parental leave, and representation.

What is Feminist Economics? Feminist economics is a field of economic thought that critiques mainstream economics for its gender-blind assumptions and neglect of unpaid labor. It seeks to redefine what counts as “productive” work and to address the power dynamics embedded in economic systems.

Core Critiques of Mainstream Economics includes the following. Exclusion of unpaid labor: Traditional GDP calculations ignore household and caregiving work, which disproportionately falls on women. Assumption of rational, self-interested agents: Overlooks cooperation, altruism, and social bonds as drivers of economic behavior. Market primacy: Fails to account for non-market systems of value exchange and mutual aid.

Goals of Feminist Economics includes the following: Valuing care work: Incorporating unpaid and underpaid care labor into economic indicators. Reducing inequality: Addressing wage gaps, occupational segregation, and barriers to workforce participation. Inclusive policy design: Analyzing economic policies for their gendered impacts. Rethinking growth metrics: Moving beyond GDP to measures like the Human Development Index, Genuine Progress Indicator, or Wellbeing Economy.

A feminist economic framework might recommend: Universal childcare and eldercare services to reduce unpaid labor burdens. Living wages and fair labor protections for traditionally feminized sectors like

nursing, teaching, and domestic work. Progressive taxation to fund social services that benefit marginalized groups. Public investment in social infrastructure alongside physical infrastructure.

Examples in Practice:- New Zealand introduced a Wellbeing Budget in 2019 that measures success by health, environment, and community indicators. Costa Rica has made significant investments in social services that support gender equality. Nordic countries integrate care policy, gender equality measures, and high female labor force participation rates into their economies.

Regarding the interconnection between Feminist Government and Feminist Economics, a feminist government uses feminist economics as its analytical backbone. Policy design and budgeting are informed by the recognition that economic systems shape—and are shaped by—gendered power relations. For example gender-responsive budgets reflect both feminist governance and feminist economic theory. Investments in care work address both the economic undervaluation of such labor and the governmental responsibility to support equality.

There are challenges and critiques which includes the following. Implementation gaps: Declaring feminist values does not guarantee policy coherence or measurable outcomes. Backlash: Feminist policies often face resistance from entrenched interests and cultural norms. Intersectional blind spots: Without constant attention to race, class, disability, and other axes, “feminist” policies risk serving only more privileged women.

Toc conclude, Feminist government and feminist economics represent transformative visions for political and economic life. They challenge the foundational assumptions of existing systems, revalue care, and strive for structural equity. While the journey toward these ideals is complex and often contested, the frameworks offer powerful tools for creating more just, humane, and sustainable societies.

Free and Fair Trade across Jigjiga Borders: Opportunities for the Somali Region and Ethiopia

■ By Mohammed Hassen Mohamed (Xareed)

1. Introduction to Free and Fair Trade

Free trade, characterized by balanced taxation and minimal bureaucratic hurdles, is essential for modern economic integration. In Jigjiga, the capital of Ethiopia’s Somali Region, trade is crucial for linking local businesses with federal markets in Addis Ababa and international partners. By reducing excessive restrictions like tariffs and quotas, and ensuring that fair taxes are paid without the threat of confiscation from border finance authorities, trade can thrive as a legitimate and profitable activity.

2. The Importance of Predictable Taxation

While taxation is vital for national development, excessive or unpredictable taxes can deter business growth. For traders in Jigjiga, paying high but transparent taxes provides legitimacy and protection within the federal system. This predictability enables businesses to plan, invest, and expand without fearing sudden confiscations or penalties at federal checkpoints. Such fairness fosters compliance and builds trust between Somali regional traders and federal institutions.

3. Reducing Rigid Control in Border Trading

Strict financial and customs controls often hinder trade, causing delays and increasing costs. When federal border controls are flexible and transparent, Somali regional traders can trust that their goods will reach Addis Ababa and other markets without unnecessary interruptions. This not only reduces corruption but also streamlines the trading system, facilitating smoother commercial flows throughout the Somali Region.

4. The Role of Jigjiga as a Trade Corridor

Jigjiga is strategically located as a border hub with direct access to Somalia and Djibouti, serving as a corridor for goods moving between Ethiopia’s hinterland and international markets. By minimizing restrictive trade measures and focusing on fair taxation, Jigjiga can establish itself as a reliable commercial gateway for imports and exports via Addis Ababa, significantly

enhancing Ethiopia’s overall trade volume.

5. Business Prospects in a Liberalized Trade System

A more liberalized trade system presents vast business opportunities. Somali regional traders, previously hindered by fears of confiscation or penalties, can now engage confidently in commerce across various sectors. Industries such as agriculture, textiles, livestock, and consumer goods stand to benefit, allowing entrepreneurs to expand production and distribution networks both within the Somali Region and in Ethiopia’s federal capital.

6. Market Opportunities Beyond Borders

Free trade not only opens doors within Jigjiga but also creates pathways to larger Ethiopian and international markets. With Addis Ababa as the country’s central economic hub, Somali regional traders have the chance to supply high-demand goods to urban consumers and industries. Similarly, products from Addis can be transported more efficiently to Jigjiga, ensuring that markets remain diverse, competitive, and inclusive.

7. Confidence Through Legal Protection

The assurance that goods will not be confiscated by federal finance border control is crucial for building traders' confidence. When businesses operate in a legally protected environment, they are more likely to comply with regulations, pay their taxes, and expand their operations. This sense of security enhances investor trust, attracts capital to the Somali Region, and ensures fair participation in Ethiopia's broader economy.

8. Job Creation and Youth Empowerment

A more transparent trading environment directly fosters job creation. As businesses grow, they need more workers in logistics, warehousing, sales, and transport. In Jigjiga, where youth unemployment is a pressing issue, trade liberalization opens doors for entrepreneurship and employment, empowering young people to contribute to Ethiopia's economic transformation.

9. Enhancing National Integration Through Trade

Trade serves to unite Ethiopia's diverse population.

As goods from the Somali region flow to Addis Ababa and products from other regions reach Jigjiga, cultural and economic ties are strengthened. This exchange promotes national cohesion, reduces marginalization, and positions the Somali Region as an equal contributor to the country's prosperity.

10. Competitiveness and Innovation

Opening Somali regional businesses to larger markets fosters competitiveness. Traders are compelled to improve product quality, adopt modern technologies, and enhance customer service to stay relevant. This competitive environment stimulates innovation, making businesses in Jigjiga stronger, more resilient, and better integrated into both national and regional economies.

11. Potential for Jigjiga as a Re-Export Center

Given its strategic location, Jigjiga has the potential to become a re-export hub, where goods imported via Djibouti or Somalia are processed, packaged, and distributed throughout Ethiopia. This opportunity diversifies the regional economy, creating new industries in logistics, packaging, and redistribution. Clear legal frameworks from Addis Ababa would facilitate this transformation, ensuring it occurs smoothly and sustainably.

12. Conclusion: A Future of Inclusive Growth

In conclusion, free trade characterized by fair taxation, reduced control, and protection against arbitrary confiscation can position Jigjiga as a thriving trade center. By connecting residents of the Somali Region with Addis Ababa and other parts of Ethiopia, this system generates new business opportunities, market access, and pathways for successful trade. Ultimately, this approach guarantees that the Somali Region is not marginalized but actively contributes to Ethiopia's vision of unity, inclusivity, and economic growth.

Mohamed is based in Jigjiga, Somali Region. He is an alumnus of Admas University, Hargeisa Branch, holds an MBA, and has authored hundreds of scholarly articles and conducted research. He is a small business owner and university lecturer. He can be reached at:Xareedmo45@gmail.com

Digital Payments in Ethiopia: Are We Truly Included?

By Befikadu Eba

One evening, I stood in front of an ATM, needing cash for an urgent expense. I requested 4,000 birr, and the machine promptly deducted that amount along with a 16-birr service charge from my account. But then, unexpectedly, it dispensed nothing. Instead of cash, I received only a notification confirming the fee had been taken. After calling the bank's customer service, I was assured that the amount would be refunded. Two days later, the 4,000 birr reappeared in my account. However, the 16 birr remained unresolved. "We will look into it," they told me. That was weeks ago, and I am still waiting.

This small personal ordeal reflects a much larger issue within Ethiopia's financial landscape. The government has been vigorously promoting digital payments as the future—a means to bring more people into the formal economy, reduce inequality, and modernize our financial systems. The vision is compelling: a cashless society where transactions are seamless, accessible to all, and free from the inefficiencies of paper money. Yet, for many ordinary Ethiopians, this digital transition feels less like progress and more like a new form of financial exclusion disguised as technological advancement.

Consider something as basic as accessing your own money. If you walk into a bank branch and fill out a withdrawal slip by hand, you can take out cash without incurring any fees. However, if you use that same bank's ATM—the supposedly more convenient digital option—you suddenly face a charge, typically 3 to 6 birr per 1,000 birr transaction. While this may seem minimal, it creates a two-tier system where those who can afford to bank in person receive free service, while those relying on digital channels must pay for the privilege.

Often overlooked in this digital transition are the fundamental economics at play. When banks expand their physical branches into unbanked areas, they incur significant costs: renting premises, staffing, maintaining security, and managing the administrative overhead of brick-and-mortar operations. Yet, when customers opt for digital channels that save banks these substantial expenses, they are not rewarded with lower fees or improved service. Instead, they face a barrage of charges that can make digital transactions more costly than traditional banking. This perverse incentive structure reveals a troubling truth: what is marketed as financial inclusion through digital means often functions as a profit center disguised as progress. Banks enjoy cost savings while passing none of those benefits to the customers who make digital banking viable. The very people adopting digital banking find themselves shouldering fees that seem designed to extract value rather than create it.

The contradictions become evident when examining mobile money transfers. Initially celebrated as a low-cost solution for sending money over distances, these services have gradually become more expensive, with fees that erode people's hard-earned cash. The most painful irony lies in small loans, where some digital lenders charge interest rates exceeding 20% per month—making them pricier than the informal lenders they were meant to replace.

What is particularly troubling is that these costs disproportionately impact those who can least afford them: small business owners making multiple daily transactions, domestic workers sending money home to their villages, and students trying to stretch a modest allowance. For them, these digital fees represent a significant burden, quietly

depleting their limited resources under the guise of financial inclusion.

The issues extend beyond just fees. There are the frustrating experiences of failed transactions, where money disappears from accounts but never reaches its intended destination. The opaque customer service channels leave users waiting endlessly for resolutions, and there is often a lack of clear recourse when problems arise. Each of these failures undermines trust in the very systems designed to empower people financially.

These challenges raise uncomfortable questions about who our digital finance revolution truly serves. If the costs of going digital outweigh the benefits for ordinary people, can we genuinely consider this progress? When informal systems provide better terms than regulated digital alternatives, what does that say about our implementation?

Moving forward requires honest reflection from all stakeholders. Financial institutions must recognize that true inclusion means affordability, not just accessibility. Regulators need to ensure that consumer protections keep pace with technological advancements. Most importantly, the voices of ordinary users—their experiences, struggles, and needs—must inform how these systems evolve.

As for me, I have reconciled with my missing 16 birr, but I can't help but wonder how many similar stories go untold across Ethiopia every day. How many people quietly endure these small digital indignities because they have no alternative? Our digital finance future holds tremendous promise, but only if we have the courage to acknowledge its shortcomings and the determination to create solutions that genuinely serve all Ethiopians, not just those who can afford to pay for participation.

The true test of our digital transformation will not lie in the sophistication of our technology, but in whether it improves financial life—not complicates it—for the market woman, taxi driver, farmer, and student. Until then, we are left with systems that appear modern but, in many ways, feel like a step backward.

At its core, true financial inclusion should uplift individuals rather than exclude them. It should focus on reaching the small shopkeeper in Addis Alem, the farmer in Wolaita, and the young entrepreneur in Adama—not through predatory fees and exploitative interest rates, but by providing empowering tools. When digital banking becomes merely another means to exploit those who are already struggling—when small and medium-sized enterprises are overwhelmed by unaffordable loan terms, or when a mother sending money to her child loses part of it to hidden charges—we have completely missed the mark. Financial inclusion was never intended to be a rebranded form of exclusion, where the disadvantaged are welcomed into the system only to be quietly robbed. It was meant to be a bridge built on fairness, not fees; on access, not exploitation. For Ethiopia's digital finance revolution to have real significance, it must serve the people it claims to include, not the profits it discreetly protects. Otherwise, we will have merely replaced one form of marginalization with another—this time, adorned with a QR code.

Befikadu Eba is the founder and managing director of Erudite Africa Investments, a former banker with a strong interest in private sector development and financial inclusion. He can be reached at befikadu.eba@eruditeafrica.com.

Entrepreneur
PROFILE:

RESUME

Name: Sintayehu Chala

Education: Diploma in Auto Mechanic

Company name: SN Garage

Title: Owner / Auto Mechanic

Founded in: 2020

What it does: General car maintenance and repair services

Hq: Addis Ababa, Megenagna

Number of Employees: 5



STARTUP CAPITAL

250,000 ETB

CURRENT CAPITAL

Over two million birr

BIG PICTURE

Reason for starting the Business: Lack of skilled mechanics

Biggest perk of ownership:

The satisfaction of seeing my customers happy with my work

Biggest strength: My dedication to quality work

Biggest challenge: Finding quality spare parts and high rental fees

Plan: Expanding the garage and adding state-of-the-art diagnostic equipment

First career: An assistant in a car repair workshop

PERSONAL

Most interested in meeting: None

Most admired person: My father

Stress reducer: Listening to music and spending time with friends

Favorite pastime: Watching football

Favorite book: None

Favorite destination: USA

Favorite automobile: Toyota Land Cruiser

DAILY EXCHANGE RATE

Aug. 22, 2025

CURRENCY	BUYING	SELLING
US DOLLAR	136.4486	139.1776
POUND STERLING	181.452	185.081
EURO	159.6039	162.796
SWISS FRANK	166.071	169.3924
SWEDISH KRONER	14.0105	14.2908
NORWEGIAN KRONER	13.1595	13.4227
DANISH KRONER	21.0024	21.4225
JAPANIS YEN	0.9098	0.928
CANADIAN DOLLAR	96.8978	98.8357
SAUDI RIYAL	36.365	37.0923
UAE DIRHAM	37.1511	37.8941

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World Together Donates Health care Products and Educational Materials to Korean War Veterans and Descendants



■ By Minas Defar

Addis Ababa- President of World Together paid a visit to Ethiopia to attend the 9th graduation ceremony of LG-KOICA Hope TVET College. The project provides a technical and vocational education opportunities in the fields of IT and Electronics for youths in Ethiopia in order to relive their lives from poverty, sever childhood economic activities and make them self-reliance citizens.

During the visit President Kim Yongwoo donates health care products and educational materials to the Ethiopian Korean War Veteran board members and for selected descendants respectively. He presents his sincere appreciation to the Ethiopian war veterans for their remarkable and heroic sacrifices for the freedom and independence of the Korean people during the Korean war.

In remembrance of the Ethiopian Korean War Veterans, who have earned a reputation for bravery and deep emotional bond between the two countries, World Together is implementing various humanitarian support projects in Ethiopia. In addition to the Hope TVET College Project, the organization is implementing Korean War Veterans Descendants Educational Development

Project (KV-EDP). This project has a special meaning to the two countries: Ethiopia and the Republic of Korea and started its operation since the inception of World Together in Ethiopia.

In this project the organization provides financial and material support for living for Ethiopian Veterans participated in Korean War (Honorarium money). Likewise, we provide financial, educational material and hygiene keeping items support for descendants.

The organization has secured a budget from the Ministry of Patriots and Veterans Affairs (MPVA) for the implementation of ‘The Ethiopian War Memorial Facility Renovation Project.’ With the budget secured from the donator, the organization is able to conduct the renovation of the war memorial facility and it has a special meaning for enhancing the diplomatic relationship between the countries: Ethiopia and the Republic of Korea.

Under its Child Growth Program which is being operated in a selected four sub cities of Addis Ababa, the provision of educational materials, scholarship support, food items and hygiene keeping materials to the beneficiaries and the family is underway.

Col. Estifanos G/Meskel, Chairman of Ethiopian Korean War Veterans Association appreciated the supports being provided by World Together in helping the veterans, widows and descendants fulfilling their livelihood needs on regular basis.

Under the slogan of ‘Self-support and sustainment through Education,’ currently World Together is operating in five different countries which includes Ethiopia, Kenya, Cambodia, Myanmar and Vietnam.



INVITATION TO BID

The Organization for Welfare and Development in Action (OWDA) is a national non-governmental humanitarian and development organization, established in 1999 in Ethiopia. OWDA serves vulnerable and hard-to-reach communities in Ethiopia, implementing programs in Health and Nutrition, Education and Protection, WASH, ESNFI, Livelihood, Food Security, and other cross-cutting sectors. In partnership with WHI in the health sector, OWDA intends to procure field vehicles funded by WHI. Vehicles to be required:

- Toyota Land Cruiser Hardtop (new or used): Model year: New 2022–2025 or used 2015 and above, body type: 5-Door, Wheelbase: Semi-Long Wheelbase (4WD), Mileage: New 0 or used ≤ 100,000 km, Engine Displacement ≥ 4,164 cc, and Manual or Automatic Transmission.
- Toyota Land Cruiser Prado (new or used): Model year: New 2022–2025 or used 2015 and above, Body Type: 5-Door SUV, Wheelbase: Semi-Long Wheelbase (4WD), Mileage new: 0 or used ≤ 100,000 km, Engine Displacement ≥ 2,700 cc, Manual or Automatic Transmission.
- Toyota Land Cruiser Hardtop Pickup (New or used): Model year: New 2022–2025 and used 2015 and above, Body type: 5-Door pickup, Wheelbase: Semi-Long Wheelbase (4WD), Mileage: New 0 or used ≤ 100,000 km, Engine Displacement ≥ 4,164 cc, Manual or Automatic transmission.

OWDA hereby invites legally registered suppliers in Ethiopia holding valid trade licenses and current tax clearance certificates to participate in this open competitive bidding process for the supply of vehicles as specified. Qualified supplier is required to submit competitive and verifiable price quotations in accordance with the detailed specifications, which can be obtained from the OWDA office in Addis Ababa, located around Meskel Square.

Submission Instructions:

All bids must be submitted in person to the address below:

- OWDA Head Office
- Lion Building, 9th Floor
- Meskel Square, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
- Telephone: (0115) 537041

Key Dates:

- Tender submission period: **25 August 2025 – 5 September 2025**
- Bid opening: **8 September 2025, 9:30 AM** at OWDA Addis Ababa Office.

(Bidders or their duly authorized representatives are invited to attend.)

OWDA reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids, in full or in part, without obligation to provide justification.

I N T E R V I E W



In this exclusive interview, Capital sits down with Natasha Hayward, a distinguished global expert on food and nutrition security and the Program Manager of the Global Agriculture and Food Security Program (GAFSP) at the World Bank. With more than two decades of experience across Africa, South and East Asia, Natasha has led critical initiatives in agriculture, rural livelihoods, and nutrition security, with a strong focus on community-driven development and social inclusion.

Currently, Natasha is at the forefront of the Global Challenge Program for Food and Nutrition Security, steering an international effort to monitor and respond to the rapidly evolving challenges in global agri-food systems. As Program Manager for GAFSP—a multilateral partnership driving innovation and investment for sustainable agriculture in the world’s most vulnerable countries—she brings a unique perspective on leveraging public and private financing to build resilient food systems in fragile settings.

This interview give Natasha’s insights on the state of global food security, the role of public and private investment, impactful interventions for women and youth, and the specific case of Ethiopia—offering readers a closer look at how international programs are shaping the future of food and agriculture worldwide. Excerpts;

ADDRESSING GLOBAL FOOD SECURITY CHALLENGES

Capital: The latest SOFI report indicates that global food security is at a shocking rate, especially as inflation is disproportionately affecting poorer countries. In your view, what are the most urgent and critical factors exacerbating this serious situation?

Natasha: “Rising conflict, increasingly frequent and severe climate shocks, and inflation are converging to deepen food insecurity around the world, especially in low-income countries. Smallholders in these countries face reduced purchasing power and escalating input costs, undermining both access to and production of healthy food. Integrated approaches – emphasizing aspects such as nutrition, climate resilience, and environmental conservation – are important to addressing short-term needs, while also creating long-term stability.”

Capital: Providing financial resources for agriculture

in low-income countries is defined as an increasing challenge. After all, what are the key strategies GAFSP and the World Bank use to fill this financial gap when development aid is under pressure?

Natasha: “GAFSP blends public and private financing, channeling funds through country-led plans, and crowds in co-investment where possible to maximize resourcing. Our donors have placed grant resources with the Program so that they can be deployed to contexts with high need, but also with the potential for partnership. Notably, we recently launched the Business Investment Financing Track (BIFT), which is a \$75 million pilot launched October 2024, and which provides innovative blended finance to mobilize private and climate capital for smallholder farmers, MSMEs, and agrifood startups. The BIFT aims to de-risk investments by promoting public private partnerships and co-financing with GAFSP’s partner DFIs (AfDB, ADB, IFC, IFAD, IDB

Invest) for at least 1:1 matched investment and 1:2 private capital investment. In so doing, we hope the BIFT strengthens local value chains, promoting climate-smart, nutritious food systems and inclusive capital market development.”

Capital: How critical is private sector involvement in solving the global food security crisis? What new models or incentives are needed to effectively drive private investment in sustainable agriculture and food systems, especially in places where you have experience, such as degraded conditions?

Natasha: I think it is worth noting that farmers are themselves private sector actors and GAFSP seeks to engage and support them, from those more dispersed smallholders, through to emerging producer organizations, enterprises and agribusiness. The private

sector is essential to scale and sustain agricultural transformation – public sector financing, though critical, will not be enough to bridge the gap in investment required. However, channeling resources to the farmers and agribusinesses that can enable this transformation is difficult often because of limited physical and financial infrastructure, high perceived risk, and inadequate risk mitigation tools. GAFSP’s focused mandate, pooled resources, diverse financing toolkit, and network of development partners across the multilateral system make it uniquely positioned to address these barriers, both investing in the enabling environment and cultivating private sector investment. We have been able to demonstrate how this can work in countries where the need is greatest and the risks are high, but where we see that resources can have the most impact.”

Capital: GAFSP was started during the 2007-08 food price crisis. What do the current challenges look like compared to that time, and what lasting lessons from GAFSP's past interventions are most relevant to today's efforts?

Natasha: While 2007–08 was a food price crisis, today we face intersecting climate, conflict, and cost-of-living shocks, as illustrated by the SOFI report. We are also in a landscape where overseas development aid is shrinking, despite the elevated and complex needs. A key GAFSP lesson from past interventions is the compounding value of long-term investments which integrate co-benefits – addressing those cross-cutting areas which are so relevant to agriculture. Food systems transformation is a powerful accelerator for broader development goals – even more so when co-benefits are built in by design. When we integrate attention to women’s empowerment, climate resilience, and nutrition outcomes, the impact of every dollar invested multiplies.

Capital: Ethiopia is among the African countries facing severe food insecurity, exacerbated by conflict, drought and economic upheaval. What are the specific problems that GAFSP has identified in Ethiopia, and how are your programs designed to address these multi-faceted problems?

Natasha: In Ethiopia, food insecurity is driven by drought, displacement, and disrupted markets. Since 2010, GAFSP has contributed US\$87 million to Ethiopia's \$843 million renewal project, AGP, which has leveraged co-financing from multiple partners and reached more than three million people across the country. GAFSP’s approach is to support country-led and -designed investments. Across Ethiopia, AGP has successfully improved smallholder productivity and market access through climate-smart irrigation, infrastructure, and extension services, boosting crop yields by up to 83% and integrating climate adaptation and nutrition-sensitive agriculture for long-term resilience. Through our private sector financing, we have also supported a company working with pastoralists in livestock production, to improve safety and quality in the supply chain for nutritious meat production.”

Capital: SOFI's report highlights the importance of maximizing impact through the integration of food, climate, nature and nutrition. Can you provide concrete examples of how GAFSP-supported programs can implement this integrated approach in practice?

Natasha: One of the core principles of GAFSP is attention to key cross-cutting themes such as women’s empowerment, sustainability, climate resilience, and nutrition outcomes. For example, a GAFSP-funded project in Rwanda – the Rwanda Sustainable Agricultural Intensification Project (SAIP) – successfully strengthened food systems stability in the country by funding the establishment of more than 12,000 kitchen gardens across the country.

“The project, which reached almost 200,000 people, emphasized nutrition-sensitive agricultural practices, training communities on the production and consumption of nutritious foods and multiplying seeds for iron-enriched beans. In particular, the project engaged women and caregivers in home-based nutrition efforts. Integrating nutrition and gender-based objectives into this project multiplied its benefit to the local community. Recognizing the inter-woven complexities of the food system, GAFSP encourages projects which respond to the multisectoral drivers of food insecurity, and we also monitor this across our portfolio, trying to document how and where these cross-cutting aspects have been successfully addressed.”

Capital: GAFSP has supported more than 20 million farmers. Can you share the success of those who are part of the GAFSP project, which highlights the program's tangible impact on food and nutrition security and improvement of livelihoods?

Natasha: Since it was established in 2010, GAFSP has mobilized US\$2.5 billion in grants and concessional finance to countries, producer organizations, and agribusinesses for transformative investments across the agri-food system, reaching more than 20 million people, as you note. GAFSP projects are designed to reach the most vulnerable in the most hard-to-reach markets, where investment can have the biggest positive impact. For example, a GAFSP-funded project in Timor-Leste – the Sustainable Agriculture Productivity Improvement Project (SAPIP) – successfully navigated fragility, conflict, and extreme weather in the country to strengthen food security and resilience on the small island state, benefitting more than 70,000 people affected by recent conflict. Investments in climate-smart agriculture, watershed planning, and farmer training have led to increased yields, reduced post-harvest losses, and expanded market access on the island, contributing to significantly improved living standards since the project began in 2013.”

Capital: As GAFSP Program Manager, what are your strategic priorities for the program from today until 2030, taking into account the latest SOFI report and the increasing challenges?

Natasha: Looking ahead to 2030 and as reflected in the SOFI report, there is clearly an urgent need to build more resilient, sustainable, and inclusive agrifood systems in low-income countries, particularly in Africa, and GAFSP is currently setting out its objectives, strategic direction and investment priorities for 2025-2030 to respond to this. At the core of the Program’s vision is to build on GAFSP’s unique strength as a ready-to-use, proven financing platform serving the international community and helping to pool scarce donor resources. A key question for our Steering Committee, which represents our multistakeholder governing body, is how to really leverage this ready platform, in an era of more limited resources, to deploy them in a way that most maximizes their value.

“Three strategic directions will be important: maximizing co-benefits by integrating attention to climate, nature, nutrition, and the central role of women in agrifood systems; enabling countries, producers and businesses to invest more boldly in innovative solutions and approaches; and catalyzing additional resources, scaling impact with increased public, private, and climate finance.”

Capital: Youth participation in taxation in Ethiopia, especially young people in rural areas, face barriers in accessing land, resources, and financial services. How is GAFSP supporting Ethiopia's youth to see agriculture as a sustainable and livable source of livelihood, moving beyond traditional farming to adopt business-driven and innovation-based approaches?

Natasha: A key focus of the AGP project in Ethiopia, which I noted earlier has been the participation of youth, who are the future of Ethiopia’s agricultural sector. GAFSP’s diverse toolkit of financing instruments allows the Program to engage with young agricultural entrepreneurs at each stage in the growth cycle of their agribusiness from start-up and building connections to local value chains all the way to seizing opportunities in global export markets. Delivering financial and technical support that is tailored to the specific needs of young agricultural entrepreneurs is fundamental for their success

and that of Ethiopia’s agrifood sector in the long-term.”

Capital: Female farmers and youth face unique and increasing obstacles in agriculture. Based on your experience in Africa, South and East Asia, what are the most effective interventions to enhance the rights of these groups, ensure their access to resources, knowledge, and markets?

Natasha: Women are central to agrifood systems, yet they face systemic barriers, including limited land rights, access to high-quality inputs, finance, markets, and training. These constraints contribute to a 24 per cent productivity gap between male- and female-managed farms in low-income countries. Youth, similarly, often lack access to land, capital, and support networks, making it difficult to see agriculture as a viable future.

GAFSP recognizes that empowering women and youth is not only a matter of equity, but a critical driver of food security and economic resilience. Our projects conduct gender gap analyses at the design stage, target finance to women and youth-led cooperatives, and promote leadership of producer organizations through capacity building. In Mauritania, for example, we support over 300 women’s cooperatives with land access, market platforms, and climate-smart training. In The Gambia, through the Agriculture and Food Security Project, more than half of the 18,000 smallholder farmers participating in the project are women, directly linking productivity gains to school feeding and nutrition outcomes.

“By embedding inclusive approaches into all aspects of our programming, GAFSP is helping to unlock the full potential of women and youth to lead sustainable transformation in food systems. This helps to enhance livelihoods, improve nutrition, and, importantly, build long-term community resilience.”

Capital: The World Bank is implementing projects in Ethiopia such as the Food Security Resilience Project and the Food Security Rural Livelihoods Program. Can you explain how these larger World Bank initiatives are working in conjunction with GAFSP's targeted support to enhance the overall resilience of the food system in Ethiopia?

Natasha: GAFSP takes its lead from country governments, supporting national priorities in agriculture and food systems. In Ethiopia, our support complements broader initiatives like the World Bank’s Food Security Resilience Project by filling targeted gaps. Typically, we work through the country’s agriculture sector coordination group to ensure that GAFSP proposals align with other development partners and add value where it’s most needed.

Capital: What are the consequences of the ongoing macroeconomic changes in Ethiopia for food security? How are these changes affecting food prices, access to money, and agricultural production in the country?

Natasha: GAFSP’s global focus means that we defer to national and local actors to complete in-country assessments of macroeconomic impacts. While we are not best placed to comment on current conditions in Ethiopia specifically, we know that macroeconomic pressures such as inflation and currency shifts can worsen food insecurity. GAFSP’s support focuses on fighting back against pressures like these on food systems security by both addressing immediate needs and building long-term resilience through improvements to productivity, market access, and climate adaptation.





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World Food Programme
Programme Alimentaire Mondial
Programa Mundial de Alimentos
برنامج الأغذية العالمي

SAVING
LIVES
CHANGING
LIVES

AMENDMENT

INVITATION FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI)

DESCRIPTION: Provision of Overland (cross-border) Transport Services from Djibouti to Ethiopia

CLOSING DATE FOR SUBMISSION OF EOIs: 29 August 2025, 12:00 hrs

REFERENCE: EOI-ETCO-LOG-2025-08

The United Nations World Food Programme in Ethiopia (WFP Ethiopia) invites qualified companies to submit their Provision of Overland (cross-border) Freight Transport Services from Djibouti to Ethiopia.

A. OVERLAND TRANSPORT SERVICE - DJIBOUTI CORRIDOR

1. Objective

This invitation for expression of interest aims to identify qualified local companies for the provision of overland transport services from Djibouti to Ethiopia.

The shortlisted companies will be invited to participate in a bidding process to provide the above-mentioned services. Based on the results of a competitive bidding process, WFP may conclude a contract with one or more company(ies) for the provision of the named services.

2. Required Services

Overland (cross-border) freight transport services for the transportation of food and non-food items.

3. EOI Process

WFP seeks to shortlist companies/organizations with demonstrable technical and financial capabilities who will be invited to participate in the bidding process. After the deadline, WFP will evaluate all submitted EOIs, and participants will be notified of the outcome by email.

4. Submission of EOI

All documents should be presented in English and in an orderly manner as per the guidelines below.

B. Required Documents

- a. Company's confirmation in writing of their interest (application) to join WFP's database or shortlist of companies for the requested services.
- b. Renewed Trade Registrations and Business License
- c. Renewed Transport Operating License from Ministry of Transport and Logistics including accredited list of trucks under your company.
- d. Taxpayer Registration Certificate.
- e. Updated company profile information: including contact details, (e-mail address is mandatory, website, address/physical location, telephone, fax numbers) and experience in the freight transport operation.
- f. Independently Audited Financial Statement, at least for two (2) years.
- g. Recommendation letters from three credible clients and other relevant documents required to operate in overland freight transport operation.

Failure to provide the required documentation will result in the company's exclusion from further consideration.

Closing Date of Submission and Contact Details.

The EOI and any supplementary documentation must be submitted in a sealed envelope and deposited at the Registry of WFP Ethiopia in Addis Ababa using the address below **no later than 29 August 2025, 12:00 hrs.**

- The cover of the envelope should contain the following information – **EOI reference number (EOI-ETCO-LOG-2025-08), the date of submission, and name of the company.**
- All EOIs should be duly signed and stamped.
- All requests for clarifications should be sent to the following email address: **addis.logisticscontracting@wfp.org**

Address: World Food Programme - P.O. Box 25584 - Bole Sub City, Woreda 02 Ring Road, Opposite cargo terminal, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Attention: Logistics Unit – Contracting Section

Further Information

This EOI does not entail any commitment on the part of WFP, either financial or otherwise. WFP reserves the right to change or cancel the requirements at any time during the EOI. WFP also reserves the right to disregard companies from further consideration if the company is not deemed to conform to the above conditions.

United Nations World Food Programme, Ethiopia.



3040 Cornwallis Road • PO Box 12194 • Research Triangle Park, NC 27709-2194 • USA
Telephone 919.541.6000 • Fax 919.541.5985 • www.rti.org

Invitation for BID

RTI is an independent organization dedicated to conducting innovative, multidisciplinary research that improves the human condition. Founded as a centerpiece of the Research Triangle Park in North Carolina in 1958, RTI offers innovative research and development and a full spectrum of multidisciplinary services. It has a worldwide staff of more than 6,000 people.

Feed the Future Ethiopia Transforming Agriculture is inviting all eligible bidders to submit their detailed company proposal, including their company profile and experience in providing similar materials. We are seeking qualified manufacturing, importing, and wholesale companies with the necessary technical and financial capacity, and a valid business license for the current Ethiopian fiscal year (2017). Qualified bidders are invited to collect the full RFQ/RFP from the RTI International website at <https://www.rti.org/currentopportunities>.

Commodity/ Service Required:	Coffee Drying Materials
Type of Procurement:	Mesh wire - Size (1.5m x 25m) ➤ Weight (18kg) ➤ Thickness - 1mm ➤ Color (silver) ➤ Material (Stain less steel)
	Shed net - Size (2m x 25m) ➤ Weight (7-8Kg) ➤ Color (black) ➤ Material (Pure original nylon net)
	Plastic cover - Size (2m x 25m) ➤ Thickness (0.4mm) ➤ Color (Yellow) ➤ Material (Pure line plastic sheet)
	Coffee sac - Made from fiber
Type of Contract:	Cost not to exceed
Term of Contract:	Potential for multiple awards
Contract Funding:	Department of State (DOS)
This Procurement supports:	Feed the Future Ethiopia Transforming Agriculture
Submit Proposal to:	InkindProcurement.ETA@transforming-agriculture.org
Date of Issue of RFP:	August 25, 2025
Date Questions from Supplier Due:	September 2, 2025, 16:00 East Africa Time (EAT)
Date Proposal Due:	September 8, 2025, 16:00 East Africa Time (EAT)
Approximate Date Purchase Order Issued to Successful Bidder(s):	TBD
Method of Submittal:	
Respond via e-mail InkindProcurement.ETA@transforming-agriculture.org with attached document in MS Word / Pdf format. Please provide digital brochures as deemed necessary to support your offer.	
Solicitation Number:	ETA-AA-25-019A-GRT

The RTI- FTFETA project reserves the right to reject any or all bids.



ETHIOPIAN NATIONAL THEATRE EMBRACES DIGITAL ERA, ANNOUNCES TICKET PRICE HIKE AND NATIONWIDE TRAINING PROGRAM

Ethiopian National Theatre, a cultural landmark with over 69 years of history, has taken a significant leap into the digital age by transitioning its operations to a fully digital system, theatre officials announced in a recent press release.

A key milestone in this modernization effort is the launch of online ticket sales, now managed through Red Cloud ICT Solutions. Director General Bareke Tadesse expressed gratitude to Red Cloud for facilitating a more convenient and accessible ticketing experience for audiences across the country. Bemnet Demissie, General Manager of Red Cloud ICT Solutions, provided further details about the digital platform, praising its ability to streamline customer service and broaden outreach.

Alongside digitalization, the theatre has announced an increase in ticket prices, raising the cost from 80 birr to 200 birr. This change, made in consultation with the Ministry of Culture and Sports, is intended not merely as a price hike but as an investment in elevating the quality of the arts and enhancing overall theatre services.

Bareke emphasized that the updated pricing reflects an "improvement" designed with the audience's cultural experience in mind. "Our core mission is not revenue generation," he noted, "but to preserve and promote Ethiopia's rich cultural heritage, foster unity, and build social cohesion through engaging entertainment and education."

In a bid to nurture future talent, the National Theatre announced plans to launch a nationwide training

program targeting young artists from across Ethiopia. This comprehensive initiative will focus on areas such as acting, composition, and production preparation. Officials highlighted the program's special emphasis on the "swing sector," aiming to develop the next generation of high-caliber performers who will have opportunities to collaborate directly with the theatre.

The theatre plans to kick off the new Ethiopian year—starting September 5, 2025—with a series of artistic

events that showcase its revitalized vision. These initiatives collectively seek to modernize and rejuvenate the historic institution, ensuring its cultural legacy endures for generations to come.

With digital ticketing, enhanced programming, and investment in young talent, Ethiopian National Theatre is poised to become a dynamic hub for the arts in the digital era while honoring its longstanding heritage.

EBNE HAKIM RELEASES "TSEHAYE," A SOULFUL ODE TO HOPE AND HERITAGE

Rising Ethio-Fusion artist Ebne Hakim has released his latest single, "Tsehaye," a heartfelt reflection on longing, hope, and the enduring light of love and culture. The track, whose title means "sun" in Amharic, blends traditional Tigrigna rhythms with contemporary alternative R&B sounds, creating a unique sonic experience that pays tribute to Ethiopia's rich musical heritage.

Timed to coincide with Ashenda, the vibrant cultural festival celebrated by young women in northern Ethiopia, "Tsehaye" captures the festival's spirit of resilience and unity. Its lyrics tell the story of a man waiting for the return of a loved one, with a central theme of hope expressed through the question, "Will she rise like the sun before tomorrow comes?"

Produced by Nuhi and released under Bana Records in exclusive partnership with Sony Music East Africa, the song marks a significant moment in Ebne Hakim's career. Known for his emotionally vulnerable lyrics and genre-blending style, Ebne continues to carve out a leading place in Ethiopia's music scene while bridging traditional roots with forward-looking sounds.

Ebne Hakim a native of Addis Ababa first gained attention with his debut single "Gela" and his EP "Brana," both showcasing his unique fusion of Ethiopian musical scales with soul and pop influences. Bana Records, based in Addis Ababa, champions artists like Ebne who push the boundaries of Ethiopian music, merging local heritage with global trends.

H O T M U S I C T A B L E

HOTTEST ARTISTS

AUGUST 14 - AUGUST 20, 2025

HOTTEST TRACKS

RANK	ARTIST	RADIO	TV	TOTAL PLAY
1	Solomon Deneke	199	61	260
2	Dawit Tsige	125	35	160
3	Samrawit Azene	63	28	91
4	Neway Debebe	84	1	85
5	Kuku Sebsibe	45	19	64
6	Lemlem Hailemichael	23	39	62
7	Addis Legesse	41	13	54
7	Shukri Jamal	2	52	54
8	Haleluya Tekletsadik	35	16	51
9	Hibist Tiruneh	21	29	50
10	Hanan Abdu	31	17	48
10	Dawit Mellesse	44	4	48

RANK	TRACK	ARTIST	RADIO	TV	TOTAL PLAY
1	Hoya Hoya	Solomon Deneke	199	61	260
2	Aya Tiragnma	Samrawit Azene	63	28	91
3	Ende Amele	Lemlem Hailemichael	23	39	62
4	Etu	Addis Legesse	39	11	50
5	Shadey	Hanan Abdu	31	17	48
6	Dar Dar	Dawit Tsige	33	13	46
7	Dejazmach	Kuku Sebsibe	30	14	44
8	Bantelay	Hana Girma	23	19	42
9	Yelebe	Haleluya Tekletsadik	29	12	41
10	Zemedye	Hibist Tiruneh	11	29	40
10	Hoya Hoya	Neway Debebe	40	0	40

THIS DATA IS GATHERED BY A 24/7 AUTOMATED RECORDING & ANALYZING ALL SYSTEM FROM 35 TV & RADIO STATIONS. THERE WERE MORETHAN 6,350 TOTAL MUSIC PLAYS ACROSS THE BROADCAST MEDIUM FOR THIS WEEK.

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Society

The

Harsh Truth:
In Corporate
Politics, Visibility
Beats Ability

By William Brooks

I want to tell you about a woman – let us call her Aida - who taught me what real leadership looks like. For 10 years, I had the privilege of working under her guidance, watching as she navigated the complexities of our company with a rare combination of sharp intellect and quiet determination. She wasn't the type to seek the spotlight, but her work spoke volumes – projects completed ahead of schedule, crises averted through careful planning, teams motivated not by empty pep talks but by her own relentless work ethic.

Then came the storm. The company suddenly fired her boss, leaving behind a trail of poor decisions that threatened to sink the share company. The board turned to Aida, appointing her as acting commercial manager in what many saw as a temporary measure until they could find a "proper" replacement. What happened next should have rewritten her career trajectory. In just nine months, she accomplished what the board had thought impossible – she stabilized the company's finances, restored confidence among key clients, and set the share company back on a path to profitability.

We all watched in awe as Aida worked miracles. She rebuilt relationships with shareholders and corporate clients that had soured under previous leadership. Most importantly, she restored a sense of pride and purpose among employees who had been demoralized by months of uncertainty. The numbers didn't lie – under her stewardship, the company went from bleeding cash to posting its healthiest quarterly results.

Then came the gut punch. Rather than rewarding her extraordinary performance with the permanent position, the board announced they had hired an external candidate – someone with flashy

“
What makes Aida's case particularly painful is how preventable it was. The board had all the evidence they needed right in front of them - clear metrics showing her success, glowing feedback from clients and staff alike, tangible results that spoke louder than any resume bullet point. Yet, they chose to ignore it all in favor of the safe choice, the conventional choice, the choice that wouldn't rock the boat

credentials but none of Aida's intimate knowledge of our company's unique challenges and culture. Overnight, the woman who had saved the institution found herself demoted, expected to train her replacement and quietly return to her previous role as if nothing had happened.

What struck me most was how Aida handled this betrayal of trust. Without complaint, she briefed the new manager on every critical issue. She introduced him to key clients. She even helped draft his first strategic plan – the same type of plan that had been so successful under her leadership. Her professionalism never wavered, even as she was essentially forced to make her own sidelining as seamless as possible for the organization.

This isn't just Aida's story. It is the story of countless professionals who give their all to organizations that never give back in equal measure. We live in a corporate world that pays lip service to meritocracy while quietly operating on a different set of rules - where connections often trump capability, where style frequently outweighs substance, and where the people who actually do the work are routinely overlooked in favor of those who simply know how to play the game.

I have thought often about why Aida's story bothers me so much. It is not just the injustice of seeing someone so capable passed over. It is the message it sends to everyone watching - that loyalty and hard work are ultimately liabilities in a system that rewards self-promotion over actual results. When teams see their most competent leaders overlooked, it breeds a quiet cynicism that no amount of corporate pep talks can overcome.

What makes Aida's case particularly painful is how preventable it was. The board had all the evidence they needed right in front of them - clear metrics showing her success, glowing feedback from clients and staff alike, tangible results that spoke louder than any resume bullet point. Yet, they chose to ignore it all in favor of the safe choice, the conventional choice, the choice that wouldn't rock the boat.

There is a particular cruelty in how we treat our workplace heroes. We lean on them in times of crisis, praise their dedication when we need it most, then return to business as usual once the storm has passed. We take their competence for granted while chasing after shinier, more conventional options. And we wonder why employee engagement suffers, why turnover rises, why so

many organizations struggle to retain their best talent.

Aida still leads by example in ways both large and small. The company continues to benefit from her wisdom and work ethic, even as it fails to properly recognize either. There is a quiet tragedy in watching someone so talented remain so undervalued, a reminder that the corporate world often fails its most dedicated servants.

To all the Aidas out there - the professionals who show up day after day, who deliver exceptional work without fanfare, who get passed over for promotions they have clearly earned - know this: Your worth is not defined by titles or organizational charts. The people who actually work with you, who see your contributions firsthand, we know the truth. We see the late nights and early mornings, the problems you solve before most people even notice them, the way you make everyone around you better at their jobs.

The real failure here isn't Aida's - it belongs to a system that cannot recognize true leadership when it sees it. A system that prizes pedigree over performance. A system that would rather bring in an outsider than reward the person who has already proven they can do the job.

Perhaps one day organizations will learn that real talent often comes without fanfare, that the best leaders aren't always the ones who look the part but the ones who do the work. Until then, the Aidas of the world will keep showing up, keep excelling, keep being the backbone of institutions that don't deserve them.

William Brooks – A freelance consultant with interests in business and politics in East Africa reachable at willybrooks87@gmail.com



Request for Proposal for Service

UNICEF (Ethiopia) wishes to request eligible bidders to participate in an Establishment of Long-Term Agreement for the Supply of Stationery Learning Materials For 24+12 Months

LRPS-2025-9199322

This tender is open only to local bidders

Details of the requirements for this bid and eligibility criteria etc. can be found in the bid document.

Interested and eligible bidders can get the bid document with the link below.

<https://tender.2merkato.com/tenders/68a5d4c50a538a684c000001>

Bids must be received by the latest on 03rd September 2025 @ 10:30 am- Local Time.

Bidders can submit bids through UNICEF Ethiopia's secured email address: eth-tendergoods@unicef.org. Bids received after the stipulated date and time will be invalidated.

A bid conference will not be applicable for this bid.

The last date for submitting any inquiries from the bidders is 31st August 2025 at 05:00 pm through,

eth-supplyqagoods@unicef.org. Proposals submitted in any other way will be invalidated, even if received before the stipulated deadline.

UNICEF is part of the United Nations Global Marketplace (UNGM). Accordingly, all proposers are encouraged to become a UNICEF vendor by creating a vendor profile on the UNGM website: www.ungm.org.

You must read all the provisions of the Request for Proposal to ensure that you understand and comply with UNICEF's requirements.

All bidders are required to complete and submit the Vendor Registration Form (Attached as Annex I) as part of the bid submission package.

The Vendor Registration Form must be submitted in both Excel and PDF formats, and include the following documents:

A valid business license

A bank confirmation letter or stamped bank details form. Please ensure all documents are accurate and complete.

Note that failure to submit compliant bids may result in invalidation of your proposal.



CFTA.Now

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COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY



We welcome submittals regarding news/information pertinent to the CFTA and relegated issues.

A section designed to promote Africa's Continental Free Trade Area using News, messages, events and commentaries. It's a joint initiative by the Pan African Chamber of Commerce and Industry and capital.

Ethiopia issues AfCFTA tariff rules but excludes Coffee and key services off tariff-free list

After years of hesitation, Ethiopia has finally taken a decisive step toward joining the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). Nearly six years after ratifying the agreement, and four years since the African Union launched the world's largest common market, the country has published regulations in the Negarit Gazette outlining which goods and services will benefit from tariff concessions. For Ethiopia, one of Africa's fastest-growing economies and a nation often described as the continent's diplomatic capital, the delay has raised questions about its readiness to embrace integration. Now that the regulation is public, attention has shifted to what Ethiopia has chosen to liberalize, and what it has left out.

The 419-page document approved by the Council of Ministers sets out tariff schedules covering almost 6,000 products identified under AfCFTA. As the continental agreement requires, 90 percent of goods fall into Category A, slated for immediate zero tariffs. Seven percent, grouped under Category B, will be phased out over a decade, while three percent grouped under Category C, are permanently exempt, usually to protect national champions. Ethiopia's regulation, however, makes public only its Category A list. The absence of details on Categories B and C underscores the sensitivity of what the country intends to shield.

Perhaps most striking is what Ethiopia has chosen not to include in its liberalized list. Coffee, the country's emblematic export and a cornerstone of its global trade identity, is not among the products subject to immediate tariff elimination. Other excluded products are sesame, khat, banking and telecom services, sectors where Ethiopia remains cautious about foreign competition. Instead, the list favors agricultural inputs, fertilizer, cement, alcohol, cotton, and processed leather. In doing so, the government signals confidence in some domestic industries while protecting others deemed too strategically or economically sensitive to expose to full continental competition.

For Africa at large, Ethiopia's choices echo a wider dilemma confronting many member states: how to balance the promise of a unified market with the political and economic impulse to guard national interests. AfCFTA was conceived to boost intra-African trade, which remains stubbornly below 20 percent of the continent's total commerce. By lowering barriers, the deal aims to unlock economies of scale, drive industrialization, and strengthen Africa's bargaining power globally. Yet if too many countries withhold

their most competitive goods and services from liberalization, the transformative potential of the pact could be diluted.

The implications for sustainability and climate policy are equally significant. Opening up trade in agricultural inputs and cement could accelerate infrastructure development and food system productivity. But without strict environmental standards, these sectors also carry heavy carbon footprints. At the same time, delaying liberalization of telecoms and banking slows down integration in digital finance and connectivity, areas crucial for

building resilient, low-carbon economies across Africa.

The regulation represents a strategic balancing act for Ethiopia. Protecting coffee and services may preserve short-term revenue and political leverage, but it also risks limiting the country's ability to position itself as a regional hub for sustainable trade and investment. Across the continent, other governments will be watching closely. Ethiopia's choices, like those of its peers, will help determine whether AfCFTA becomes a vehicle for green growth and

inclusive development, or whether it stalls under the weight of protectionism.

What is clear is that Africa's sustainability journey is inseparable from its trade policies. In a time of mounting climate pressures, fragile food security, and urgent calls for green investment, how Ethiopia and other nations open, or close, their markets will shape the continent's collective capacity to deliver on the promise of AfCFTA: not just freer trade, but a more sustainable and self-reliant Africa.

African Union Urged to Expedite AfCFTA Implementation Across the Continent

Executive Director of the Borders Institute (TBI) and a political analyst, Wafula Okumu stressed the need for the African Union accelerating the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) to reduce financial dependency.

In an exclusive interview with Ethiopian News Agency, Okumu pointed out that the reform process initiated in 2016 aimed to enhance the effectiveness of the AU and increase ownership levels among its member states.

He asserted that an institutional overhaul of the organization is both "urgent and necessary" to address its significant fragmentation caused by an excessive number of focus areas, as well as its inefficient working methods, poor decision-making, and lack of accountability.

He elaborated that some progress has been made regarding the reforms.

He specifically highlighted that the 'AU Peace Fund,' which finances peace and security

operations, has been fully restructured and is now fully operational, having raised 96% of its 400 million USD target from member contributions by 2024.

Nevertheless, he advised the African Union to place appropriate emphasis on other reform priorities and to further advance the implementation of the entire reform process.

He stated that the full implementation of all AU audit reports is the most effective way to ensure greater accountability in executing continental policy strategies.

Conversely, he mentioned that the AU must seek innovative financing arrangements to achieve greater financial independence and reduce reliance on foreign partners.

This will necessitate aligning the principles employed by the AU to identify sources and attract funding for its projects and programs with the expectations of the African populace.

He noted that the enforcement of the

0.2% levy is problematic under current circumstances, especially concerning the imposition of duties on goods sensitive to national interests and varying regional trade arrangements.

He believed this has led the African Union to be financially dependent and exacerbated its dependency. He claimed, "The excessive reliance on foreign financial assistance has tarnished the organization's reputation, with many perceiving it as a tool for external interests."

Consequently, he stated that "these issues could have been easily resolved through the implementation of the AfCFTA," and he strongly advocated for the execution of the AfCFTA.

In conclusion, he emphasized the necessity of maintaining a balance between the obligations to serve their citizens and the establishment of organizations that also cater to the needs of the African populace.

He remarked: "The two responsibilities should not be viewed as mutually exclusive."

CFTA now

PACCI is the lead business organization with members in over 50 countries of the continent representing the interests of businesses and industry associations of every size and sector. PACCI operates as Africa's voice of business, advocating for pro-business policies that create jobs, growth and prosperity.



Africa's Path to Economic Growth and Unity

From Rwandan gold to Ethiopian coffee to Libyan oil, Africa is rich in diverse and abundant resources. But despite this wealth, it remains the world's poorest continent, a status worsened by its limited participation in the global economy. Home to 18% of the world's population, Africa accounts for just 2.8% of international trade, as of 2019. The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) seeks to change this by creating the world's largest free trade area, spurring development, and ultimately lifting millions out of poverty.

Breaking the Cycle of Poverty and Dependency

As of 2019, 478 million Africans were living in extreme poverty, with another 58 million just above the poverty line. Many reside in one of the 45 countries whose economies rely heavily on the export of raw materials. Wealthy nations buy these

primary goods, use them to manufacture finished products, and then sell those products back to African countries at premium prices. This cycle leaves these countries poor and highly vulnerable to fluctuations in global demand.

Recognizing Africa's historical disadvantages as well as its immense potential for economic growth, the African Union established AfCFTA in 2018. The agreement aims to unite the 55 member states and the approximately 1.3 billion people living within them into a single market for goods and services. Now, four years after its official launch in 2021, AfCFTA has made considerable progress toward achieving its founding goals of increasing intra-regional trade and making Africa more competitive in the global marketplace.

Progress, Innovation and Real Impact

By 2024, 49 of the 55 signatories had

ratified the agreement, and 19 countries had enacted tariff reductions into national law. These actions mark a key step toward facilitating an economically integrated Africa, where intra-continental trade accounts for much more than the current low rate of 14.9%. According to World Bank estimates, full implementation of AfCFTA could increase the total economic output of African countries by \$450 billion and add \$76 billion to the global income by 2035.

Beyond trade policy, AfCFTA includes initiatives which aim to support its broader economic and social objectives. The Pan-African Payment and Settlement System (PAPSS), launched in 2022, allows for instant and secure payments between African countries, reducing costs and increasing trade efficiency. Meanwhile, the Protocol on Women and Youth in Trade promotes networking, mentorship,

and market training, making AfCFTA the first trade agreement to legally protect the interests of these two marginalized groups.

Making a Difference

Although the implementation of AfCFTA has been gradual due to the complexities of coordinating trade policies among 55 distinct states, it has already begun to make a meaningful difference in the lives of Africans. Brigette Harrington, owner of Igire Coffee, was the first to receive an AfCFTA certificate of origin for Rwanda. Benefiting from the agreement's trade advantages, Harrington increased her exports from 150 bags to 400 bags of coffee. She is just one example of how a unified African market can benefit small businesses across the continent.

The Road to Success

Ultimately, AfCFTA's path forward is promising but uncertain. Success will require member states to achieve regulatory harmonization, balance their various needs, and ensure that the benefits of trade are equitably distributed. What is unquestionable, however, is what Africa stands to gain. If fully realized, AfCFTA could unlock Africa's vast economic potential, pulling 30 million people out of extreme poverty, according to the World Bank.



Save the Children

INVITATION TO TENDER FOR THE CONSULTANCY SERVICE

Tender Reference # - SCI-ET-2025-008

Save the Children International (SCI), the world's leading independent non-profit organization for children, intends to prequalify consultancy firms and establish a framework agreement (without price) for a period of three years, with the possibility of extension.

Save the Children Ethiopia Country Office invites competent potential Consulting Companies which works in different thematic areas. Thus, we hereby invite potential suppliers to submit a sealed tender in accordance with the Service Details, Instruction to Bidders, and General Terms and Conditions of Purchase as described in the bid document.

Tender document

- Potential bidders may obtain tender documents against payment of a non-refundable amount of ETB 100 from SCI offices in Addis Ababa Country office starting from **August 27-2025** up to **September 12-2025** during working hours.

Address

- Save the children Ethiopia Country Office, close to Meskel Square, near the Hyatt Regency Hotel.

Bid Submission

- Tenders must be submitted in soft copy through the email address which will be indicated on the bid document. Bidder can submit their document up to **September 15, 2025**.

Save the Children Procurement Committee will open tender responses on September 16, 2025.

SCI reserves the right to accept or reject this bid, in partial, or in its entirety.



Save the Children

INVITATION TO TENDER FOR THE MOTORBIKES PURCHASE

Tender Reference # - SCI-ET-2025-009

SAVE THE CHILDREN INTERNATIONAL (SCI, Ethiopia) the world's leading independent non-profit organization for children intends to purchase **4 pieces of 200cc offroad Motorbikes** that will be distributed to different partners throughout the country to improve equitable access to vaccination program.

And hereby invites potential suppliers to submit a sealed tender in accordance with the Service Details, Instruction to Bidders, and General Terms and Conditions of Purchase as described in the bid document.

Tender document

- Potential bidders may obtain tender documents against payment of a non-refundable amount of ETB 100 from SCI offices in Addis Ababa Country office starting from **August 26-2025** up to **September 02-2025** during working hours.

Address

- Save the children Ethiopia Country Office, close to Meskel Square, near the Hyatt Regency Hotel.

Bid Submission

- Bid Security in the name of "Save the Children International" amounting to ETB 100,000 in the form of CPO or bank guarantee valid for a period of at least 3 months starting from the date of tender submission. The submission must be in a separate sealed envelope. (Cash and insurance bonds are not accepted)
- Bidder technical proposal must be submitted in soft copy through the email address ethiopia.bidsubm@savethechildren.org. Bidder can submit their document up to **September 02-2025** cob. The subject of the email should be "ITT/IN-SCI-ET-2025-009/Bidder Response - 'Bidder Name', 'Date'".
- Bidder Financial proposal must be submitted in hard copy- sealed document to Save the children Ethiopia country office. Financial proposal submission date is **September 03, 2025, cob up to 03:00pm**.

Save the Children Procurement Committee will open technical tender responses on September 03, 2025.

SCI reserves the right to accept or reject this bid, in partial, or in its entirety.

CHINA’S UNWAVERING COMMITMENT TO HIGH-LEVEL OPENING-UP

■ By Ambassador JIANG Feng

In today’s world, economic development faces multiple challenges. The technological, digital, and intelligence divides continue to widen, and structural problems such as the growing gap between developed and developing countries and the marginalization of the least developed countries are becoming increasingly prominent.

Against this backdrop, China is demonstrating its responsibility as a major power through concrete actions. At the recently concluded 2025 World Artificial Intelligence (AI) Conference, China released the Global AI Governance Action Plan, calling for international cooperation and coordinated governance to promote the accessibility and benefits of AI for all. The upcoming 8th China International Import Expo in November this year will establish a dedicated exhibition area for products from least developed countries (LDCs) for the first time, and expand the African Products Exhibition Area, creating convenient channels for products from Global South countries to enter the Chinese market.

However, in disregard of the facts, some Western media hype up the so-called “overcapacity,” “industrial subsidies,” and “export dependence” against China, putting forward the false proposition of “economic rebalancing.” Facts speak louder than words. China’s practice of innovation and opening up is a powerful rebutted to these false accusations.

China’s new energy capacity is advanced capacity that can bridge the world’s “green gap.” The current global new energy capacity falls far short of market demand. The International Energy Agency estimated that global demand for new energy vehicles (NEVs) will reach 45 million units by 2030, over four times the 2022

level, resulting in a demand gap of 27 million units. As the world’s largest NEV producer, consumer and exporter, China is becoming the core pillar filling the gap. In 2024, China produced 12.89 million and sold 12.87 million NEVs respectively, with exports surpassing 2 million for the first time, while over 10 million units served the domestic market. By deeply integrating green technological innovation into the national innovation system, China has made breakthroughs in key technologies such as photovoltaic cell efficiency and NEV manufacturing, significantly reducing costs and laying a solid foundation for the global diffusion of clean energy and green technologies.

The core competitiveness of “Intelligent Manufacturing in China” stems from the innovation strength of Chinese enterprises fostering new quality productive forces. Driven by innovation, China is accelerating the development of new quality productive forces. In the first half of 2025, the value-added output of large-scale high-tech manufacturing increased by 9.5% year-on-year. The production of cutting-edge products such as 3D printing equipments, NEVs, and industrial robots surged by 43.1%, 36.2%, and 35.6% respectively compared with the same period last year. Backed by continuous technological innovation, robust supply chains, and fierce market competition, “Intelligent Manufacturing in China” have gained widespread popularity in global markets, which is the result of the industrious effort of Chinese enterprises. In 2024, China’s total research and development (R&D) expenditure reached 3.6 trillion yuan, ranking second in the world, among which 77% comes from Chinese enterprises investment. China also leads the world in total R&D personnel and science and technology professionals, and it boasts the largest number of top 100 innovation

clusters globally, with more than 460,000 high-tech companies. Fundamentally, China’s industrial competitiveness reflects its innovation capability.

China, leveraging its super large-scale market, is creating shared opportunities for the world. With its super large-scale market, China’s domestic demand is the main engine and anchor of economic growth. Among the hundreds of thousands of Chinese companies that actually exported goods in 2024, nearly 85% also engaged in domestic sales, which accounts for nearly 75% of total sales. The international market is an extension of the domestic market, with the robust domestic circulation providing a solid foundation for the dual circulation development paradigm. On December 1, 2024, China has granted zero-tariff treatment to all LDCs with which it has diplomatic relations, including 33 African nations, on 100% of their products. By March 2025, China’s imports from African LDCs had reached USD 21.42 billion, marking a 15.2 percent year-on-year increase. In June this year, China further announced its readiness to extend the zero-tariff treatment to cover 100% of tariff lines for all 53 African countries that have diplomatic ties with China, and give African LDCs more export access facilitation. China is thus creating more opportunities for Africa and the world through tangible actions.

China’s path of economic innovation is both a journey of self-reliance and determined striving, rooted in its own strengths, and an open road of embracing the world and pursuing win-win cooperation. China’s success stems from market reforms, technological innovation, and high-level opening-up. Narratives such as “overcapacity,” “industrial subsidies,” or “export dependency” ignore China’s



substantial contributions to the global industrial chain stability and growth, and overlook the real needs of Global South countries for energy, technology, and economic development.

A sick person doesn’t get well by forcing others to take the medicine. Those who use “economic rebalancing” to justify protectionism have nothing to gain and will only destabilize global industrial and supply chains, harm emerging sectors and hinder the world’s climate response and green transition. Practice has fully demonstrated that China’s development is an opportunity for the world. China will continue to unswervingly advance high-level opening-up, open the door wider for sharing development opportunities, and bring more stability and certainty to the turbulent world.

Ambassador JIANG Feng is Head of Mission of China to the AU and Representative of China to the UNECA

The Unregulated Profession in Ethiopia: Valuation

■ By Tamrat Mengesha

Valuation is a critical pillar in any modern economy. It underpins financial reporting, capital markets, mergers and acquisitions, taxation, litigation, and investment decision-making. Yet, in Ethiopia, valuation remains a fragmented and unregulated profession, carried out without legal ownership, professional standards, or recognized qualifications. The absence of a comprehensive framework has caused significant damage to trust and confidence in our financial sector—a gap that must urgently be addressed if Ethiopia is to realize its ambition of building a vibrant and credible financial system.

Ethiopia’s Reform Journey: Lessons from Accounting and Capital Market Regulation

In 2014, Ethiopia enacted **Proclamation No. 847/2014**, mandating companies to adopt IFRS for SMEs, Full IFRS, and IPSAS. This proclamation has also mandated the establishment the **Accounting and Auditing Board of Ethiopia (AABE)**, a regulatory body that has since overseen the accounting and auditing profession. While challenges remain, the accounting profession has seen visible progress since its regulation.

Similarly, in 2021, Ethiopia passed **Proclamation No. 1248/2021**, establishing the **Ethiopian Capital Market Authority (ECMA)** and the **Ethiopian Securities Exchange (ESX)**. In just a few years, the capital market legal framework has taken root, paving the way for IPOs, securities trading, and investor participation under a regulated environment.

These reforms show that when a profession is backed by law and governed by a regulator, credibility improves, professional standards are set, and the economy benefits. Unfortunately, valuation—a profession at the heart of these

reforms—remains in legal limbo.

Why Valuation Matters

Valuation touches every critical aspect of Ethiopia’s financial modernization:

- **Capital Markets** – Companies listing on ESX need fair valuations to attract investors.
- **Mergers & Acquisitions (M&A)** – Banks facing recapitalization under NBE’s directive require credible valuations of assets and equity.
- **Financial Reporting** – IFRS and IPSAS demand valuation of assets, financial instruments, and fair value disclosures.
- **Litigation & Taxation** – Courts and tax authorities rely on professional valuation in disputes and assessments.

Yet today, valuations in Ethiopia are often conducted by untrained individuals, with no **Valuation Professional Organizations (VPOs)**, no regulator to set qualification standards, and no adoption of **International Valuation Standards (IVS)**. This creates room for inconsistencies, inflated or understated values, and ultimately, a lack of trust in financial transactions.

Lessons from Neighboring Countries

Ethiopia is lagging behind its peers. Many neighboring African countries have recognized valuation as a regulated profession, established VPOs, and joined the **International Valuation Standards Council (IVSC)**. For example:

- **Kenya** – The Institution of Surveyors of Kenya regulates valuation, and Kenya is a member of IVSC, ensuring alignment with global practices.
- **Tanzania** – Through its Valuers Registration Board, valuation is licensed and monitored, increasing confidence in real estate and financial transactions.

➤ **South Africa** – The South African Institute of Valuers (SAIV) is a full member of IVSC, ensuring professional development, ethics, and global recognition.

These examples highlight how regulatory frameworks not only protect markets but also integrate national economies into global financial systems, attracting investment and enhancing transparency.

Strategies for Ethiopian Lawmakers

To close this critical gap, Ethiopia needs a Valuation Proclamation that establishes a clear legal and institutional framework for the profession. Key strategies include:

- Establishing a Regulatory Authority** – Either as an independent Valuation Board or within an existing body like NBE, ECMA or AABE tasked with oversight, licensing, and discipline.
- Creating Valuation Professional Organizations (VPOs)** – These bodies would register, certify, and build the capacity of professional valuers.
- Adopting International Valuation Standards (IVS)** – Just as IFRS and IPSAS were adopted, IVS should be mandated as the uniform standard for all valuations.
- Capacity Development** – Universities and training institutes should be empowered to develop valuation curricula, certifications, and continuous professional development programs.
- Joining IVSC** – Ethiopia should seek membership to align with global best practices, enhance credibility, and create opportunities for Ethiopian valuers internationally.

Recommendations

- Immediate Action by Parliament** – Draft and enact a Valuation Proclamation

to provide a legal basis for the profession.

- Collaboration between Regulators** – NBE, ECMA and AABE, should jointly push for valuation regulation, given their dependence on reliable valuations.
- Engagement with Regional Partners** – Ethiopia should study the regulatory experiences of Kenya, Tanzania, and South Africa to avoid pitfalls and adopt best practices.
- Public-Private Partnerships** – Encourage professional associations, universities, and private firms to participate in building the valuation profession.
- Awareness and Advocacy** – Stakeholders in banking, insurance, real estate, and capital markets must advocate for valuation reform as a cornerstone of financial sector liberalization.

Conclusion

Ethiopia has taken commendable steps in reforming its financial system—first in accounting, then in capital markets. But valuation remains the missing link. Without a legal framework, valuation will continue to be carried out inconsistently, undermining trust and stability at a time when Ethiopia is opening its financial sector. If lawmakers act decisively to regulate the profession, establish VPOs, and adopt IVS, Ethiopia can safeguard its financial reforms and unlock the confidence needed to attract both domestic and foreign investors.

Valuation is not optional—it is foundational. Ethiopia cannot afford to delay.

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CAPITAL'S TOP 25 ANNUAL SURVEY

Capital has been publishing public opinions for the last 26 years about popular culture and major events in Ethiopia. This year we have selected 25 categories for our readers to answer questions ranging from your favorite actor in 2017 EC to who you think was the most capable politician of 2017 EC? Capital invites you to participate in this survey and help us create a unique profile of our country, the results of which shall be published in our forthcoming issue.



1. Most Progressive Regional State:
2. Most Popular Town or City:
3. Most Capable Politician:
4. Most Efficient Public Office:
5. Most Caring Private Hospital:
6. Most Enterprising Entrepreneur:
7. Most Discussed Local Issue:
8. Most Popular National Project:
9. Ethiopia's Proudest Moment in 2017:
10. Ethiopia's Greatest Opportunity in 2017:
11. Ethiopia's Greatest Concern for 2017:
12. Best Magazine:
13. Best Ethiopian Stage Actor/ Screen Actor:
14. Best Ethiopian Stage Actor/Screen Actress:
15. Best Album:
16. Best Amharic Film:
17. Best Sportsman:
18. Best Sportswoman:
19. Best Entertainment Destination:
20. Best Restaurant:
21. Best Stand Up Comedian:
22. Most Creative Commercial:
23. Scandal of the Year:
24. Favorite Amharic Book of the Year:
25. Most Inspiring Ethiopian Public Personality of the Year:

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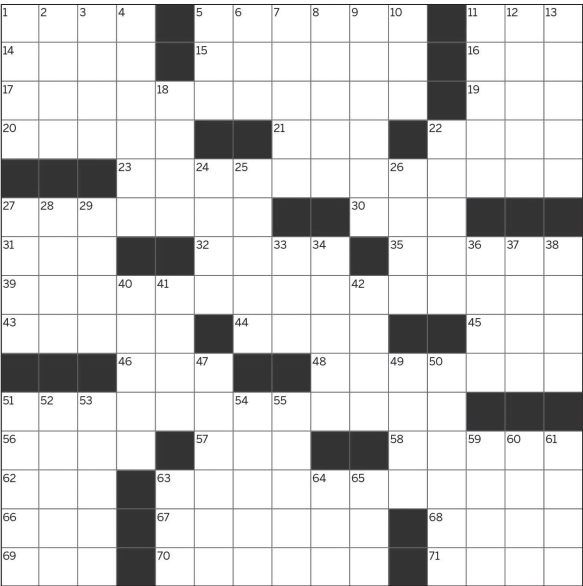
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ACROSS

- 1 Like some histories
- 5 Scents such as freshly baked bread and clean laundry
- 11 Cave mammal
- 14 Zilch
- 15 __ Creed: Mass recitation
- 16 Flamenco cry
- 17 Avant-garde
- 19 Was victorious
- 20 Live and breathe
- 21 Feel under the weather
- 22 Cabin timber
- 23 Assets and liabilities statement
- 27 King Arthur's realm
- 30 Compete in a slalom
- 31 Alias letters
- 32 Dozes (off)
- 35 Archipelago unit
- 39 Stylistic faux pas that puts an editor between a rock and

- a black sheep?
- 43 Take potshots (at)
- 44 Repeated word in a Doris Day classic
- 45 Tear (apart)
- 46 Archer's asset
- 48 Positives
- 51 Illumination that sets a tone
- 56 Storylines
- 57 Salty expanse
- 58 Pirouetting, say
- 62 Tabby
- 63 List of top-scoring players, and what the start of 17-, 23-, 39-, or 51-Across could be called?
- 66 Feasted on
- 67 Achieve fame
- 68 Arancini ingredient
- 69 Sopping
- 70 Organized workflow
- 71 Flair

DOWN

- 1 __ upon a time
- 2 Gumbo thickener
- 3 Against
- 4 Doesn't disturb
- 5 Rashida's "Parks and Recreation" role
- 6 Fix, as a fight
- 7 Atlantic, for one
- 8 Soldier trained in first aid
- 9 "I teach geometry, so I know all the __": math professor's quip
- 10 Observe
- 11 "Starman" singer David
- 12 Unaccompanied
- 13 Core belief
- 18 Lang. of Rome
- 22 Run an email scam
- 24 __ division
- 25 Molecule makeup
- 26 Pass over
- 27 Zoom devices, familiarly
- 28 Related (to)
- 29 Ankle-length skirt

- 33 Hollywood ending?
- 34 Confident stride
- 36 "Bridgerton" title
- 37 Cleveland's lake
- 38 Baking amts.
- 40 Apple tablets
- 41 Singer Diamond
- 42 Heritage celebrated in May, for short
- 47 Great suffering
- 49 Hoity-toity type
- 50 Send to voicemail, perhaps
- 51 Colorful parrot
- 52 Deliver a speech
- 53 Chamber music configuration
- 54 Bike parts
- 55 "You've never __ so good"
- 59 Follow covertly
- 60 Marine apex predator
- 61 Idyllic place
- 63 __ Vegas Aces
- 64 Night before
- 65 "Shiny Happy People" band

Solution: see below



WEEKLY HOROSCOPES

Aries

You may be feeling particularly social now. The energy that caused misunderstandings and delays is easing. All the same, focus on keeping regular schedules and working hard to deliver what you've promised. This is a good time for team building through relaxing and enjoyable activities. Wait to start anything new. There can be confrontations with others. Keep things simple when emotions are running high.



Cancer

This period could bring your feelings close to the surface. Conflict in the workplace can be improved by supporting an open dialog where all sides feel they're being heard. This is a fortunate time if you're looking for a job. Your work ethic and community connections will support you. The energy supports research and solving mysteries. Be patient with other people's wild ideas. Entrepreneurs find practical support for careful planning now.



Libra

The energy is very unsettled. Your best hope of getting a job or making the right decision is now. After this, it's best to go with the flow. You may be feeling especially lazy or else particularly creative and imaginative. Those with artistic careers will be most at home with this energy. You can expand your customer base. Travel for work is favored as well. Set long-term financial goals. Feel free to quit working early.



Capricorn

Endless little misunderstandings, delays, or mechanical breakdowns will begin to subside. Jump into any area that requires written or spoken reports. This is also a positive time for marketing efforts. You may find strong support for your creative imagination. Expect good working relationships. Things could be more stressful later. Your plans may be limited or challenged. The energy brings strong feelings.

Taurus

The stresses of the last few weeks could seem to continue. An expansive energy can have you feeling especially anxious. Take time to clean and put your workspace in better order. Update goals and objectives. Make new lists. All these efforts will help you feel more centered and in control. Steadily improving your skills will pay long-term benefits. Don't feel you're a failure for not being perfect.



Leo

Expect the unexpected. The energy supports expanded opportunities for travel and education. This is a lucky time to apply for work. This period can see you feeling rather emotional. It's important not to say the wrong thing. It's a good time to market a product or service. Accidents are possible if you move too quickly. The energy supports planning. Managers may have to put in extra hours to keep things on track.



Scorpio

Focus on doing your best now. Scattered energy can make people and situations unpredictable. If you've been considering a change of career, this is a good time to make serious plans to move in a new direction. Don't take rumors to heart. Many people are stressed and off balance. The energy encourages a realistic approach to financial matters. Honesty and specific goals serve your best interests. Managers will find practical support.



Aquarius

You may be able to present products, deal easily with the public, and find moneymaking opportunities now. You might have to put in long hours, but you'll be building a better future. Be cautious about well-meaning friends or co-workers who could give you mistaken advice. The energy increases your natural intuition. Trust your first impulse in any situation. The cosmos could bring stressful confrontations.

Gemini

You have the opportunity to make important decisions now. Be prepared to accept certain unavoidable losses in work and personal concerns. You'll discover that these apparent troubles and setbacks are often necessary adjustments. Things aren't as bad as they may seem. This is especially true in the case of people who stubbornly refuse to accept a change of structure in the workplace. Think for yourself.



Virgo

This period will bring many to a crossroads. Decisions you make now can set the tone for the next six months. This is positive for applying for a job or upgrading your current position. Other people may be stressed now. Be ready to cope with mechanical breakdowns and emotional meltdowns. Your competence and sense of humor will help keep things on track. This is a powerful time to revise current goals.



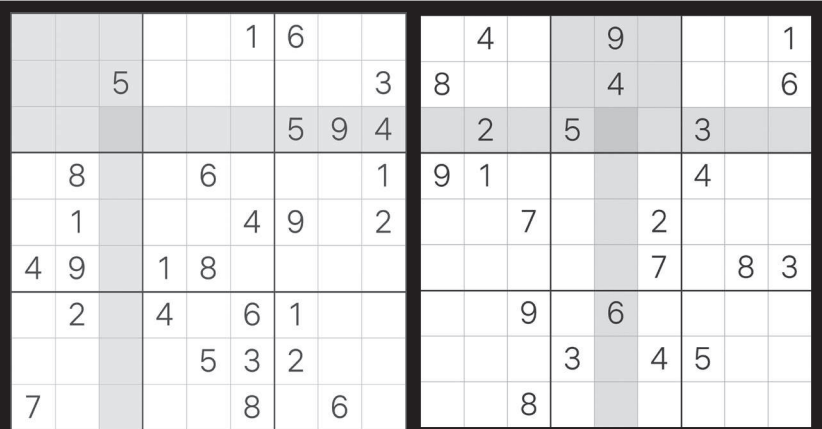
Sagittarius

After weeks of delays and review of already established agreements, the energy begins to flow again now. This can be an uneventful period that offers you the opportunity to get a lot done. Don't neglect necessary details. Ignore any rumors or gossip in the workplace. Be as honest and direct as possible when working with the public. The energy can make people impulsive and demanding. Work matters will flow quite easily for you today.



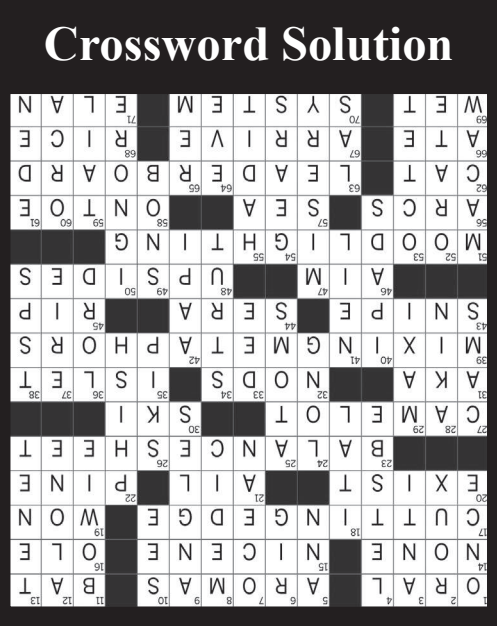
Pisces

Some of the frustration you may have been feeling in the last few weeks will begin to ease now. All the same, you need to be patient and methodical in your approach. This is a positive time for any situation involving communications, marketing, and transportation issues. You have good ideas, but don't expect to be heard yet. This could be an aggravating period in some respects. Try not to take rumors or criticism to heart.



Sudoku

The game is easy, the rules are simple. All you have to do is make sure you fill every 3x3 box every row and every column, without repetition, using the number 1-9.



Capital

SPORT

By Michael Samson
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East Africa’s upgraded stadiums spark a robust vision for sports tourism

Co-hosted by Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania, the 2024 African Nations Championship (CHAN) convenes Africa’s most skilled footballers to East African pitches. The tournament has catalyzed a reimagining of sports tourism and infrastructure in East Africa.

By Bonface Orucho, bird story agency

The 2024 CHAN, a tournament exclusively for home-based players, has given Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania a shared and immovable deadline to meet international hosting standards.

For Kenya, the deadline has been matched by form on the pitch. The Harambee Stars are enjoying a dream run, booking a quarter-final slot after edging Zambia 1 – 0 on Sunday. The team has also won over two-time champions Morocco.

According to Football Kenya Federation (FKF) official Michael Senelwa, the infrastructure gains are as significant as the football.

“These facilities are an investment in positioning East Africa as a serious contender for bigger tournaments like AFCON,” he said in a call.

This is the first time CHAN has been staged across three countries, and the coordination it has required is already shaping future multi-nation hosting bids.

According to The East African, joint preparations included harmonizing CAF compliance benchmarks, standardizing construction schedules, and coordinating cross-border inspections.

Sports economist Isaac Yegon says the infrastructure rush could succeed if linked to grassroots development and urban planning.

“If managed well, these venues can anchor sports academies, draw private sector investment into surrounding zones, and strengthen a pipeline of talent and events,” he said in a call.

Kenya’s CHAN preparations have been the most capital-intensive in the region. Kasarani Stadium, one of the country’s main venues, underwent a KSh 3.6 billion (over US\$27 million) refurbishment, with an additional KSh 3.1 billion (about US\$24 million) budgeted for a second phase, according to the Ministry of Sports.

Upgrades include a new hybrid pitch, CAF-approved LED floodlights, modernised player facilities, upgraded media tribunes,

and expanded VIP seating.

Upgrades at Nyayo Stadium improved the seating, broadcast systems, and security measures to meet CAF standards.

The centerpiece of Kenya’s push, however, is Talanta Stadium, a 60,000-seat, multi-sport arena under construction at a cost of KSh 44.7 billion (US\$344.5 million).

With construction still in progress, the stadium is financed through a bond issued by Linzi Finco, the financing arm of Liaison Group. The project anchors a larger “Talanta Sports City” complex.

The Sports City will integrate training grounds, housing for athletes, hotels, a conference space, and a transport hub.

Officials say the goal is to make it a year-round sports, events, and tourism hub, avoiding the “tournament-only” syndrome that has plagued other mega-venues across Africa, according to CAF.

Beyond the bricks and mortar, CHAN has also tested new systems. During the opening match against the DRC, several fans entered into Kasarani stadium

without authorization and misconducted themselves. A fine of \$50,000 placed on Kenya over security and safety breaches has forced the country’s football federation to work harder to ease stadium congestion. It has also improved digital ticketing.

For Uganda, CHAN provided the push to complete the long-delayed upgrade of Mandela National Stadium, better known as Namboole.

Closed since 2019 after failing CAF inspections, the stadium has undergone extensive work: reinforced roofing, a re-laid natural grass pitch with new drainage, upgraded locker rooms, improved medical facilities, and modernized broadcast suites.

Seating has been replaced and expanded in line with CAF and FIFA standards, while new floodlights now allow for evening matches.

According to the Ministry of Education and Sports, the project is financed through a mix of government funding and private partnerships.

According to Senelwa, its reopening repositions Uganda “on the continental hosting map” and will serve as a hub for athletics, rugby, and national events beyond football.

Tanzania’s Benjamin Mkapa Stadium, already one of Africa’s largest with a 60,000-seat capacity, required targeted upgrades to meet CAF requirements.

These included a new irrigation system, refurbished tunnels and changing rooms, upgraded security surveillance, and improved VIP and media facilities.

The Samia Suluhu Hassan Stadium is also under construction, costing over US\$112 million (about Tsh286.72 billion).

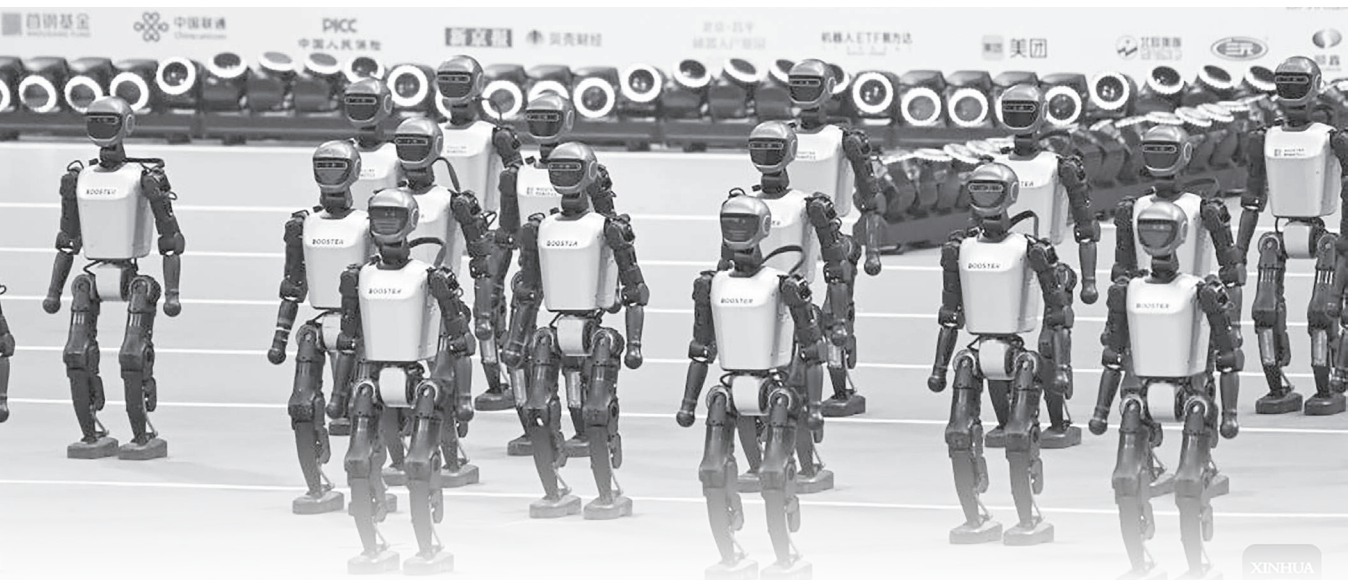
In addition, Tanzania has invested in secondary training grounds in Dar es Salaam to accommodate visiting teams and reduce wear on the main pitch. The government has tied these upgrades to its wider sports-tourism plan, branding CHAN as an opportunity to market coastal attractions and the country’s MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, Exhibitions) potential.

Senelwa cautions that the challenge is not delivery, but legacy.

“The test comes after the final whistle. These stadiums need consistent use, from local leagues to school tournaments, to justify the billions spent.”

Past African tournaments offer mixed lessons. Morocco’s stadiums from CHAN 2018 have been integrated into local football, while venues from AFCON 2010 in Angola and AFCON 2012 in Gabon-Equatorial Guinea have struggled to find consistent use.

With CHAN still in progress, the matches remain the main spectacle. But if East Africa can turn its new stadiums into year-round engines of sport and commerce, CHAN 2024 may be remembered less for the football itself than for the infrastructure it left behind.



WORLD HUMANOID ROBOT GAMES OPEN IN BEIJING

The World Humanoid Robot Games, an international sports competition for human-form robots, opened in Beijing on Thursday.

The event, hosted by the Chinese capital's municipal government and other entities, comes amid the nation's efforts to boost the capabilities of humanoid robots.

Robots developed by companies and students in 16 countries, including Japan, marched into the venue for the opening ceremony.

A robot developed by a Beijing-based firm represented the contestants. It declared they will compete for the future

by utilizing wisdom, while inheriting the will of humankind and exerting the power of science and technology.

Robots later participated in various sports. Spectators at a soccer match erupted in laughter when competitors collided with each other and fell in the pitch before being dragged away.

Full-fledged competitions begin on Friday. A total of more than 500 robots are scheduled to take part in 26 events ranging from track and field to dancing and martial arts.

The Chinese government is seeking to advance the level of the country's humanoid robotics to the world's top tier by 2027.



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