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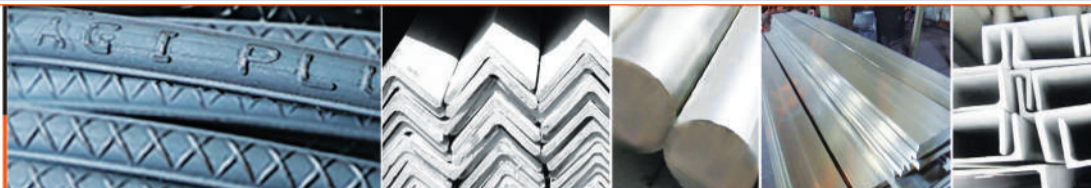
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MPC expected to hold credit cap as inflation rebounds despite falling money market rates

By Muluken Yewondwossen

The National Bank of Ethiopia's (NBE) Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) is expected to maintain its current monetary policy stance at its meeting next week, with market observers anticipating no immediate changes to the country's bank credit growth cap despite renewed calls from industry experts to ease

lending restrictions for key productive sectors. The meeting comes as Ethiopia's macroeconomic indicators send mixed signals. While inflation has resumed its upward trajectory after briefly falling into single digits, money market interest rates—including Treasury bill (T-bill) and Open Market Operations (OMO) yields—have declined sharply, with some falling into single-digit territory.

Financial sector experts argue that these conflicting trends warrant a reassessment of the NBE's blanket credit growth restrictions, particularly for export-oriented industries, manufacturing, agribusiness, and other productive sectors that are considered less inflationary.

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Ethiopia needs a developmental state that delivers

With Ethiopia having just conducted its election, the country now enters another crucial political moment: translating political legitimacy into tangible results. Elections matter, but what matters even more is whether the new governing order can deliver stability, economic growth and a clearer development direction.

That is why Ethiopia should look closely at governance models that emphasize planning, discipline and long-term execution. The question is not whether the country should copy another nation's system. It is whether Ethiopia can adopt a more coherent, results-driven approach to development at a time when public expectations are high and economic pressures remain intense.

For too long, many African governments have treated development as a series of disconnected promises rather than a sustained national project. A stronger model would begin with one simple principle: the state must have the capacity to set priorities, coordinate institutions and follow through. Without that, even the best election results produce little change in daily life.

Ethiopia's recent election gives the country a chance to reset. The government now has the political space to define a clear national agenda, align ministries around shared objectives and commit to measurable outcomes. That means moving beyond short-term politics and toward a development strategy that can survive beyond one electoral cycle.

A useful model would be one rooted in continuity, not improvisation. It would set long-term targets in infrastructure, industry, agriculture, education and technology, then build the administrative discipline needed to achieve them. Development does not happen because leaders announce ambitions; it happens because institutions execute them consistently.

That is especially important for Ethiopia, where the demands are enormous. The country needs jobs for a rapidly growing population, reliable services, stronger transport links, and greater productivity in both urban and rural economies. It also needs a state that can manage reform without constant disruption. The test of leadership after an election is not rhetoric, but delivery.

One lesson from successful developmental states is that governance must be tied to outcomes. Public policy should not be measured only by speeches, political symbolism or elite consensus. It should be measured by whether roads are built, factories operate, farmers earn more, schools function better and young people see real opportunities.

Ethiopia can learn from systems that place emphasis on long-term planning and policy consistency. Such systems are not perfect, and no model can be transplanted wholesale. But the underlying discipline is worth studying. Countries that advance quickly usually do so because their governments remain focused, organized and patient enough to see reforms through.

The post-election period is also the right moment to strengthen national cohesion. Elections often expose divisions, but they also create opportunities for a broader social contract. If the government can frame development as a shared national project, it may be able to reduce political friction and build wider public trust. Citizens are more likely to support reform when they can see a credible path to better livelihoods.

Ethiopia also needs a sharper sense of strategic autonomy. In a world shaped by global competition, the country should engage external partners on the basis of its own priorities, not someone else's agenda. That means using partnerships to expand infrastructure, technology transfer, investment and skills, while ensuring that national interests remain at the center.

The key point is this: Ethiopia does not need another abstract policy framework. It needs a governing philosophy that combines vision with execution. The election has provided the political mandate. The next step is turning that mandate into a developmental agenda that ordinary people can feel.

That agenda should include stronger institutions, more disciplined budgeting, better project management and a clearer focus on productive sectors. It should also include a renewed commitment to merit, accountability and policy coordination. These are not glamorous reforms, but they are the ones that determine whether a country progresses or stalls.

If Ethiopia's new leadership is serious about the promise of change, it must treat this moment as more than a political transition. It should be the beginning of a development turn — one that is practical, disciplined and national in scope.

Ethiopia has already spoken through the ballot box. Now it must speak through results.



■ By Alexandra del Castillo

COMMENT

Building the next generation of climate-conscious innovators

“The future of Africa's climate is not something we wait for – it is something we build.” In a discussion with Africa Renewal, Fatima Zannah Mustapha describes what drives her to create climate innovations that support the community while helping the environment.

Growing up in Borno State of Nigeria, Fatima Zannah Mustapha, witnessed how climate change impacts further compounded existing vulnerabilities – intensifying food insecurity, economic instability, and displacement. For many community members, especially women and young people, environmental degradation is not a distant crisis but a daily reality.

A defining turning point for her was observing how declining agricultural productivity limited opportunities, and how those most affected by these challenges were excluded from innovative solutions.

“This shaped my commitment to building practical, inclusive, and scalable climate solutions that empower women and young people to adapt and lead in their own communities” she says.

Empowering women and youth in climate and tech

As an award-winning tech innovator, Fatima is passionate about amplifying women's voices in the tech field and is deeply committed to using technology as a tool for inclusion and transformation. Her passion for tech engagement stems from her experience in training over 500 women in digital skills, where she saw firsthand how access to technology can unlock economic opportunities and confidence. This journey naturally evolved into climate action, as she recognized that equipping women and girls with digital and technical skills enables them to develop and lead innovative climate solutions within their communities.

In 2007, Fatima co-founded the Future Prowess Foundation, an award-winning organization dedicated to empowering vulnerable populations — particularly women, youth, and refugees — through education, technology, and sustainable development. The Foundation's mission is to bridge inequality gaps by providing access to digital skills, climate education, and economic opportunities, enabling communities to build resilience and sustainable livelihoods. Through the Foundation, Fatima leads an integrated approach to climate action that combines green farming, digital empowerment, and innovative agricultural solutions.

“We train women and youth in climate-smart agriculture, including sustainable farming, tree planting, and environmental stewardship,” Fatima explains, “We're equipping them with the tools to not only become drivers of climate solutions but also improve agricultural productivity and resilience in their communities.”

One of the foundation's key innovations is the advancement of plant tissue culture, which allows for the production of high-quality, disease-free planting materials that improve crop yield and resilience. Through this work, women and girls gain access to improved, high-yield planting materials that increase agricultural productivity, strengthen food security, and create sustainable income streams for their households and communities.

Shifting perceptions on climate solutions

When Africa Renewal asked Fatima about any challenges she's encountered in her work, she explained that implementing innovative climate solutions in underserved regions is crucial – but it comes with its challenges. Fatima flags how limited technical infrastructure and resources can make it difficult, especially when trying to advance methods such as tissue culture and climate-smart agriculture systems.

She further explains that driving these innovative solutions also requires building trust with partners, continuous training, and demonstrating concrete and effective impacts as many communities heavily rely on traditional farming methods as Fatima explains. Additionally, gender barriers continue to limit women's access to resources despite their central role in agricultural practices.

Fatima sees potential: “By building strong partnerships and leading community-driven approaches, we continue to overcome these barriers and scale sustainable impact that position climate actions as an opportunity for innovation, leadership, and economic growth”.

She recalls a time when early efforts to introduce modern farming methods, including climate smart agriculture in Borno State, were initially met with some resistance. Fatima explains that establishing climate-smart demonstration farms helped overcome this barrier by allowing residents to observe the techniques firsthand. She says that demonstrating higher yields and engaging local women as trainers and leaders proved pivotal, ultimately driving increased adoption of sustainable practices, improving food production, and strengthening community resilience.

From vulnerability to leadership

“We are not just witnesses to climate change – we are innovators, problem-solvers, and leaders of solutions the world needs,” says Fatima, “Africa has the potential to lead a new model of climate resilience rooted in community, creativity, and sustainability.”

From 2018 to 2025, the Future Prowess Foundation has implemented several impactful community projects, including digital literacy programs, climate-smart agriculture training, and women empowerment initiatives. The Foundation has already seen a positive impact in communities across Maiduguri and other parts of Borno State, including Jere and surrounding rural areas.

Currently active in Northeast Nigeria, particularly in Maiduguri, Fatima continues to provide women and young people with the tools to create positive climate change within their communities and daily interactions. She is leading projects that integrate climate-smart agriculture, digital empowerment, and emerging technologies such as AI to expand sustainable impact. She hopes to scale this approach across Nigeria and Africa, creating a network of youth-led, technology-driven climate solutions.

“If we act with purpose and urgency, we can transform our story from vulnerability to leadership.”

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From Quarry Town to Green Haven: How Yucun Village Reinvented Itself



YUCUN, China

Nestled among breathtaking mountain landscapes, a charming artisan shop called Family Rules & Precepts stands as a living symbol of China's remarkable rural revitalization. Owned by Mr. Ge Yuanhe, the shop reflects the success of the country's "Green Revival" program, which transformed Yucun Village from a polluted mining community into a thriving ecotourism destination.

Stepping inside the shop is like entering a gallery of handcrafted treasures. Every shelf displays intricate household decorations meticulously created by Mr. Ge himself—from delicate keepsakes to striking centerpiece sculptures. Each piece showcases years of craftsmanship and a deep appreciation for the natural beauty that now surrounds the village.

The displays are thoughtfully arranged to capture visitors' attention, but the experience extends far beyond shopping. Guests are warmly welcomed with freshly brewed tea and local snacks before browsing the diverse collection of artworks, with pieces available to suit a variety of budgets.

The beauty of the artwork is matched by its creator. Mr. Ge's warm smile and gentle personality immediately put visitors at ease. His eyes light up as he explains the story behind each creation, revealing how local stone and natural materials inspire his work. Compliment his craftsmanship, and he modestly laughs before inviting guests into his small workshop at the back of the store. There, using only a handful of simple machines, he patiently cuts, polishes, and shapes raw rock into elegant decorative pieces.

The journey through his creative world continues downstairs, where a vibrant "ladies' zone" showcases beautifully handcrafted bags made from local bamboo, fine leather, and colorful fabrics. Together, the collections celebrate both traditional craftsmanship and the entrepreneurial spirit that has flourished in modern-day Yucun. The success of Family Rules & Precepts is



Ge Yuanhe


closely intertwined with Yucun's extraordinary transformation.

Located in Tianhuangping Township, Anji County, Huzhou City, approximately two and a half hours from Hangzhou Airport, Yucun is surrounded by lush green mountains near the provincial border. Today, its tranquil scenery makes it difficult to imagine that the village was once scarred by decades of mining and environmental degradation.

Less than two decades ago, Yucun relied heavily on quarrying and mining industries that generated income but left behind polluted air, damaged landscapes, and declining living conditions. As China introduced its "Green Revival" initiative in the early 2000s, local authorities made the bold decision to close heavily polluting mines and embrace a new development model centered on environmental restoration.

The village invested in ecological conservation, infrastructure improvements, and rural beautification while encouraging residents to

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build businesses around tourism, traditional crafts, agriculture, and hospitality. Former miners and their families found new opportunities as entrepreneurs, artisans, guesthouse owners, and tourism operators. Mr. Ge Yuanhe's journey mirrors this transformation. Rather than relying on extractive industries, he now earns a living by creating handcrafted artwork that celebrates the very natural environment once threatened by pollution. His shop has become one of many local businesses benefiting from the steady flow of visitors drawn to Yucun's picturesque landscapes and rich cultural heritage. The results have been remarkable. Yucun now welcomes more than 1.5 million visitors each year, generating tourism revenue exceeding 36 million yuan (approximately US\$5 million). The village has also earned recognition as one

of China's leading rural tourism destinations and currently sits just one star short of the prestigious national 5A tourist attraction rating. Yucun has been recognized as one of the UN Tourism Best Tourism Villages in 2021. Today, Yucun stands as a powerful example of how environmental rehabilitation, sustainable tourism, and community entrepreneurship can work hand in hand. Its journey from polluted mining town to flourishing eco-village demonstrates that protecting natural resources can become the foundation for lasting economic prosperity. For visitors, the story is evident not only in the emerald mountains surrounding the village but also in places like Family Rules & Precepts, where every handcrafted piece tells the story of a community that transformed hardship into opportunity.

NBE quietly lays groundwork for distributed ledger currency exploration

By our staff reporter

The National Bank of Ethiopia (NBE) announced that it is laying a critical foundation to deploy a home-grown digital currency based on Distributed Ledger Technology (DLT). Speaking at the Huawei Finance summit 2026, Naoll Addisu Senior Technology Advisor to the Governor of the National Bank, Senior Technology Advisor to the Governor of the National Bank, revealed that the bank has dispatched a survey to assess the public's readiness for this blockchain-built digital currency. This initiative is part of a robust effort under the "Digital Ethiopia 2030" vision to transform the country from a conventional financial structure into a financial hub that is "nurtured by home-grown values and driven by digital technology." The National Bank began exploring this digital currency technology exactly 60 years after the institution's establishment in 1966. This marks a

historic transition, moving from the 19th-century "Amole Chew" (salt bar) currency alternative and the silver coin minted from silver bullion for the first time in 1894 into the era of Smart-Contract digital currency. According to Naoll, the modern role of the National Bank extends far beyond traditional monetary policy regulation or acting as a lender of last resort. To facilitate this upcoming wave of Financial Intelligence (Fin Intelligence), the bank is undergoing an extensive internal structural overhaul. Previously, Central Bank Governor Eyob Tekalign acknowledged that the central bank had officially begun studying central bank digital currencies (CBDCs). The Governor stated that the bank is currently conducting a detailed evaluation of potential "retail central bank digital currency" models and the implications of issuing a digital Birr. At a time when central banks around the world are adapting to new forms of

money—including "stablecoins" and other digital instruments—the Governor indicated that the work is still in the exploration and study phase, noting, "While we do not yet fully know exactly what it means, we heavily need to study the matter deeply." According to the Advisor, a new "Technology Cluster" led at the Deputy Governor level has been established, reporting directly to the Governor of the bank. This cluster consolidates infrastructure operations, analytics, and innovation directorates. Alongside this, a new "Financial Infrastructure Supervision Directorate" has been organized to oversee ecosystem resilience, data security, and emerging digital payment systems. This exploration of digital currency is directly tied to the National Bank's values of "Utilitarian Innovation" and "Digital Sovereignty." In his briefing to international technology partners, the Advisor urged that future financial technologies should address tangible societal challenges—

such as boosting agricultural productivity and expanding financial inclusion—rather than extracting wealth from the poor. For his part, Eric Yuan, CEO of Huawei Ethiopia, stated that beyond the digital and mobile banking transition the financial industry underwent over the past decade, it is now shifting into a smarter, artificial intelligence (AI)-driven, and customer-centric era. Since this global shift has brought rapid digital banking expansion and financial inclusion to Ethiopia, Huawei has pledged, through its "RONGHAI" ecosystem program, to support the country's financial institutions in building robust infrastructure, optimizing data utilization, and accelerating the AI transition. Emphasizing that this modern financial future cannot be built by a single institution alone, he explained that collective collaboration among regulatory bodies, banks, and technology partners is the primary foundation for innovation and growth.



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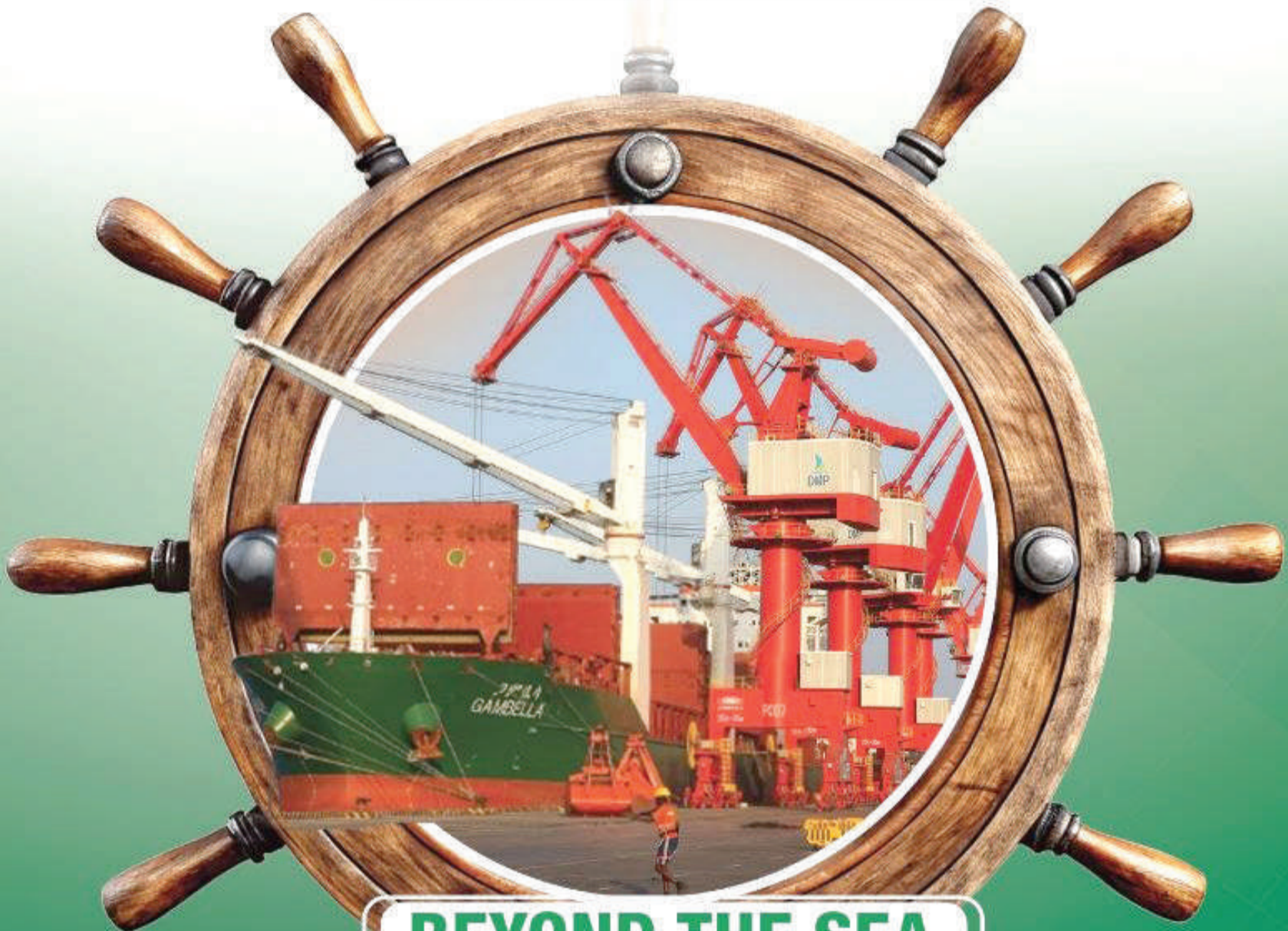
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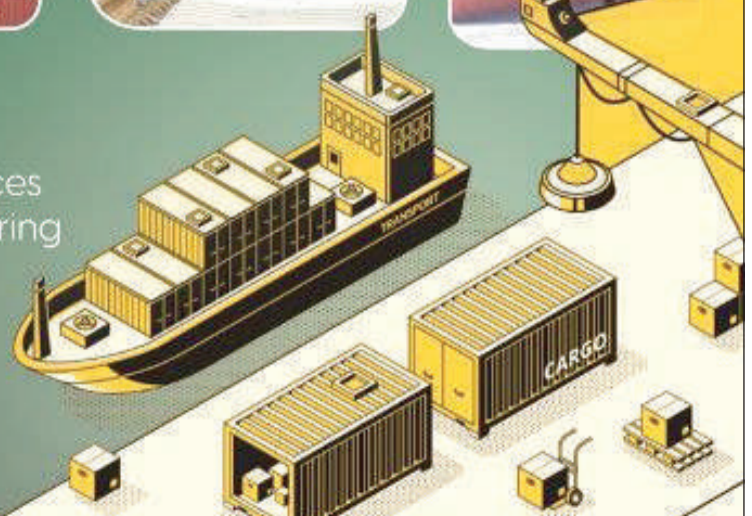
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MPC expected to hold . . .

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The central bank had previously announced plans to fully remove the bank credit growth cap—introduced in August 2023 to curb inflationary pressures—at the start of the Ethiopian New Year in September 2025. However, that expectation was not realized during the first MPC meeting of the fiscal year held at the end of September. Earlier, the MPC, which now includes two external members alongside NBE officials, increased the annual credit growth ceiling from 14 percent to 18 percent, citing easing inflation, tight monetary conditions, and improved supply-side developments. More in September, the committee raised the cap again to 24 percent for the remainder of the current fiscal year. Despite these adjustments, bankers and financial sector experts told Capital they do not expect the committee to recommend lifting or significantly relaxing the credit growth restriction during next week's meeting. Some analysts even anticipate the central bank could tighten monetary policy further as inflation accelerates once again. According to experts familiar with discussions between Ethiopian authorities and development partners, the NBE has revised its original timetable. Instead of removing the cap at the beginning of the fiscal year, authorities have now committed to phasing it out gradually by the end of 2026. As a result, analysts believe the upcoming MPC meeting is unlikely

to produce any major shift in policy regarding the credit cap. The credit growth cap was introduced in 2023 when Ethiopia's annual inflation exceeded 20 percent. Since then, inflation had steadily declined, supported by tighter monetary policy, improved fiscal discipline, and the government's decision to discontinue direct central bank financing. Headline inflation fell to 9.7 percent in February 2026—the first single-digit reading in more than eight years. However, inflation has since accelerated, reaching 13.4 percent in May. Analysts attribute much of the renewed price pressure to external shocks, particularly disruptions stemming from the conflict in the Middle East and concerns over shipping through the Strait of Hormuz, which have pushed up global energy costs and import prices. While inflation has risen again, money market indicators have moved in the opposite direction. Since May, the NBE has accepted OMO bids at an allotment rate of around 11 percent, well below the central bank's 15 percent policy rate. Treasury bill yields have also fallen sharply. During the latest bi-monthly auction held on Wednesday, the government offered 28 billion birr in securities but received bids totaling nearly 97 billion birr, underscoring abundant liquidity in the banking system. The

cutoff yield for the 28-day T-bill was just 7 percent. Eshetu Fantaye, a veteran banking executive and financial expert with more than three decades of experience, believes the sharp decline in money market yields reflects excess liquidity created by the credit growth cap. "Banks have substantial funds that they cannot deploy through lending because of the credit cap," Eshetu told Capital. "As a result, they are investing heavily in Treasury bills and other short-term instruments simply to earn some return, even if the yields are relatively low." He warned that maintaining a blanket credit restriction across all sectors could ultimately undermine economic growth and even contribute to inflation by constraining domestic production. "The central bank should distinguish between inflationary and non-inflationary sectors," he said. "Applying the same lending restriction to all sectors ignores the different contributions they make to the economy." According to Eshetu, manufacturers, exporters, agribusinesses, and medium-sized enterprises are treated no differently from sectors that generate greater inflationary pressure. "Banks naturally prefer lending to businesses that are simpler and more profitable unless the regulator provides targeted incentives or guidance," he said. Industry experts argue that the lending restriction is limiting

access to working capital for manufacturers and exporters. Factories producing edible oil, pharmaceuticals, steel, and other essential goods are struggling to finance raw material purchases despite helping address supply shortages that could ease inflation. Some firms continue paying wages while operating below capacity because they cannot secure sufficient financing. Exporters face similar challenges, with limited access to pre-export financing affecting their ability to fulfill international contracts and generate foreign exchange earnings. Eshetu suggested that the NBE establish a dedicated unit to oversee sector-specific credit allocation rather than applying a uniform lending ceiling across the banking industry. "Targeted credit management would stimulate production, increase supply, and support economic growth without necessarily fueling inflation," he said. Meanwhile, Ethiopia is awaiting the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) Fifth Review under the Extended Credit Facility (ECF), with the IMF Executive Board expected to meet on July 1. Speaking at a press briefing on Thursday, IMF Communications Director Julie Kozack said the review will include a proposal to rephase disbursements under the program by bringing forward approximately 200 million USD to help Ethiopia address the economic

impact of the Middle East conflict and rising energy prices, while maintaining the program's total access at 3.4 billion USD. "The staff report following Board approval will contain the revised disbursement profile for the remainder of the program," Kozack said, adding that future reviews will continue assessing Ethiopia's evolving financing needs. Separately, NBE Governor Eyob Tekalign recently said Ethiopia's macroeconomic reforms have significantly improved the country's debt outlook. Speaking at an event organized by the Office of the Prime Minister, the governor expressed confidence that the IMF's assessment would conclude that Ethiopia's public debt has become sustainable, with the country's debt-to-GDP ratio expected to improve further over the coming year. Despite renewed debate over the effectiveness of the credit growth cap, market participants largely expect the MPC to maintain its current policy stance at next week's meeting. For many economists, the central question is no longer whether the cap should eventually be removed, but how the central bank can transition toward a fully interest rate-based monetary policy framework while ensuring sufficient credit reaches productive sectors that drive growth, expand exports, and support long-term price stability.

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The Fabric of Innovation: Capital Explores Asia's Largest Textile Hub

■ SHAOXING, China

In the bustling Keqiao District of Shaoxing (Zhejiang Province), the sheer scale of global commerce materializes in a dizzying labyrinth of fabric, color, and machinery. This is China Textile City—an industrial cluster officially recognized as the largest textile distribution hub in Asia. Responsible for trading roughly a quarter of the world's apparel fabrics annually, the mega-cluster serves as the undisputed beating heart of the global garment supply chain. Capital gained access to this sprawling industrial marvel to evaluate firsthand how the modern textile ecosystem operates.

While the market is traditionally renowned for its staggering trade volume, a profound structural evolution is taking place beneath its surface. The era of low-cost, uniform mass production is rapidly yielding to an agile framework driven by intensive seasonal market research, color forecasting, and hyper-rapid trend alignment. To understand this paradigm shift, Capital spoke with one of the 5,000 plus advanced boutique mills in Keqiao, finding a prime example in a prominent manufacturing and design supplier known by its English trade initialization, SSTY.

Companies matching this high-end profile typically anchor their operations in premium showrooms or corporate design spaces within the East Market or Union Market sectors of Keqiao. Unlike the traditional stalls of raw or stock materials, these specific zones are explicitly designated for high-end, fast-fashion, and trend-setting apparel fabrics.

Operating as a high-end Original Design Manufacturer (ODM), SSTY bypasses the conventional model of simply processing mass orders for basic textiles. Instead, the firm channels significant capital into custom sample creation, specializing heavily in high-performance, trend-forward fashion bases. Their production capabilities focus tightly on knitted jerseys, premium spandex blends, high-stretch scubas, and technical jacquards specifically tailored for modern street fashion, casual leisurewear, and athletic apparel. Pushing the boundaries of material science further, their latest addition to their portfolio features an advanced UV-protection fabric designed specifically for the surging casual outdoor apparel market.

SSTY perfectly exemplifies the lean scale and strategic



supply chain positioning of a highly specialized, agile boutique design and trading mill. Operating with a core team of around 70 employees, the company maintains a

remarkably high-efficiency framework. In Keqiao, these next-generation firms keep their vital R&D, design, quality control (QC), and brand-management teams completely

in-house.

Rather than burdening themselves with massive, inflexible infrastructure, they leverage Keqiao's extensive, hyper-interconnected regional network of specialized local dyeing and weaving facilities, explains SSTY's founder. This allows them to scale physical production upward or downward almost instantly.

This design-first framework is precisely why a mid-sized team of 70 can successfully anchor the supply chains for China's largest domestic clothing brands and fast-fashion giants.

They act as the agile creative engine that converts global runway trends into shelf-ready fabrics at record speeds.

As developing nations look to scale their own industrial manufacturing footprints, the Keqiao model—and the lively blueprint demonstrated by innovators like SSTY—offers a compelling case study. True supply chain dominance is no longer achieved merely by operating the largest factories, but by commanding the fastest, most intelligent bridge between design inspiration and production reality.

Zemen Bank to provide sharia-compliant services across its 142 branches and dedicated windows

Our staff reporter

Zemen Bank, renowned for delivering modern banking services through innovation and technology, has announced the official launch of its interest-free banking service under the brand name "Z-Qamar." The bank stated that it will deliver this new service nationwide across its 142 branches through fully dedicated windows and standalone specialized branches tailored for this purpose.

During his opening speech at the service's launching ceremony, Zemen Bank's CEO, Dereje Zebene, highlighted that this Sharia-compliant service marks the next chapter in the bank's 17-year journey of excellence. Recalling that the bank operated with a limited



number of branches shortly after its establishment, he emphasized that it is currently expanding its horizons to achieve universal accessibility based on community needs.

The CEO further explained that the service name "Z-Qamar" combines Zemen Bank's signature "Z" with the Arabic word "Qamar,"

which translates to "Moon." This symbolizes quality, sustainability, modernity, and innovation. He assured that the service will be delivered to customers with the highest level of integrity, strictly adhering to required Sharia principles and core values.

"Interest-free banking is not just a matter of faith; it plays a paramount role

in expanding financial inclusion, bringing untapped economic potential into the formal financial system, and achieving sustainable development goals," Dereje stated.

Accordingly, through "Z-Qamar," customers can efficiently access savings, investment, trade finance, and digital banking services aligned with Sharia principles in a customer-centric manner. It was also noted during the event that to bring this project to fruition, members of the bank's Sharia Advisory Board, the Board of Directors, and the National Bank of Ethiopia and the bank's staff have been engaging in intensive preparation and strategic support over the past two years.



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From birthplace to powerhouse: How China's development model offers a blueprint for Africa

■ JIAXING, China

Standing on the shores of Nanhu Lake, the birthplace of the Communist Party of China (CPC), visitors are reminded of how a movement founded more than a century ago has overseen one of the world's most remarkable economic transformations.

Addressing a media delegation from Ethiopia and Rwanda, Professor Deng Yanting, Deputy Director of the Division of Security Studies at the China-Africa Institute, reflected on China's journey from widespread poverty to becoming the world's second-largest economy, arguing that the country's experience offers valuable lessons for developing nations, particularly in Africa.

"The evidence of China's development is visible everywhere," Professor Deng said, pointing to the bustling, modernized surroundings. "The transformation speaks for itself and requires little explanation."

As the CPC approaches its 105th anniversary, Professor Deng outlined the governance model and policy framework that, in his view, have underpinned China's development.

Among the country's most significant achievements, he cited the eradication of absolute poverty under the United Nations' poverty standards and China's long-term goal of building a modern socialist country by 2049, the centenary of the People's Republic of China. He said the long-term objective has guided national planning and policymaking across successive administrations.

According to Professor Deng, continuity in policymaking has been central to achieving these objectives. Before major national policies are implemented, party committees across the country—from Beijing to local governments—participate in coordinated study sessions to ensure a shared understanding of policy priorities and objectives.

With more than 100 million CPC members nationwide, he said the system is designed to maintain policy consistency while ensuring implementation at every level of government.

Professor Deng also reflected on



Professor Deng Yanting

Austria expands influence in Africa through educational cooperation

By Eyasu zekarias

To strengthen bilateral relations and foster sustainable development, the Republic of Austria has unveiled a new public-private partnership that facilitates scholarships and exchange opportunities for students studying engineering and technology.

Implemented under the framework of the "Focus Africa" strategy, this initiative enables talented students from Ethiopia and various African countries to access high-quality education at Montanuniversität Leoben (the Technical University of Leoben) in Austria. Speaking at a recent event in Addis Ababa, the Austrian Ambassador to Ethiopia, Simone Knapp, stated: "This new initiative launched at Montanuniversität Leoben is a significant step toward linking Africa's emerging talents with Austria's expertise in science, engineering, and sustainable technology. It celebrates and strengthens our long-standing academic and institutional partnerships."

This public-private partnership aims to support Austrian-African mobility for skilled engineering and technology students. The Ambassador explained that the strategy is not a one-size-fits-all approach, but rather a mechanism for Austrian ministries, institutions, and private companies to strengthen cooperation beyond Europe and its other traditional partners.

The program is specifically tailored for

students enrolled in accredited colleges in Ethiopia and other African countries. Under this agreement, qualified Ethiopian and African engineering and technology graduates can pursue full-degree studies in Austria through strategic pathways established by the "Focus Africa" initiative.

This partnership particularly takes into account Ethiopia's rapid development in the mining and natural resources sector. Minister of Education, Berhanu Nega, emphasized that developing domestic human resource skills is crucial to managing this growth.

"Two years ago, our overall mineral exports were low, but last year they grew to nearly \$5 billion," Berhanu said. Despite the sector's significant growth, he pointed out a shortage of local human capital to manage these resources efficiently, adding, "We cannot grow the mining sector by remaining perennially dependent on foreign experts."

To address this gap, the government is establishing mining and petrochemical institutes at universities like Bule Hora. The partnership with Montanuniversität Leoben is expected to accelerate this capacity-building process by granting Ethiopian students access to advanced Master's degree programs, research opportunities, and industry-aligned practical skills.

Thomas Prohaska, Vice-Rector of Montanuniversität Leoben, added "Building on the strong momentum generated by the Austrian-Ethiopian

Symposium on Sustainable Mining and Circular Engineering, and following recent high-level discussions, we are proud to develop 'Focus Africa' as a long-term platform for cooperation. Together with our partners, we aim to bridge education, research, industry, and skill development, creating tangible opportunities for students and institutions in Ethiopia and Africa."

Susanne Feiel and Clemens Weihs, lead of the "Focus Africa" initiative, further explained that the project transforms their international educational approach. It does not just create new opportunities and strategically support talented Ethiopian and African students to pursue higher education in Austria; it also directly links their education with industry, ensuring quick post-graduation employment opportunities.

Berhanu Nega called on partners to break away from traditional bureaucratic red tape and move rapidly, describing the partnership as a "win-win" relationship shaping the future of both countries. "The timing is right; we must launch this educational framework right now," the Minister said, emphasizing that sluggish development projects are obsolete. He further suggested that European educational institutions should actively promote the high quality and affordability of their systems, positioning Austria as a compelling alternative for African students who might otherwise look exclusively to the United States.

China's political evolution following the collapse of the imperial system, drawing comparisons with the governance challenges faced by many post-colonial African countries after independence.

Managing a population of more than 1.4 billion people, he argued, requires a governance structure capable of aligning diverse interests behind shared national goals. Rather than adopting a competitive multi-party political system, China has chosen what he described as a unified institutional model that seeks to build consensus within a single governing framework.

He described Chinese modernization as a gradual process focused on reducing domestic inequalities, strengthening national capacity, and pursuing reform while preserving policy independence. The objective, he said, is to ensure that economic globalization benefits the population without compromising China's long-term development priorities.

Responding to questions from journalists, Professor Deng also addressed China's One China policy, placing it within the historical context of the Chinese Civil War and the geopolitical tensions that followed during the Cold War.

He said the policy remains the cornerstone of China's diplomatic relations, with Beijing maintaining formal diplomatic ties only with countries that recognize the People's Republic of China as the sole legal government of China. Countries that maintain official diplomatic relations with Taiwan do not have formal diplomatic relations with Beijing.

Professor Deng distinguished the Taiwan issue from international conflicts such as the Russia-Ukraine war, describing it as an internal matter concerning China's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

For many African observers, the discussion offered insight into how China's leadership links historical experience, centralized governance and long-term strategic planning to its broader development agenda—an approach that continues to attract attention from countries seeking alternative pathways to economic transformation.

The lack of clear constitutional recognition leaves IGR System legally vulnerable

By our staff report

The complete omission of formal mechanisms governing relations between the federal government and regional states from the federal constitution has emerged as a fundamental structural vulnerability in Ethiopia's transition toward a sustainable system of cooperative federalism. Although the country has enacted major legal reforms to fill this gap, legal experts and researchers warn that without a clear constitutional foundation, the institutions designed to coordinate these relations will remain fragile, lacking legal guarantees, and easily bypassed by informal political dynamics.

The institutional weakness resulting from this constitutional vacuum was the primary focus of an validation workshop and panel discussion titled "Intergovernmental Relations in Ethiopia: Opportunities, Challenges, and Remedies." Held on June 23, 2026, this high-level leadership forum brought together senior government officials, policy analysts, legal scholars, and regional stakeholders to rigorously evaluate the practical performance of the country's federal structures. Organized

by the Policy Studies Institute (PSI), the forum assessed why Ethiopia's formal Intergovernmental Relations (IGR) frameworks continue to falter despite the existence of a clear statutory framework.

Opening the forum, the Speaker of the House of Federation, Agegnehu Teshager, emphasized that sustained and institutionalized communication between the federal and regional governments is the only reliable path to sustaining democracy, resolving complex boundary disputes, and achieving inclusive national development. Echoing this sentiment, Minister of Mohamed Idris the Ethiopian Minister of Peace, stated that formal coordination is not a luxury but a critical prerequisite for maintaining national peace and ensuring the uniform implementation of national policies. However, data presented by researchers revealed a severe disconnect between these lofty policy goals and the reality on the ground.

To address the historical absence of independent and sustainable institutions, Ethiopia had previously enacted the Intergovernmental Relations Proclamation No. 1231/2021. This highly anticipated law established a comprehensive vertical

and horizontal framework, which included the National Executive Relations Forum (NERF) chaired by the Prime Minister, the National Legislative Relations Forum (NLRFF), and the National Judicial Relations Forum (NJRF). Additionally, it provided a Joint Regional Governments Relations Forum for horizontal cooperation among regions, alongside a dedicated National FDRE IGR Secretariat to serve as the administrative and technical hub for the entire system.

However, a comprehensive national study drawing from 178 key informants across federal institutions and various regions—including Oromia, Amhara, Somali, Benishangul-Gumuz, South West Ethiopia, Tigray, and the Dire Dawa City Administration—revealed that the primary challenge is not the absence of a legal framework, but rather the failure to implement the enacted law. Five years after the proclamation's enactment, the formal IGR system remains institutionally weak and largely dormant. Nigussie Afesha, from PSI, noted that most of the legally mandated vertical and horizontal forums are either completely non-functional or have ceased operations. Most

critically, the National IGR Secretariat has never been fully operationalized, leaving the federal system without its vital coordinating engine.

Mulugeta Getu, lead researcher of PSI, pointed out that among the four formal vertical forums, only the National Judicial Relations Forum (NJRF) has operated consistently. Conversely, the highly anticipated National Executive Relations Forum (NERF) collapsed entirely after meeting only three times, while the House of Federation-Regional Governments Relations Forum has never been activated. In the absence of formal institutional structures, informal political party channels, personal networks, and ad hoc consultations continue to dominate the governance landscape. While these informal channels allow for rapid communication during crises, they severely lack transparency, accountability, and long-term sustainability.

Mulugeta observed that because federal actors dictate the agendas, participation, and outcomes of these meetings, they have transformed the dynamic from mutual negotiation into top-down administrative directives. Similarly,

horizontal cooperation among regions is reactive rather than proactive, triggered primarily by border disputes or sudden security threats rather than serving as an active tool for economic and infrastructure integration.

Scholars argue that the Office of the Prime Minister, the House of Federation, and regional governments must make a coordinated and urgent effort to reactivate NERF and operationalize the National IGR Secretariat with a dedicated budget line.

To resolve this fundamental vulnerability, the study urges exploring future opportunities to directly embed IGR principles and institutions into the federal constitution, thereby granting them the permanent legal sanctity they currently lack. Furthermore, experts emphasized the need to formalize existing semi-formal sectoral platforms, establish a robust Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) framework to track forum performance, and widely expand training programs for civil servants and political leaders to build a genuine culture of cooperative federalism.

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Spotlight

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PHOTO: Anteneh Akililu

Ethiopia and Team Europe Complete €75 Million Urban Water and Sanitation Programme

The Ministry of Water and Energy of Ethiopia has completed the €75 million Urban Water Supply and Sanitation Programme, a landmark initiative that has significantly improved access to clean water and sanitation services for urban communities across the country, supported by Team Europe.

The water infrastructure improvements implemented in 43 towns across eight regions of Ethiopia are expected to benefit 2.11 million people and included the development of new water sources, including deep groundwater wells and spring developments, as well as the construction and rehabilitation of transmission and distribution networks. Major infrastructure investments included nearly 1,500 kilometres of water pipelines, 75 water storage reservoirs with capacities ranging from 50 to 2,000 cubic metres, and two conventional water treatment plants in Metehara and Jinka. Additional works included the installation of 79 surface pumps and 61 submersible pumps, water treatment facilities, generator and pump houses, and operational buildings for town water utilities.

Launched more than a decade ago in Addis Ababa, the programme has been supported by Team Europe partners, including the European Investment Bank (EIB Global), the French Development Agency (AFD), the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS), and the European Commission (EU).

"We accepted the public trust without being boastful about our success" — Prosperity Party

The National Election Board of Ethiopia (NEBE) has released the verified and endorsed overall results of the 7th national general election, which was held on June 1, 2026. In this election, the ruling Prosperity Party achieved a major victory by securing a wide majority, winning 438 out of the 501 contested parliamentary seats for the House of Peoples' Representatives.

When announcing the verified final results, the Deputy Chairperson of the Board, Tesfaye Neway, explained how the parliamentary seats were distributed among various political forces. According to the results released on June 21, 2026, although the Prosperity Party emerged dominant, several competing parties and independent candidates also managed to secure parliamentary seats. Accordingly, Ethiopian Citizens for Social Justice (Ezema) secured 13 parliamentary seats through its high participation in various areas, while the National Movement of Amara won 6 seats in the House of Peoples' Representatives from its contest in the Amhara region. Additionally, Medrek obtained 3 parliamentary seats in the Sidama region, while the remaining seats were distributed among other parties and independent candidates who competed across regions.

Somaliland President Signals Growing Ties with the US, UAE and Israel

In an exclusive interview with i24NEWS on Wednesday, Somaliland President Abdirahman Mohamed Abdullahi said he could not rule out the possibility of an Israeli military base on Somaliland soil in the future while announcing that direct flights between Israel and the capital Hargeisa would begin "very soon."

Speaking to i24NEWS's Middle East Now anchor and correspondent Nicole Zedeck during his historic first public state visit to Israel, Abdullahi said the opening of Somaliland's first-ever embassy in Jerusalem was a natural extension of the two countries' relationship. "Normally, embassies are opened in the capitals of individual countries that recognize each other," he said, adding that Israel was the only country to respond to a letter he sent to 193 nations in May 2025 requesting recognition.

Abdullahi was keen to push back on the characterization of Somaliland as a breakaway region, noting that his country declared independence on June 26, 1960, five days before Somalia, making it older than Somalia, Kenya, Uganda, Eritrea, and roughly half the countries on the African continent. "We are not breakaway," he said. "We became a sovereign country on 26 June, 1960."

REMEMBERING HISTORY



TAKING COVER



CHILLING



ECA commits to improved delivery for Africa's prosperity at the mid-year review meeting

The United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UN- ECA) is working assiduously to drive transformative change across the continent, with a renewed focus on accelerating implementation and delivering results.

The 2nd Quarter Annual Programme Performance Review Meeting (APPRM) of the EAC, held in Addis Ababa from 17-19 June, showcased ECA's commitment to advancing key priorities, including the AfCFTA, regional value chains, technology and digital transformation, macro-economic policy, finance and planning.

To drive progress, ECA is taking bold steps to accelerate its work program, aiming to achieve 75% of its annual deliverables by the 3rd Quarter APPRM. The organisation is strengthening partnerships with the African Union and Regional Economic Communities (RECs) to fast-track implementation of Agenda 2063 and Agenda 2030. Key initiatives include, among others, the development of three regional value chains for intensified focus, convening the Committee on Climate Change, Blue Economy, Agriculture, and Natural Resources Management, and launching a pioneering training course on Economic Diplomacy for young diplomats.

ECA urges Southern Africa to build resilience as Middle East crisis exposes structural economic vulnerabilities

The UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), Subregional Office for Southern Africa (SRO-SA), has called on Southern African countries to accelerate regional integration, strengthen economic resilience and implement coordinated policy responses to mitigate the growing impacts of the ongoing Middle East crisis.

The call was made during a High-Level Regional Dialogue on "Implications of the Middle East Crisis on Southern Africa: Assessing Impacts, Ongoing Mitigation Measures and Building Regional Resilience," which brought together senior government officials, representatives of regional economic communities, United Nations Resident Coordinators, development partners, private sector leaders, civil society organisations, and policy experts.

Opening the dialogue, Eunice G. Kamwendo, Director of ECA's Subregional Office for Southern Africa, warned that the crisis represents another major external shock following the COVID-19 pandemic and the Russia-Ukraine conflict, threatening to reverse the region's hard-won macroeconomic gains.

Urgent Action Needed to Ease Engine MRO Bottlenecks

The International Air Transport Association (IATA), in collaboration with Emerton, today released a new study examining bottlenecks in the maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO) of latest-generation single-aisle aircraft engines—namely LEAP engines from CFM, and Geared Turbofan (GTF) engines from Pratt & Whitney.

The study, Single Aisle Aircraft Engines MRO: Strategic Levers to Address Supply Chain Challenges, highlights how engine durability issues, spare parts shortages, limited spare engine availability, and constrained aftermarket access are disrupting airline operations.

These pressures are creating costly operational challenges, including reduced engine time on wing, increased demand for engine shop visits and more complex airline maintenance planning.

The number of grounded Pratt & Whitney GTF powered aircraft peaked in March 2025 at 648, 28% of the GTF-fleet. These aircraft were awaiting engine shop visits, spare engines or parts. Affected airlines have had to adapt their fleet plans, including by retaining older aircraft, extending leases or leasing additional aircraft, and adjusting capacity.

Capital NEWS IN BRIEF

More than 215 Civilians Die in South Darfur Detention Centre, Sudan Doctors Say

More than 215 civilians detained at a major detention centre in Sudan's South Darfur state have died over the past two months due to torture and disease outbreaks, the Sudan Doctors Network said on Wednesday. The fatalities at the Daqrees prison in Nyala, the capital of South Darfur, occurred during May and June. Human rights and humanitarian organizations describe the facility as one of the largest detention centres in the Darfur region, housing large numbers of civilians detained since the war broke out in April 2023. The Sudanese doctors' group said field sources reported that the deaths resulted from a lack of healthcare, mistreatment, torture, and the spread of epidemics. Humanitarian and medical organizations face severe challenges accessing the detainees due to tight restrictions, the group added. ... The Sudan Doctors Network condemned the abuses and called for an immediate halt to forced detentions. It demanded that international medical and humanitarian organizations be granted immediate access to all detention facilities in Darfur.

(Sudan Tribune)

US Releases Experimental Ebola Drug for DR Congo Outbreak Trials

The US Department of Health and Human Services confirmed it will provide doses of MBP134, an antibody drug developed by

California-based Mapp Biopharmaceutical, for compassionate use in the DRC and to support a clinical trial in the outbreak region. ... Trial data could help support future regulatory review and possible US approval, the spokesperson added, declining to say how many doses were being provided. ... Shipments of MBP134 and other treatments intended for trials are already on their way, the WHO said. The agency is working with health partners to prepare trial enrolment at treatment facilities in the affected region. Trials of the Mapp drug and two antivirals developed by US pharmaceutical company Gilead Sciences are due to begin in the coming weeks, according to information provided by the WHO and scientists involved in the testing. MBP134 will be tested both on its own and alongside Gilead's remdesivir, also known as Veklury, which was widely used during the Covid-19 pandemic. A second Gilead drug, obeldesivir, will be tested as a possible preventive treatment. ... Running trials and delivering care in the eastern DRC will be difficult, global health officials said. Disease testing and contact tracing are challenging, supply chains have been disrupted, mistrust is widespread and health workers have faced attacks.

(RFI)

Kenya Police in Massive Show of Force on Protest Anniversary

Kenyan police put on a massive show of force Thursday in a bid to prevent protests marking two years since a landmark Gen Z uprising. Thousands of Kenyans took to the streets in June 2024 against economic hardship and corruption, eventually storming parliament to force the cancellation of new taxes. It was

a watershed moment with young Kenyans ignoring traditional ethnic dividing lines, and June 25 has become an annual day of protest as frustration continues with the government of President William Ruto. But they paid a heavy price, with at least 127 people killed across the two years of protests, according to a police watchdog, as security forces shot people with near-total impunity. ... Ruto said this week that Kenyans had a right to demonstrate, but warned against anyone "mobilised to destroy property or cause chaos". Yet politicians have frequently deployed masses of hired "goons" -- armed men sent to attack opponents -- who are blamed for most of the looting and robberies during protests. AFP saw scores of them operating alongside police during last year's protests, and they have recently been used to attack everything from opposition rallies to civil rights meetings in churches.

(AFP)

IATA Outlines Four Priorities to Strengthen the Aviation Supply Chain

The International Air Transport Association (IATA) identified four priorities to address persistent failures in the aerospace supply chain at the inaugural IATA World Maintenance and Engineering Symposium in Madrid: Enhance supply chain visibility; Open up the aftermarket; Unlock the value of data, digitalization, and artificial intelligence (AI); and Build human capacity.

Supply chain failures were a focal point at IATA's recent Annual General Meeting. "The aircraft order backlog is over 18,000. And the average fleet age has reached a record 15.2 years. Moreover, being short over 5,000 more fuel-efficient replacement aircraft that airlines

had counted on, means missed efficiency gains, not to mention higher lease rates and increased maintenance costs. In total, supply chain failures cost airlines at least \$11 billion in 2025. Today's higher fuel prices will only make that worse," said Willie Walsh, IATA's Director General in his Report on the Air Transport Industry.

"Alongside aircraft delivery delays, engine durability issues, shortages of materials and spare parts, and constrained maintenance capacity are disrupting airline operations. Addressing these challenges will require practical action and cooperation across the aviation value chain," said Stuart Fox, IATA's Director, Flight and Technical Operations.

(Press release)

Term of the Day

DILUTION

» Definition

Dilution occurs when a company issues more shares, reducing the ownership percentage of existing stockholders. It can also occur when employees or others with stock options exercise them. Each stockholder owns a smaller part of the company, decreasing share value, when more shares are available.

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From studio to industry: ADIF 2026 charts a path to job creation in Africa's creative industries

By Nicholas Mokuia

Africa's creative economy is currently valued at \$60 billion, with projections suggesting it could reach \$200 billion by 2030 if the right policies are put in place. That figure framed the conversation at one of the closing sessions at the recently concluded Africa Digital Innovation Forum (ADIF 2026) in Addis Ababa. A panel on Creative Industries and Job Creation brought together Music entrepreneur Jawaya Guitars founder and Sauti Sol founding band member Polycarp Otieno; musician and producer Bolingo Passey and IKOJN fashion brand founder Christine Njoki - all in conversation with cultural policy expert Prof. Kimani Njogu, and head of the creative program at UNCTAD Marissa Henderson for a candid look at what it would take to turn the immense potential held by the sector into sustainable livelihoods. In 2023 alone, the creative industries employed an estimated 5 million people across the continent. Yet despite that scale, Africa contributes just 1% of creative goods exported worldwide, a gap that is seen as both a warning and an opportunity. Much of the discussion centred on the difference between individual artistic success and a functioning industry. Polycarp spoke to this from his experience setting up structures that work for the music sector as something he and Sauti Sol more broadly have been deliberate about from the beginning of their careers. Having been among the first Kenyan acts to scale to that level, Sauti Sol recognised the structural gaps in the industry and responded by establishing Sol Generation, a publishing and record label venture designed to support the next generation of artists rather than simply build personal legacy. Passey, reflecting on his own path as a younger artist, described the reality of juggling multiple roles at once: singer, songwriter, composer, instrumentalist and manager often out of necessity given his limited access to resources. There is an upside, he noted, in that artists who wear every hat retain creative control over their work. But the trade-off is exhausting with most creatives starting out being forced to multitask across functions they are not equipped for. With better structures and training, particularly on the business side of art, these artists would be more adequately prepared with the knowledge they require. Prof. Njogu brought a policy lens shaped by years of advocacy and his role as the lead in Kenya's Creative Economy Working Group (CEWG). He equally recalled his role as co-chair of the consultative committee that helped embed and protect the creative industries within Kenya's constitution, ensuring artistic freedom was safeguarded alongside scientific and academic freedom. The underlying argument being if people are regarded as the foundation of a nation, then culture must be treated as equally foundational and not peripheral. This conviction has translated into sustained advocacy through CEWG,

which has engaged parliament directly to shape policy affecting the sector, including the introduction of arts and culture into Kenya's Competency-Based Curriculum. Progress on policy is slow, Prof. Kimani acknowledged, but consistency matters. CEWG's current push is to fast-track the implementation of the creative economy bill which will, among many things, secure investment in the creative economy as an immediate priority. He was direct about the scale required: investing less than 1% of GDP in the creative economy is simply not enough. Investment across the full creative sector value chain is imperative. The need for trade barriers affecting creatives within Africa to be lifted through opening borders and reducing intra-African restrictions for artists would meaningfully improve the industry's prospects. AfCFTA will provide the necessary policy framework to ensure mobility is achieved within the continent. Polycarp pointed to a manufacturing gap with a personally relevant example, the guitar. One of the most-played instruments in the world (with strong arguments that it originated from the continent) is not manufactured here. The wood used to build it traces back to Africa, yet the continent still lacks the infrastructure to manufacture instruments at scale and compete globally. Polycarp's own venture, Jawaya Guitars, was raised as a direct response to build instruments from African raw materials on African soil. Other sub-sectors face their own version of the same problem. Fashion creatives, for instance, struggle to compete against the second-hand clothing market (mitumba), where prices are simply impossible to match. Musical gear, meanwhile, is in some cases taxed as luxury items, raising the barrier to entry for musicians just starting out. On a different register, panelists noted how central social media has become to an artist's career, functioning as a kind of digital CV. The caution offered alongside this was virality should not be the creative's goal. Maintaining authenticity matters more and lasts longer. Taken together, the panel's message was insisted on sequencing structures that let artists focus on their craft, training creatives to build business capacity alongside creative skill, advocate for policy that treats culture as core infrastructure and build manufacturing systems that let African creatives capture more of the value they generate. Every sub-sector is different and will need its own approach, but the panelists agreed that the creative economy is not adjacent to Africa's development goals, it is one of the more direct paths to achieving them.

Nicholas Mokuia is a young Scientist and Creative Writer at Twaweza Communications

Capital features a variety of independent voices; the opinions articulated in this column are the author's own and operate independently of our corporate viewpoint.

Entrepreneur PROFILE:

RESUME

Name: Bekalu Desalegn

Education: Degree in Mechanical Engineering

Company name: Wegen Engineering

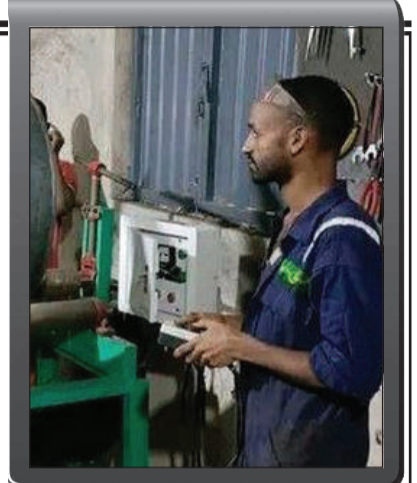
Title: Founder

Founded in: 2024

What it does: Manufacturing workshop machinery, agricultural machinery, renewable energy machinery, and other industrial equipment

Hq: Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Number of Employees: 10



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Biggest strength: Technical problem-solving skills and persistence.

Biggest challenge: Shortage of raw materials (metal/steel), high cost of components, and working space.

Plan: To scale up production and become a leading agricultural and renewable energy machinery manufacturer in East Africa.

First career: Machinist

Most interested in meeting: Successful local industrialists and technology innovators.

Most admired person: None

Stress reducer: Spending time in nature.

Favorite pastime: Sketching machine designs and experimenting with metalwork's.

Favorite book: All motivational book

Favorite destination: Japan

Favorite automobile: Hilux Pick-up

DAILY EXCHANGE RATE

June. 20, 2026



የኢትዮጵያ ንግድ ባንክ
Commercial Bank of Ethiopia

CURRENCY	BUYING	SELLING
US DOLLAR	156.01	159.14
POUND STERLING	202.42	206.47
EURO	178.84	182.42
SWISS FRANK	189.65	193.44
SWEDISH KRONER	15.99	16.31
CHINESE YUAN	22.62	23.07
UAE DIRHAM	42.48	43.33
JAPANIS YEN	0.94	0.96

INTERVIEW

Green Motion Ethiopia rides EV shift in Addis

Following Ethiopia's historic decision in 2024 to ban the import of internal combustion engine (ICE) passenger vehicles, the domestic transport and logistics sectors have been forced into a rapid and mandatory transformation. While many traditional industry players viewed the sudden shift to electric mobility with concern, forward-thinking entrepreneurs saw it as a major and timely opportunity.

At the forefront of this movement is Bizuayehu Tadesse, General Manager and CEO of Green Motion Ethiopia, who brings extensive experience in Ethiopia's travel, transport logistics and finance sectors. Recognizing that the country's traditional and fragmented car rental market needed modernization, Bizuayehu successfully acquired the master franchise for Green Motion, a UK-based company globally known for its eco-friendly car rental services.

By introducing Green Motion to Ethiopia, Bizuayehu is doing more than bringing a digital, app-based international brand to the local market. He is creating a strategic link between sustainable ground transportation and East Africa's corporate, diplomatic and tourism sectors.

Capital sat down with Bizuayehu Tadesse for an extensive discussion on the realities of building a fully green-powered vehicle fleet, overcoming infrastructure shortages, the recently signed loyalty agreement with Ethiopian Airlines' ShebaMiles program, and redefining transport logistics regulations in Ethiopia. Excerpts:

Capital: In 2024, Ethiopia banned the import of new gasoline and diesel vehicles. How has this policy shaped your business model compared with Green Motion's operations in other countries?

Bizuayehu: Ethiopia's decision to stop importing new gasoline and diesel cars has created a strong opportunity for our business. In many other countries, the shift to electric vehicles is happening slowly, with companies gradually changing their fleets over time. But in Ethiopia, this policy has accelerated the transition and pushed the entire market to think differently from the start. For Green Motion Ethiopia, this has been an advantage because we did not have to adjust or replace an existing fuel-based fleet. Instead, we built our operations from the beginning with a

clear focus on hybrid and electric vehicles. This allows us to be more flexible, more efficient and better prepared for the future. At the same time, it aligns us closely with Ethiopia's national vision of reducing emissions and promoting clean energy, especially given the country's strong renewable energy resources. As a result, we are not only providing car rental services, but also supporting the broader shift toward sustainable and environmentally friendly transport in Ethiopia.

Capital: Considering that Ethiopia is powered almost entirely by renewable hydroelectric energy, including the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam, do you view the shortage of charging stations as a "chicken and egg" problem? In your view, who should be responsible for solving it?

Bizuayehu: Yes, it is clearly a "chicken and egg" problem. Customers are hesitant to use electric cars if there are not enough charging stations. At the same time, investors may not want to build charging stations if there are not many electric cars on the road.

We believe the solution should be shared. The government should lead by creating policies and investing in infrastructure. At the same time, private companies like Green Motion should invest in electric vehicles and support charging solutions where possible. It requires cooperation from all sides.

Capital: What is the objective of the agreement signed this week between the Ethiopian Airlines ShebaMiles program and Green Motion International?

Bizuayehu: The agreement between the Ethiopian Airlines ShebaMiles program and Green Motion International is mainly focused on improving the overall travel experience and creating more value for customers. Through this partnership, we are connecting two important parts of a traveler's journey — air travel and ground transportation. Now, customers who rent a car from Green Motion anywhere in the world can earn one mile for every one US dollar they spend. This means that whether a customer is traveling for business or tourism, their car rental experience also contributes to airline loyalty

rewards.

This is especially important for Ethiopian travelers and international visitors who frequently use Ethiopian Airlines. It gives them an added benefit and encourages them to stay within one connected travel ecosystem. In addition, it strengthens Ethiopia's position in the global travel market by linking a national airline loyalty program with an international car rental network.

Overall, the partnership is not just about rewards — it is about making travel more seamless, more rewarding and more connected from the moment a customer lands to the moment they reach their final destination. **Capital:** Given that electricity supply outside Addis Ababa can be unreliable, how are you promoting eco-friendly car rental services to tourists visiting rural areas?

Bizuayehu: We understand that electricity supply can be less reliable outside major cities, which makes it more challenging to depend only on electric cars. To address this, we are using a mixed approach. We provide both electric and hybrid vehicles. Hybrid cars are especially useful

for long-distance travel and areas with limited charging stations. At the same time, we are working with hotels, lodges and tourism operators to explore small-scale charging solutions and raise awareness among travelers.

Capital: You are currently working with a local company, Excellence Car Rental. Is this a temporary supply solution, or is your long-term strategy based on local partnerships rather than importing your own fleet?

Bizuayehu: Our partnership with Excellence Car Rental is not just a short-term solution to meet current demand — it is a key part of our long-term strategy in Ethiopia. We strongly believe that working with local companies is essential for sustainable growth. Local partners bring deep knowledge of the market, customer behavior and day-to-day operational realities that international companies may take time to fully understand.

By combining this local expertise with Green Motion's global standards, technology and brand reputation, we can create a stronger and more reliable service. This partnership also allows us to scale our operations



INTERVIEW

more quickly and efficiently, without depending only on importing our own fleet, which can be challenging in the current environment. At the same time, it helps build local capacity by creating opportunities for knowledge transfer, skills development and business growth within Ethiopia.

In the long run, our goal is to build a balanced model — one that integrates international best practices with strong local partnerships. This approach not only supports our business growth, but also contributes to the development of a more professional, modern and sustainable car rental industry in Ethiopia.

Capital: You've said the car rental sector is underdeveloped not because of a lack of demand, but because of a lack of international brands. How are you educating the local market to trust a digital, app-driven car rental system?

Bizuayehu: The challenge in Ethiopia is not demand, but trust and familiarity. Many customers are used to traditional, informal ways of renting cars.

We are focusing on education and experience. We show customers how easy and transparent a digital system can be — clear pricing, proper insurance and reliable service. Once customers try it and see the benefits, they become more comfortable and confident in using the system.

Capital: Ethiopia plans to have 500,000 electric vehicles by 2030. With banks hesitant to provide loans for EVs and a shortage of professional mechanics, how can the private sector fill this gap?

Bizuayehu: There are two main challenges when it comes to expanding electric vehicle adoption in Ethiopia: access to finance and the shortage of technical skills. Electric vehicles usually require a higher upfront investment compared with traditional cars, and many banks are still cautious about financing them.

However, we are encouraged by the positive discussions we have had with Zemen Bank and Dashen Bank, both of which have shown strong interest and commitment to supporting this transition. This is a very important step, because tailored financing solutions — such as loans designed specifically for EVs — can make these vehicles more accessible to businesses and individuals.

At the same time, there is a clear gap in technical expertise. Electric vehicles require different skills for maintenance and repair compared with traditional cars. As part of our role in the private sector, we are looking to invest in training programs and capacity building so local mechanics and technicians are well prepared to



support this new technology.

In addition, we are exploring flexible business models such as leasing, which can reduce the burden of high upfront costs and allow more customers to adopt electric vehicles gradually.

Capital: What are your organization's goals leading up to COP32, and what is your strategic plan for the next five years?

Bizuayehu: As we move toward COP32, our main goal is to demonstrate that sustainable transport is not only possible in Ethiopia, but also practical and scalable. We want to show that with the right partnerships and planning, green mobility can work effectively even in a developing market.

Over the next five years, we have a clear growth strategy. We plan to gradually increase the number of electric and hybrid vehicles in our fleet, with a strong focus on making environmentally friendly options more accessible to both businesses and individual customers. At the same time, we aim to expand our presence beyond Addis Ababa into other key cities, tourism destinations and business corridors.

Capital: What challenges have you faced in trying to make 70 to 80 percent of your fleet electric, considering that EV charging stations are not yet widely distributed across Ethiopia?

Bizuayehu: The biggest challenge is still the limited number of charging stations and the reliability of power supply in some areas. To manage this, we are taking a step-by-step approach. We are focusing first on cities like Addis Ababa, where infrastructure is better. We also use hybrid vehicles to give



customers more flexibility while the charging network continues to grow.

Capital: Beyond Bole International Airport, where is Green Motion Ethiopia headed next? Are there specific historical routes or business corridors you are targeting?

Bizuayehu: We started our operations at Bole International Airport because it is the main gateway for international travelers entering Ethiopia. It is the first point of contact for most visitors, which makes it the ideal location to introduce our services and create a strong first impression of reliable, professional and environmentally friendly transport.

Looking ahead, our expansion strategy focuses on both tourism and business mobility. We plan to grow into key historical and cultural destinations such as Lalibela, Gondar and Axum, which attract a large number of international and domestic tourists. At the same time, we are targeting important business routes and emerging economic corridors where there is increasing demand for structured and high-quality transport services.

Our goal is to build a network that connects major entry points with key destinations across the country. By doing this, we aim to support the growth of Ethiopia's tourism sector while also making business travel more efficient. At every stage of this expansion, we remain committed to providing reliable, modern and environmentally responsible transport solutions that align with the country's move toward greener mobility.

The Political Economy of Deal-Making Made In Donald Trump

■ Alazar Kebede

Few political figures have so successfully transformed business deal-making into a political brand as President Donald Trump. Long before entering politics, Trump cultivated an image as a master negotiator through real estate ventures, media appearances, and particularly through his 1987 published book “The Art of the Deal”. His political career subsequently extended this business-oriented approach into the sphere of governance. Trump's understanding of politics as a sequence of transactions and bargains has significantly influenced both domestic and international policymaking. From a political economy perspective, Trump's deal-making illustrates the complex relationship between economic power, political authority, and market institutions in contemporary capitalism. Political economy scholars argue that economic outcomes are rarely determined solely by market forces; instead, they emerge from interactions among states, businesses, and social actors. Trump's approach reflects this understanding, albeit in highly personalised form. Rather than viewing institutions as autonomous frameworks governing economic activity, Trump frequently approached politics as a bargaining arena where outcomes depended upon leverage, reputation, and strategic pressure.

Central to Trump's philosophy is the notion that successful negotiations require asymmetrical power. In “The Art of the Deal”, Trump emphasised the importance of maintaining leverage, projecting strength, and exploiting bargaining advantages. This perspective aligns with realist traditions in political economy, which emphasise power as the fundamental determinant of economic relationships. During his presidency, Trump repeatedly utilised economic instruments including tariffs, sanctions, and trade restrictions not merely for economic objectives but as mechanisms to increase bargaining power. Perhaps the clearest example was the renegotiation of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). Trump criticised NAFTA as detrimental to American workers and threatened withdrawal unless substantial concessions were secured from Canada and Mexico. The resulting United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) reflected Trump's transactional approach, combining protectionist rhetoric with hard bargaining tactics. Supporters argued that this strategy corrected unfair trade practices and strengthened domestic industries. Critics, however, contended that many changes were incremental and that the confrontational approach generated unnecessary uncertainty in international markets.

Trade policy under Trump also demonstrated how economic nationalism can reshape global political economy. The imposition of tariffs on Chinese imports marked a significant departure from decades of bipartisan support for trade liberalisation. Trump justified these measures by arguing that China had exploited global trade rules at the expense of American manufacturing. The ensuing trade war represented more than an economic dispute; it reflected broader geopolitical competition over technological leadership, industrial capacity, and global influence.

From a political economy perspective, Trump's trade policies revealed the enduring importance of state power in an era of globalisation. Contrary to arguments suggesting that markets have diminished state authority, Trump demonstrated that governments retain substantial capacity to influence economic outcomes through regulatory and trade policies. Nonetheless, economists have questioned the effectiveness of these measures, noting that tariffs often increased costs for American consumers and businesses while disrupting global supply chains.

Another significant dimension of Trump's deal-making concerns the relationship between political leadership and corporate interests. Throughout his business and political careers, Trump maintained close connections with business elites, emphasising deregulation, tax reductions, and investment incentives. The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 substantially reduced corporate tax rates, reflecting a supply-side economic philosophy that lower taxes stimulate investment and growth. Advocates claimed that these reforms enhanced business competitiveness and encouraged capital formation. However, critics argued that the principal beneficiaries were large corporations and wealthy individuals, thereby exacerbating economic inequality.

The political economy of Trump's administration also raises important questions regarding the boundaries between public office and private business interests. Scholars have noted that Trump's extensive business holdings created unprecedented concerns regarding conflicts of interest and the potential commodification of political influence. Political economy literature emphasises that effective market systems depend upon transparent institutions

and clear distinctions between public authority and private gain. When these boundaries become blurred, public trust in both markets and democratic institutions may decline.

Furthermore, Trump's reliance on personalised negotiations often challenged established institutional norms. International agreements were frequently framed not as multilateral commitments but as transactions that could be renegotiated if perceived as unfavourable. This approach was evident in Trump's withdrawal from several international agreements, including the Paris Climate Agreement and the Trans-Pacific Partnership. While supporters viewed such decisions as assertions of national sovereignty, critics argued that they weakened international cooperation and undermined institutional stability.

The role of media in constructing Trump's deal-making image also deserves attention. Trump's political success cannot be separated from his mastery of modern communication technologies and media narratives. Political economy scholars increasingly recognise that information and media constitute significant forms of economic and political power. Through social media platforms, particularly Twitter during

his presidency, Trump communicated directly with citizens, investors, and global leaders. Market reactions often followed presidential statements, demonstrating how symbolic power and media visibility can influence economic behaviour.

Importantly, Trump's deal-making style has broader implications for contemporary capitalism. His presidency reflected wider societal frustrations concerning globalisation, inequality, and declining industrial employment. Many voters perceived traditional political elites as ineffective in protecting national economic interests. Trump's transactional politics resonated because it promised decisive action and immediate results. However, the long-term sustainability of governance based primarily on personalised bargaining remains contested.

Effective economic governance typically requires stable institutions, predictable rules, and cooperative relationships among diverse actors. Excessive reliance on transactional leadership may produce short-term gains while undermining institutional legitimacy and policy consistency. As noted Economists argued, institutions reduce uncertainty by establishing durable rules that

structure economic interactions. Frequent renegotiation and unpredictability may therefore discourage investment and increase economic volatility.

In conclusion, Donald Trump's approach to deal-making offers valuable insights into the political economy of contemporary capitalism. His emphasis on leverage, bargaining power, and transactional politics underscores the continuing importance of state authority and economic nationalism in global affairs. At the same time, his presidency illustrates the tensions between personalised leadership and institutional governance. While Trump's methods succeeded in reshaping debates surrounding trade, industrial policy, and economic sovereignty, they also raised significant concerns regarding inequality, institutional stability, and democratic accountability. Ultimately, the political economy of Trump's deal-making demonstrates that business and politics remain deeply interconnected, with power serving as the central currency in both domains.

To know more ideas on this, Josef Stiglitz's 2020 printed book entitled “People, Power, and Profits: Progressive Capitalism for an Age of Discontent” is a real gem.

AI sovereignty is about options, not ownership

■ By Ren Ito

The US government's sudden decision, on June 12, to restrict foreign access to some of Anthropic's most advanced models is further confirmation that AI is now a geopolitical issue of the highest order. Until recently, countries competed by building services, infrastructure, and applications on top of frontier AI systems. Now, access to the systems themselves is a strategic concern.

The prevailing assumption used to be that AI would follow the logic of globalization. Countries would rely on a handful of frontier models, mostly developed in the United States, while competing in downstream services, semiconductors, data, and applications. Access to the most advanced AI systems was largely taken for granted. But if this assumption no longer holds, the central question is not which model is best, but which can be accessed at all.

With frontier capabilities becoming an issue of national security and diplomacy, governments will be tempted to pursue “AI sovereignty” through the development of national champions or domestic alternatives to the leading US options (ChatGPT and Claude). But as understandable as this instinct is, it risks addressing the wrong problem.

After all, AI is advancing too fast for such a strategy to pay off. Technological advantages that appear decisive can vanish within months. Today's breakthrough becomes tomorrow's baseline. Models that dominate headlines for a few months are quickly matched or surpassed by competitors. Even countries willing to invest tens of billions of dollars in developing models face daunting odds when competing directly against the world's largest technology firms. That is why the question is not whether a country can build a frontier model, but whether it can secure reliable access to frontier intelligence wherever it emerges.

The recent Anthropic case illustrates the point. If access to a leading AI model can be restricted overnight, dependence on

any single provider becomes a strategic risk. That does not mean every country should build its own frontier model. But it does mean that no country can assume uninterrupted access to someone else's system.

For America's closest allies, the first priority should be to preserve access. Countries such as Japan and other G7 members share not only democratic values with the US, but also deep security interests. Supporting the technological resilience of allies ultimately strengthens America's own strategic position. Moreover, AI remains an immature and rapidly evolving technology whose future trajectory is uncertain. Continued collaboration between American model developers and allied countries that contribute technology, talent, infrastructure, and markets will be essential for expanding the ecosystem itself. AI should not become a technology that is hoarded; it should be one that is developed together.

In the emerging AI economy, competitive advantage will increasingly come not from owning a single model, but from being able to evaluate, select, and orchestrate many models. Organizations that can seamlessly switch among competing systems will be more resilient than those that depend on a single provider and expose themselves to too many vulnerabilities—from technical failures and commercial disputes to geopolitical pressure. Just as countries seek to diversify energy sources and semiconductor supply chains, they will also diversify their AI providers.

Yet orchestration alone is not enough. Countries must also be able to evaluate AI systems independently. Governments need the ability to assess which models are genuinely useful compared to others, and what risks particular systems may pose. Such judgments cannot be delegated entirely to foreign companies or foreign governments.

This is why recently established AI safety institutes and national cyber-security agencies are becoming increasingly

important. Rather than merely trying to regulate AI, their role is to provide the independent technical expertise needed for informed national decision-making. Countries that cannot assess AI systems for themselves will inevitably find their choices shaped by others.

Relying on multiple AI models rather than a single provider is its own form of deterrence, because it makes coercion less effective. If governments and organizations can seamlessly switch between multiple frontier models, restricting access to any one of them loses much of its strategic value. Model orchestration becomes both an economic capability and a geopolitical asset.

But diversification is not enough. To achieve true AI sovereignty, countries must be able to combine national data with multiple frontier AI systems, generate knowledge about what works, and translate that knowledge into decision-making. This last step—sovereign decision-making—becomes difficult when a country depends on others to interpret its most important information. If the analysis of defense intelligence, economic data, public-health risks, or critical infrastructure ultimately relies on external actors, political autonomy becomes constrained. The implications extend well beyond AI policy. Once access to intelligence becomes a geopolitical issue, the challenge facing middle powers is clear. Rather than trying to replicate US or Chinese capabilities, these countries must ensure that they have room for strategic maneuver while remaining deeply integrated into the global economy. This is a familiar challenge: Throughout modern history, successful middle powers have prospered not by isolating themselves from larger powers, but by maintaining strong alliances while preserving the capacity for independent action.

The emerging geopolitical competition will revolve around who designs, finances, operates, and optimizes the critical infrastructure of the AI age: data centers, power grids, communications

networks, logistics systems, ports, and digital public infrastructure. AI capability will become embedded in the systems on which modern societies depend.

In this environment, the meaning of “safe and trustworthy AI” must evolve, too. Today's debates about AI safety often focus on technical questions about model alignment, transparency, bias, misinformation, or harmful outputs. These are important concerns, but for governments, businesses, and the wider public, trust requires something broader. A trustworthy AI ecosystem is one in which users can rely on continued access, retain meaningful control over their data, and avoid becoming dependent on political decisions made elsewhere. It is an ecosystem in which access is not conditioned on political alignment, and where participation does not require the surrender of digital sovereignty. Trust lies not in any one model, but in the institutions, governance arrangements, and international relationships surrounding it.

As AI becomes critical infrastructure, reliability, resilience, and political neutrality may matter as much as raw model performance. The most powerful model is not necessarily the most valuable if access to it can be withdrawn abruptly, or if dependence on it constrains strategic choices.

AI sovereignty lies not in building a national version of ChatGPT, but in preserving freedom of action in a world where access to intelligence itself is contested. It is about optionality, not ownership.

Ren Ito, a former Japanese diplomat, is Co-Founder of Sakana AI.

Capital features a variety of independent voices; the opinions articulated in this column are the author's own and operate independently of our corporate viewpoint.

Society

Anchoring inflation expectations in Ethiopia is a fantasy, and here's why

By Matias Assefa

Just about three weeks ago, the IMF issued a press release to announce the conclusion of the fifth review of Ethiopia's four-year economic stabilization program, agreed upon by the IMF staff and the Ethiopian authorities. The release mostly contained the usual stuff – praising authorities' efforts to execute the program, highlighting downside risks, and making some recommendations. But there was one real head-scratcher among the latter. Namely, the IMF urged the authorities to maintain "a tight monetary policy stance to anchor inflation expectations." It turns out that anchoring inflation expectations using monetary policy in the existing economy is, well, an inflated expectation which cannot be met. And there emerges a microcosm of the IMF's general reluctance to tailor its policy advice to the realities on the ground in recipient countries.

To those readers who may be less versed on the issue, expectations of future inflation are a key determinant of actual inflation today, since they affect current spending and price setting behavior. Moreover, they take center stage in the transmission of monetary policy through the real economy. In fact, many of the transmission mechanisms depend on them. And so, in central bankers' shop talk, inflation expectations are said to be "anchored" when the public has been accustomed to expect low inflation, being largely indifferent to temporary fluctuations. They lose their anchor when the public has grown accustomed to anticipate chronic inflation, the latter getting embedded in the economy.

And there are different ways of evaluating expected inflation. One way is to approximate it from what is happening to those goods- and services-prices that are less volatile in nature. Another alternative is to consult what financial markets have to say. Yet another, more direct method is to conduct surveys of consumers and businesses (e.g., purchasing managers) on how much inflation they expect in the short to medium term.

Now, the common worry of policymakers is that if inflation stays high for a lengthy period, it may get entrenched in public expectations, ushering in a cycle of rising prices, whose stopping probably requires a sustained economic downturn. So modern monetary authorities, in particular, consider stabilizing or "managing" expectations as an important task. Critical to this end, however, is the behavior of monetary policy. In particular, system, credibility, transparency, and effective communication in central bank policy actions/plans are considered as decisive factors. The degree of development of financial and economic systems also matters.

Given these, what does the situation of inflation expectations in Ethiopia look like? The relevance of expectations is undeniable. In fact, it is not unreasonable for one to worry that fear of high future inflation has gotten entrenched in private-sector expectations. For our troubling inflation has lasted for so long even while being juxtaposed with high unemployment. There have been anecdotes, too, about some

domestic businesses raising their prices and workers demanding higher wages anticipating increased cost/price pressures. Yet expectations have been glaringly missing from inflation discourse among media pundits, economic commentators and public officials alike.

However, it is one thing to be cognizant of a problem and another to be able to do something about it. And the Ethiopian monetary authority encounters numerous obstructions as it sets about influencing expectations. The first one arises from the central bank itself. That's to say, the National Bank of Ethiopia (NBE) does not have a longstanding acquaintance with timely, systematic, and well-articulated policymaking. In fact, until very recently, monetary policymaking in Ethiopia has been shrouded in secrecy, while exhibiting defective monetary policy framework, weak commitment to fight inflation and the NBE's subservience to the Treasury (not to mention its politicized pasts). But an established track record as successful and sufficiently independent central bank is a sine qua non for guiding expectations.

Headwinds are not confined to the NBE, though. Monetary policy never functions in a vacuum, but rather within given financial, institutional and economic structures. And Ethiopia has long been characterized by underdeveloped financial system, inferior quality of institutions, relatively large size of the informal financial sector, and primary goods-inclined production structure. As a result, the link between monetary policy tools and either economic activity or price level has been somewhere between loose and nonexistent, forestalling monetary transmission. And this fact alone makes anchoring expectations a nonstarter.

Most of the general public, too, perceives the NBE just as regulator of commercial banks at best, or as a bank with the large vault to store cash at worst, and therefore does not really understand how monetary policy responds to economic conditions. Thus it would be too ambitious a task to shape the public's policy and inflation expectations today.

Leaving aside for a moment the aforesaid constraints on the conduct of monetary policy, how would the IMF know whether inflation expectations are anchored or unanchored when there is little hard data to begin with? (Incidentally, it would be great if institutions like the Ethiopian Economics Association and the Policy Studies Institute fill the gap by regularly conducting surveys on expectations and publishing the results, so that any interested party can know the true extent and duration of the problem.) Trying to produce a change in a latent variable is akin to shooting at a hidden enemy combatant in a war. Neither hits nor misses make sense.

To be sure, the authorities have already started taking measures to enhance the relevance of monetary policy to ultimate economic outcomes. For instance, the NBE has revised its monetary policy framework, setting price stability as a primary policy goal. And monetary policy committee meetings and proposals are now being publicized. The government is also taking various steps to reform the financial

industry, expand the formal sector, and bring about structural change in the economy. But until such efforts come to full fruition and at least a fairly predictable relationship is empirically established between central bank tools and economic growth/inflation, it remains extremely difficult for the NBE to be legitimately credited for low inflation (or indeed be blamed for high inflation), let alone correlated with (un)anchored expectations.

Of course, the IMF of all institutions should know all this. After all, it is a place where some of the most rigorous empirical analyses on economic issues are performed. So why its staff team finds it fitting to dispense a policy prescription that has little chance of yielding the desired result is anyone's guess. But whatever one's explanation, making a public statement that will not survive contact with reality risks calling into question the whole policy advice.

For the truth is that anchoring inflation expectations is at the pinnacle of central banking. I mean, if the NBE were already in that stage, it would not need the kinds of

reforms it is undertaking today. The ability to guide expectations is rather something the central bank must continually strive to acquire in the future. And what will the IMF's superfluous recommendation add to this endeavor? If anything, by giving a wrong impression of the development stage the economy is at, it can potentially distract the policymakers from focusing on laying the required groundwork (including developing the NBE as a truly technocratic institution it is supposed to be).

In short, the IMF's counsel notwithstanding, at this stage of our monetary, financial and economic development, we can tighten monetary policy as much as we like, but anchoring expectations remains nothing more than pie in the sky.

Matias Assefa is an economic and business Analyst based in Addis Ababa. He can be reached at matias.assefa@gmail.com

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CONSTRUCTING THE FUTURE AFRICA

Ethiopia expects birr stability in 2026/27 despite heavy FX pressures

By Mulaken Yewondwesen

The Ministry of Finance projects the birr will stabilize in the upcoming 2026/27 fiscal year, despite a 15 percent depreciation against major foreign currencies over the past year. During his federal budget presentation to Parliament last week, Finance Minister Ahmed Shide forecasted a 9.8 percent overall economic growth for the coming fiscal year. This growth is expected to be driven by a 7.1 percent increase in agriculture, 11.6 percent in industry, and 8.5 percent in the services sector, with the economy maintaining strong momentum despite unforeseen global developments. However, Ahmed acknowledged potential challenges from the ongoing Middle East conflict, which has been factored into the government's budget planning. Ethiopia is projected to import goods worth USD 25.8 billion in 2026/27, with fuel imports alone accounting for approximately USD 6 billion.

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Something New from Zemen

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TSEMEX WORLD-CLASS WATER STORAGE SOLUTIONS

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ANNOUNCEMENT
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REQUEST FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST



**UNITED NATIONS WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME (WFP)
Ethiopia Country Office
REQUEST FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI) – No. ET-EOI-003-2026
For Supply, Installation and Commissioning of Reverse Osmosis (RO) Desalination System
at Semera WFP Premises, Afar Region, Ethiopia
Closing on 13 July at 12:00 hrs**

1. BACKGROUND

The World Food Programme (WFP) Ethiopia Country Office intends to procure the supply, installation, and commissioning of a Reverse Osmosis (RO) water treatment plant/ Desalination system to provide potable water for operational use at its Semera WFP compound.

The source water is from a drilled borehole, characterized by elevated salinity and dissolved contaminants requiring advanced treatment.

2. OBJECTIVE

The objective of this Expression of Interest (EOI) is to identify qualified and experienced suppliers capable of delivering a complete water treatment system that meets operational and potable water quality requirements.

3. TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS & PROJECT SPECIFICATIONS

3.1 Customer Requirements

The Client requires the supply, installation, and commissioning of a 3 m³/hr Reverse Osmosis (RO) system to meet operational needs.

The requirement is based on the water analysis report from the College of Technology & Built Engineering dated 28 January 2026, and applicable site conditions. (Review Annex 2)

A comprehensive and updated water analysis shall be conducted prior to final system design and order confirmation.

The system shall be designed to produce potable water in accordance with WHO Drinking Water Guidelines.

3.2 Site Conditions

The available water analysis indicates that the following parameters exceed acceptable limits:

Parameter	Unit	Result	Limit
TDS	Ppm	3,900	<1000
Calcium	Ppm	245	<150
Copper	Ppm	3.21	<2
Conductivity	µS/cm	5,900	<1,500
Chloride	Ppm	380	<250

3.3 Indicative Treatment Process

The treatment process is expected to include, but not be limited to:

- Filtration
- Reverse Osmosis (RO)
- Disinfection

Suppliers are encouraged to propose optimized solutions based on their technical expertise.

3.4 Indicative System Overview

The system configuration may include:

- Raw water abstraction from borehole and storage in a raw water tank
- Pre-treatment using a multimedia (glass media) pressure filter to remove turbidity and suspended solids
- Chemical dosing (antiscalant) to prevent membrane scaling
- Reverse osmosis system for removal of dissolved salts, heavy metals, and contaminants
- Post-treatment disinfection (chlorination) prior to storage in treated water tank

3.5 Key Equipment (Indicative)

The system is expected to include, but not limited to:

- Centrifugal transfer/booster pump (~1.6 kW indicative)
- Automatic multimedia (glass media) pressure filter (approx. 900 mm diameter)
- Reverse osmosis plant (3 m³/hr capacity)
- Chemical dosing systems
- Disinfection unit
- Cleaning-in-place (CIP) system
- Associated piping, valves, and control systems

Final equipment selection and system design shall be proposed by the supplier based on verified design data.

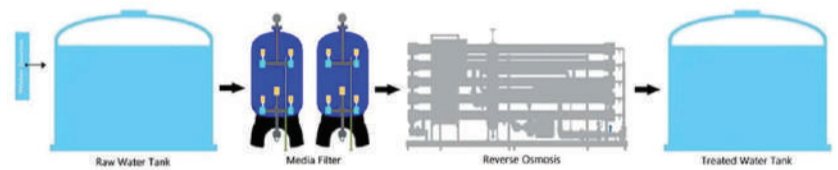
3.6 Indicative System Overview

The system configuration may include:

- Raw water abstraction from borehole and storage in a raw water tank
- Pre-treatment using a multimedia (glass media) pressure filter to remove turbidity and suspended solids
- Chemical dosing (antiscalant) to prevent membrane scaling
- Reverse osmosis system for removal of dissolved salts, heavy metals, and contaminants

- Post-treatment disinfection (chlorination) prior to storage in treated water tank

3.7 Indicative System Layout



3.8 Key Equipment High Level Specification

The key equipment is summarized below. Specifications are indicative and describe principal characteristics.

The pre-treatment stage includes a Automatic Multimedia (Glass Media) Pressure Filter to reduce turbidity and suspended solids before RO processing. The filter uses graded glass media to ensure efficiency and durability.

Reverse Osmosis Plant	
Reverse Osmosis (RO) is a process in which purified water (permeate) is produced from the feed water via the rejection of 95%-98% organic and inorganic constituents by a semi-permeable membrane system. The RO system separates the incoming feed stream into two effluent streams:	
The permeate (treated water) passes through Reverse Osmosis membranes and thus contains greatly reduced quantities of mineral salts and organics for use typically (>96% of the rejection ratio). A ratio of permeate to feed water gives the system recovery.	
The concentrate (reject water) is the stream that passes tangentially across the membrane surface and thus retains the impurities separated from the permeate stream. A minimum flow of concentrate is necessary to keep members from 'fouling' due to the removed mineral salts and organic contents.	
The pre-treatment stage of the water treatment plant shall entail the use of a Automatic Multimedia (Glass Media) Pressure Filter to reduce the turbidity and suspended material in the raw water before feeding into the reverse osmosis plant. The filters are charged with fine glass media of different grades to ensure filtration efficiency and increased longevity before recharge.	

4. SCOPE OF WORK

4.1 Supplier Responsibilities

The successful supplier shall be responsible for:

- Detailed system design and engineering
- Supply of complete equipment and materials
- Installation and integration of all system components
- Testing and commissioning
- Performance verification
- Provision of technical documentation (including as-built drawings and warranties)
- Supply of initial spare parts and consumables
- Training of operators and system handover

4.2 Client Responsibilities

The Client shall be responsible for:

- Provision of accurate project and site data
- Preparation of installation site and ensuring accessibility at all times
- Provision of utilities (water, power, access)
- Civil works, including foundations and drainage (backwash/washout pipelines)
- Designation of personnel for training and handover

5. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Interested suppliers shall meet the following requirements:

- Proven experience in supply and installation of reverse osmosis systems
- Demonstrated completion of similar projects (minimum 2-3 references)
- Adequate technical and engineering capability
- Availability of local technical support and after-sales service
- Compliance with applicable quality and safety standards

6. DELIVERY & IMPLEMENTATION

- Estimated delivery period: 8-12 weeks
- Installation and commissioning to be carried out by qualified personnel
- Final acceptance subject to successful testing, performance verification and warranty submission.

7. IMPORTANT NOTES AND CONDITIONS

- The system design is based on preliminary water analysis and may require adjustment upon detailed analysis
- Treated water quality shall be verified during commissioning
- The system shall achieve potable water quality in accordance with WHO standards under proper operation conditions
- Consumables such as membranes and chemicals shall require periodic replacement, and replacement schedules shall be provided
- Delivery shall be carried out using appropriate equipment (e.g., crane truck), and suppliers shall ensure safe offloading procedures
- Installation may involve drilling, welding, and mechanical works as required

8. SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Interested suppliers shall submit:

- Company profile
- Experience and references of similar projects
- Technical capability statement
- Proposed technical approach
- Relevant certifications and accreditation

9. SUBMISSION DEADLINE

- **EOI submissions must be received on or before: 13 July 2026, 12:00 hrs (East Africa Time)**

10. METHOD OF SUBMISSION OF DOCUMENTS

Vendors interested in participating in the prequalification process are requested to express their interest and submit the required qualification documents to WFP via email at addisababa.procurement@wfp.org.

Please ensure that the email subject line clearly indicates: The EOI reference number: **ET-EOI-003-2026**, and the project title: **“Supply, Installation and Commissioning of Reverse Osmosis (RO) Desalination System in Semera WFP Premises, Afar Region, Ethiopia”**. This will facilitate efficient tracking and follow-up the responses by WFP.

11. DISCLAIMER

This request for Expression of Interest (EOI) is issued for prequalification purposes only and does not constitute a solicitation.

WFP reserves the right to accept or reject any submission, and to cancel the process at any time without incurring any liability.

ANNEX 1 – INDICATIVE BILL OF QUANTITIES

No.	DESCRIPTION	UNIT	QTY	Unit Price Before VAT (ETB)	Total Price Before VAT (ETB)
PRE-TREATMENT					
1	Centrifugal Pump, 1.6kW (Equivalent to Davey Dynaflo 6210)	Pcs	1		
2	Automatic High Pressure Multimedia Filter (Glass Media Type – 900 mm Diameter) (Equivalent to Dayliff PXD900 Filter)	Pcs	1		
3	Grade 2 Glass Media (Equivalent to Certikin Grade 2)	Pcs	32		
4	Grade 3 Glass Media (Equivalent to Certikin Grade 3)	Pcs	16		

REVERSE OSMOSIS & DISINFECTION

5	Reverse Osmosis System, 3m ³ /hr Capacity (Equivalent to Dayliff RO TDS2000)	Pcs	1		
6	Chemical Dosing Pump, Automatic (Equivalent to Dayliff/Seko AML200)	Pcs	3		
7	Antiscalant Chemical – 25KGS (Equivalent to Genesys LF)	Pcs	1		
8	Biofilm Removal Agent – 25KGS (Equivalent to Genesol 80)	Pcs	1		
9	Chlorine – 20KGS (Equivalent to Dayliff Chlorine)	Pcs	1		
10	Chemical Tank – 60 Litres	Set	3		
11	CIP Pump	Pcs	1		
12	CIP Tank – 170 Litres	Pcs	1		
13	CIP Chemicals	Set	1		

PIPING, TRANSPORT SERVICE AND INSTALLATION

14	Pipes, Fittings and Valves for Installation	Ls	1		
15	Transport and Installation	Ls	1		
Sub Total (ETB)					
Add VAT 15% (ETB)					
Grand Total (ETB)					

Consumables & Spare Parts – 1 Year

No.	Description	Unit	Qty	Unit Rate Before VAT (ETB)	Total Price Before VAT (ETB)
1	RO Membrane Set (Compatible with installed RO system)	Set	8		
2	Antiscalant Chemical – 25 KGS	Pcs	2		
3	Biofilm Removal Agent – 25 KGS	Pcs	2		
4	Chlorine – 20 KGS	Pcs	2		
5	CIP Chemicals	Set	1		
Sub Total (ETB)					
Add VAT 15% (ETB)					
Grand Total (ETB)					

ANNEX 2 – WATER ANALYSIS REPORT

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 College of Technology & Built Environment
 የሲቪል እና አካባቢ ስራ ምህንድስና ት/ቤት
 School of Civil & Environmental Engineering

Physical and Chemical Analysis of Water

Source of Sample: Ground Water

Requested by: World Food Programme (WFP)

Date of Analysis: Jan 28/2026

No	Parameter	Before Treat	After Treat
1	T°C	2.0°C	20°C
2	PH	7.6	7.5
3	Color	Colorless	Colorless
4	TDS	3.9 g/l	3.3 g/l
5	Odor	Odorless	Odorless
6	Conductivity	5.9 ms/cm	5.1 ms/cm
7	Turbidity	1.66 NTU	1.13 NTU
8	Acidity	7 mg/l as ca co ₃	5 mg/l as ca co ₃
9	Alkalinity	10 mg/l as ca co ₃	5 mg/l as ca co ₃
10	Hardness	250 mg/l as ca co ₃	235 mg/l as ca co ₃
11	Chloride	380 mg/l	320 mg/l
12	Sulfate	450 mg/l	400 mg/l
13	Phosphate	0.96 mg/l	0.86 mg/l
14	Nitrate	5.3 mg/l	2.9 mg/l
15	Nitrite	0.02 mg/l	0.019 mg/l
16	Iron	0.08 mg/l	0.07 mg/l
17	Manganese	0.2 mg/l	0.01 mg/l
18	Calcium	245 mg/l as ca co ₃	240 mg/l as ca co ₃
19	Magnesium	10 mg/l as ca co ₃	5 mg/l as ca co ₃
20	Chromium	0.02 mg/l	0.01 mg/l

Tested by Asnake Teshome Approved by [Signature]
 Signature [Signature] Signature [Signature]



Ethiopian-Armenian Museum Debuts with High-Level Diaspora Dialogue

In a major celebration of cross-cultural heritage, the Armenian Cultural Center in Addis Ababa officially opened the History Museum of the Ethiopian-Armenian community on June 20. The landmark event was paired with a high-level diaspora dialogue featuring Zareh Sinanyan, Armenia's High Commissioner for Diaspora Affairs.

Co-organized by the Embassy of Armenia in Ethiopia and the Executive Council of the Armenian Community of Ethiopia, the opening marks a significant milestone in documenting a unique, centuries-old bond between the two nations.

In his welcoming remarks, Sahak Sargsyan, the Armenian Ambassador to Ethiopia, praised the profound impact the small but vibrant Armenian community has historically made on Ethiopia's modernization and development. "The establishment of this History Museum is an important milestone toward preserving and popularizing the shared Armenian-Ethiopian heritage," Ambassador Sargsyan noted, emphasizing the deep symbolic value of the new institution.

The Ambassador also welcomed High Commissioner Sinanyan, who traveled to Addis Ababa not only to engage with the local community but also to



hold strategic meetings with counterparts at the Ethiopian Diaspora Service and the African Union.

Addressing the attendees, Commissioner Sinanyan highlighted the resilience and outsized influence of the local diaspora. Despite its relatively small numbers, Sinanyan stressed that the Armenian community has made an "invaluable and lasting contribution" to various sectors of Ethiopian society over the

centuries, acting as a vital bridge between the two cultures while proudly maintaining its own national identity.

The museum's creation is largely the result of years of dedication by community activist, author, and museum curator Vartkes Nalbandian. During the event, Nalbandian shared insights into the extensive, painstaking work involved in gathering archival materials, photographs, and historical artifacts to bring the exhibition hall to life.

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

HOTTEST ARTISTS

JUNE 18, 2026 - JUNE 24, 2026

HOTTEST TRACKS

RANK	ARTIST	RADIO	TV	TOTAL PLAY
1	Dawit Tsige	37	19	56
2	Mastewal Eyayu	37	17	54
3	Dawit Mellese	52	0	52
4	Neway Debebe	51	0	51
5	Mesay Tefera	30	15	45
6	Tewodros "Teddy Afro" Kassahun	43	1	44
7	Abdu Kiar	34	5	39
8	Michael Belayneh	33	4	37
9	Addis Legesse	23	11	34
10	Rahel Getu	21	11	32
10	Veronica Adane	19	13	32
9	Mesay Tefera	57	5	62
10	Esubalew Yitayew	53	0	53

RANK	TRACK	ARTIST	RADIO	TV	TOTAL PLAY
1	Hayyee	Hana Girma	9	18	27
2	Demama	Dawit Tsige	9	9	18
3	Emeye Ethiopia	Tewodros Tadesse	12	2	14
4	Yelebe	Haleluya Tekletsadik	7	5	12
5	Sewedelat	Madingo Afewerk	10	1	11
5	Zarem Atirsagn	Fikeraddis Nekatebeb	7	4	11
6	Kome Limerkish	Tilahun Gessesse	6	3	9
7	Dejazmach	Kuku Sebsebe	6	2	8
8	Ende Amele	Lemlem Hailemichael	5	2	7
9	Tekuye	Betty Sher	5	1	6
9	Abebaye	Veronica Adane	3	3	6
10	WOZE	DIDIGAGA	4	1	5
10	Emetalehu	Mastawal Eyayu	5	0	5
10	Boobooye	Abdu Kiar	5	0	5
10	Lanchi	HenokGetachew	5	0	5
10	Yegle Nesh	Dawit Tsige	4	1	5
10	Men Aseba New	Bisrat Surafel	4	1	5
10	Postegnaw	YEMa	5	0	5
10	Gojamoch Zenetu	Seyumekal Gebre	3	2	5
10	Keremela	Neway Debebe	5	0	5

THIS DATA IS GATHERED BY A 24/7 AUTOMATED RECORDING & ANALYZING AII SYSTEM FROM 35 TV & RADIO STATIONS. THERE WERE MORE THAN 8,509 TOTAL MUSIC PLAYS ACROSS THE BROADCAST MEDIUM FOR THIS WEEK.

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SOMALI REGIONAL EDUCATION BUREAU
Invitation for Local Competitive Bidders
The Somali Regional State Education Bureau invites all interested and eligible bidders for the following

Text books Transportation for Woredas & Schools

With ref: SRS/NCB/REB/003/2018

- Suppliers must have a valid Trading License Renewed for 2018 EFY, Tax Clearance Certificate valid until the date of deadline of bid submission and VAT registration/TIN/Supply Certificate for each lot. Bidders are required to bring Original Documents with their copies when they are purchasing their documents.
- Interested bidders on the submission of a written application to the office of Somali Regional State Education Bureau Procurement and Property Administration upon submission of written application and nonrefundable fee of **ETB:1,000 (One Thousand Birr)** for each Lot may purchase bid document.
- All bids must be accompanied by a **bid security of 2% (Two Percent)** of the bid price in the form of CPO or bank guarantee, Insurance Bond is not acceptable and valid for a period of 60 days after bid opening.
- Bids must be submitted to Somali Regional State Education Bureau Procurement and Property Administration Department after 10 days of announcement on the Capital newspaper at 10:00 AM.
- Bids will be opened on the 10th day after the announcement on the Capital, at 10:30 AM in the presence of bidders or legal representatives. Late Bids shall be rejected. Bidders shall submit two envelopes marked **<Qualification Information Bid Security>** in one envelope and **<Financial Bid>** separately in another envelope and should be sealed in an outer envelope.
- Evaluation is to be carried out in two stages, **<Qualification Information>** first and **<Financial bids>** of qualified bidders next.
- The Somali Regional State Education Bureau has a right to accept or reject the bid.

Somali Regional State Education Bureau P.O. Box. 210 | Tel: 025 775 2069/3586/85/ Fax 0257753524 Jigjiga



SOMALI SOMALI REGIONAL EDUCATION BUREAU
Invitation for Local Competitive Bidders
The Somali Regional State Education Bureau invites all interested and eligible bidders for the following

1: Printing Of Examination Papers and Students Examination Cards for Grade 6 and Grade 8 With Ref: SRS/NCB/REB/004/2018

- Suppliers must have a valid Trading License Renewed for 2018 EFY, Tax Clearance Certificate valid until the date of deadline of bid submission and VAT Registration/TIN/Supply Certificate for each lot. Bidders are required to bring Original Documents with their copies when they are purchasing their documents,
- Interested bidders on the submission of a written application to the office of Somali Regional State Education Bureau Procurement and Property Administration upon submission of written application and nonrefundable fee of **ETB 1,000 (One Thousand Birr)** for each Lot may purchase the bid document.
- All bids must be accompanied by a **bid security of 2% (Two Percent)** of the bid price in the form of CPO or bank guarantee. Insurance Bond is not acceptable and valid for a period of 60 days after bid opening.
- Bids must be submitted to Somali Regional State Education Bureau Procurement and Property Administration Department after 10 days of announcement on the Capital newspaper at 10:00 AM.
- Bids will be opened on the 10th day after the announcement on Capital Newspaper at 10:30 AM in the presence of bidders or legal representatives. Late Bids shall be rejected. Bidders shall submit two envelopes marked **<Qualification information Bid Security>** in one envelope and **<Financial Bid>** separately in another envelope and should be sealed in an outer envelope.
- Evaluation is to be carried out in two stages, **<Qualification information>** first and **<financial bids>** of qualified bidders next
- The Somali Regional State Education Bureau has a right to accept or reject the bid.

Somali Regional State Education Bureau P.O. Box. 210 / Tel 025 775 2069/3586/851 Fax 0257753524 Jigjiga



SOMALI REGIONAL EDUCATION BUREAU
Invitation for Local Competitive Bidders
The Somali Regional State Education Bureau invites all interested and eligible bidders for the following

Printng of Text books and Teachers Guide

With ref: SRS/NCB/REB/005/2018

- Suppliers must have a valid Trading License Renewed for 2018 EFY, Tax Clearance Certificate valid until the date of deadline of bid submission and VAT registration/TIN/Supply Certificate for each lot. Bidders are required to bring Original Documents with their copies when they are purchasing their documents.
- Interested bidders on the submission of a written application to the office of Somali Regional State Education Bureau Procurement and Property Administration upon submission of written application and nonrefundable fee of **ETB:1,000 (One Thousand Birr)** for each Lot may purchase bid document.
- All bids must be accompanied by a **bid security of 2% (Two Percent)** of the bid price in the form of CPO or bank guarantee, Insurance Bond is not acceptable and valid for a period of 60 days after bid opening.
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- The Somali Regional State Education Bureau has a right to accept or reject the bid.

Somali Regional State Education Bureau P.O. Box. 210 | Tel: 025 775 2069/3586/85/ Fax 0257753524 Jigjiga



SANDFORD
INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL
 Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

News Release

Scholarship Opportunity for Admission to Sandford International School

The governing Board & management of Sandford International School are delighted to announce that scholarship places have been made available for 2026/27 academic year.

Places to be offered

Places will be available for students entering our Year 7 cohort in August 2026.

Guidelines and Procedures

- The scholarship opportunity is granted to Ethiopian nationals who are currently attending their 6th grade classes in one of the government schools in Addis Ababa.
- The award is only available to students who can fulfill the requirements and criteria that are set by Sandford International School.
- The Maximum number of scholarship places available will not exceed ten (10).
- If any student wishes to be considered for a place, they must be nominated by their current school.
- Students nominated by their school:
 - Must achieve a high score in the Year 6 national examination.
 - Will complete a Cognitive Ability Test (CAT4) at Sandford.
 - Must have excellent records of behavior, attendance and punctuality.
 - Will be able to demonstrate a consistently high level of performance at their previous school.
 - Will have a positive attitude to self-improvement.
 - Be in the age range of eleven to thirteen upon entry into the school

All government schools will be notified of this opportunity by letter that will be written by Addis Ababa Education Bureau

Government school administrators will nominate students to the scholarship committee of Sandford International School. Applications can be sent prior to the announcement of the national examination results. The school scholarship committee will seek clarification in due course.

If clarification is required, you can contact Mr. Tamer Kebede (Admission Officer) and Mrs Tigist Sitotaw (registrar and records officer) admissions@sandfordschool.org

Or by phone +251 11 1 23 37 20

Thank you - The School Admissions Team



Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.
ETHIOPIA

Request for Proposal For Recruitment of Third-Party Monitoring Agents/Consultant firm for Rapid Assessments in four regions (Afar, Amhara, Oromia, and Tigray) in Ethiopia

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) kindly request you to submit your bid for the provision of the services below:

No.	Post	PROCUREMENT REF. NO.	Web-link for detailed advert	Submission Deadline
1	Recruitment of Four Third-Party Monitoring Agents/Consultants for Rapid Assessments in Oromia Region	UNDP-ETH-00743	https://www.ungm.org/Public/Notice/305036 or https://procurement-notices.undp.org/view_negotiation.cfm?nego_id=46884	07-Jul-2026
2	Recruitment of Four Third-Party Monitoring Agents/Consultants for Rapid Assessments in Afar Region	UNDP-ETH-00744	https://www.ungm.org/Public/Notice/305035 or https://procurement-notices.undp.org/view_negotiation.cfm?nego_id=46883	07-Jul-2026
3	Recruitment of Four Third-Party Monitoring Agents/Consultants for Rapid Assessments in Amhara Region	UNDP-ETH-00745	https://www.ungm.org/Public/Notice/305034 or https://procurement-notices.undp.org/view_negotiation.cfm?nego_id=46882	07-Jul-2026
4	Recruitment of Four Third-Party Monitoring Agents/Consultants for Rapid Assessments in Tigray Region	UNDP-ETH-00746	https://www.ungm.org/Public/Notice/305037 or https://procurement-notices.undp.org/view_negotiation.cfm?nego_id=46885	07-Jul-2026

In line with the TOR and RFP enclosed hereafter.

When preparing your quotation, please be guided by the RFP Instructions and Data. Please note that quotations must be submitted directly in the system responding to the questions and uploading required documents by the date and time indicated in the online portal. It is your responsibility to ensure that your quotation is submitted before the deadline. Quotations received after the submission deadline outside the online portal, for whatever reason, will not be considered for evaluation.

Quotations must be submitted directly in NextGenERP supplier portal following this link:

<http://supplier.quantum.partneragencies.org> using the profile you may have in the portal.

Follow the instructions in the user guide to search for the tender using Negotiation ID in this document.

In case you have never registered before, you can register a profile using the registration link shared via the procurement notice and following the instructions in guides available in UNDP website:

<https://www.undp.org/procurement/business/resources-for-bidders>.

Do not create a new profile if you already have one. Use the forgotten password feature in case you do not remember the password or the username from previous registration.

Thank you and we look forward to receiving your quotations.

UNDP looks forward to receiving your Proposal and thanks you in advance for your interest in UNDP procurement opportunities.



INVITATION TO BID

Disposal of a Vehicle

REF. PRO32-3-773-PMU/26-4-1

The United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) invites interested bidders to participate in a closed bid exercise for the disposal of a Vehicle (Toyota Camry).

The bid is to be sold "as is, where is" without recourse to warranties of any kind. Bid with some information will be available from 29 June 2026 – 20 July 2026 on UN working hours and days from Monday to Thursday morning time between 9:00 AM to 12:30 PM afternoon time 15:00 PM to 17:00 PM and on Friday 9:00 AM to 13:00 PM.

For any queries regarding this bid, please contact the Bid Officer, Tel. 0115445779 extension (35779).

For physical inspection purposes, please contact the Inventory Control Unit of ECA in person or by telephone at 0115-443115, extension 33115.

Physical inspections will be conducted on **June 29, July 1,3,6,8,10,13,15,17,20** between **9:00 AM and 12:30 PM**.

Interested bidders may collect the bid document from the Procurement Unit, in Room no. NG.4S.03 of its Secretariat Building (Niger) 4th floor in the ECA compound at Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, during working hours, starting from 29 June 2026 – 20 July 2026 from Monday to Thursday morning time between 9:00 AM to 12:30 PM afternoon time 15:00 PM to 17:00 PM and on Friday 9:00 AM to 13:00 PM on UN working hours and days only.

The closing date of the bid submission will be 20 July 2026 at 16:00 PM, and the opening will be on 21 July 2026 at 10:00AM. No Proposal shall be received after this deadline.

Please deposit Birr 200 in United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) account No. 100090977858 and collect bid document from Supply Chain Management Section Procurement unit 4th floor Room No. NG.4S.03.

Bidders will be expected to submit a bid bond of 10% of the total bid amount in the form of CPO as a guarantee to participate in closed bid exercise. The 10% Bid bond will not be returned to the awarded bidder who failed to collect his/her award. Submission of bid on the basis of another bid is strictly prohibited.

The Economic Commission for Africa reserves the right to reject any or all proposals received whenever such rejection is in the interest of the organization.



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US**



SALES OFFICE :

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 - marketing@steelyrmipic.com
- 🌐 Web Site: www.steelyrmipic.com P.O.Box: 10742 (A.A Ethiopia)
- 📍 Address: Addis Ababa, Gurd Shola, Century Mall (HO)



TUSKER LITE RWENZORI MARATHON · KASESE, UGANDA · 22 AUGUST 2026



START AT THE EQUATOR. FINISH UNDER THE MOUNTAINS OF THE MOON IN UGANDA.

August 22, 2026 - Kasese, Uganda.

- 42K**
Full marathon
- 21K**
Half marathon
- 10K**
Road race
- 5K**
Neon vibes run

www.rwenzorimarathon.com/register

#TUSKERLITERWENZORIMARATHON

Run Where the Equator Meets the Mountains of the Moon

There is a place in western Uganda where the road begins on the Equator and ends beneath snow-capped peaks. On 22 August 2026, thousands of runners will gather there for the fifth edition of the Tusker Lite Rwenzori Marathon — and we would love to see Ethiopia well represented among them. There is something that happens when runners from different countries line up together. The shared nerves at the start, the encouragement traded on the road, the hugs at the finish — running

has a way of dissolving borders. The Tusker Lite Rwenzori Marathon brings together the running communities of East Africa and beyond, and Ethiopian runners belong right in the middle of it. We want this to feel like a family reunion of the road, with the joy of running carrying everyone from the Equator to the mountains. Picture the start line. You are standing on the Equator, inside Queen Elizabeth National Park, savannah stretching around you. The gun goes, and you run toward the Rwenzori — the "Mountains of the Moon" — their peaks rising ahead the whole way. You finish in Kasese town with drums, dancing, and a

celebration waiting at the line. Few races anywhere offer a course like this. In 2026 the marathon earned World Athletics Label Road Race status. Only a couple of hundred races worldwide hold this designation, which confirms that course measurement, timing, safety, and elite standards meet strict international rules. For runners chasing accurate times and serious fields, that label carries weight. There are four distances to choose from — the full marathon (42km), half marathon (21km), 10km, and 5km — so whether you are racing for a personal best or lacing up for your first event, there is a place for you.

A word of warning for the marathon runners. Around the 28km mark comes the Kilembe climb, a steep ascent through the old mining valley that has ended more than a few personal-best ambitions. Survive it, and a long downhill rewards you. It is the kind of challenge runners talk about long after the medals are handed out. Kilembe has become legendary — will you face it? Beyond the marathon, Uganda rewards the curious who stay a few extra days. Gorilla trekking, chimpanzees, mountain trails, and the warmth of the local community are all within easy reach. Getting there is straightforward. Ethiopian Airlines

connects Addis Ababa to Entebbe directly, and from there it is a short domestic flight or a scenic drive to Kasese. A Uganda eVisa is all you need to enter. Registration is open now at www.rwenzorimarathon.com/register, and early-bird entry closes on 1 July — so the moment to commit is here. We would be honoured to welcome Ethiopian runners to the Equator start line this August. Come race where two great running traditions meet, and help us write the next chapter of East African running.



From 'Gypsum' scandal to business excellence

How Ethiopia is nurturing a global export powerhouse

By Mekonnen Solomon

In Ethiopia's dynamic agricultural landscape, I encountered a compelling narrative that bridges public perception challenges with substantial economic opportunity. In Addis Ababa, our capital, a persistent rumor regarding the adulteration of Injera with "Jesso"—a colloquial term for gypsum used in construction—captured my attention. This narrative generated considerable anxiety among residents, including friends and acquaintances, who expressed reluctance to patronize small, budget-friendly eateries central to local culture. Social media amplified the concern, with dark humor suggesting that consumers might "stick to the walls" after meals, implying the gypsum's binding properties extended beyond the plate. The repercussions of this unfounded rumor were deep and regrettable. Many small-scale restaurant owners and bakers, often operating with limited resources, suffered significant livelihood losses as customer confidence eroded. In certain cases, the city Code Enforcement Authority (ደንብ አስከሬ) imposed business closures and detentions without the benefit of comprehensive physical and laboratory analysis or due process.

Subsequent investigations conclusively determined that the white substance in question was not gypsum but cassava (Manihot esculenta), a highly nutritious, gluten-free root crop. Cassava is a dense source of complex carbohydrates and sustained energy, full of vital nutrients like immune-boosting Vitamin C, copper, and dietary fiber, which promote digestive health and long-lasting fullness. This episode, in my view, exemplifies the detrimental effects of agricultural illiteracy. Cassava, unfamiliar to many consumers accustomed to traditional cereals such as teff, was erroneously transformed into a symbol of fear rather than recognized as a potential superfood rich in carbohydrates, fiber, and micronutrients.

Ethiopia's flowers, fruits, and vegetables have achieved an impressive annual value of approximately \$500 million over the past 25 years. This represents a solid foundation built on sustained investment and market development. Still, a number of studies and research reveal that the cassava sector is ripe for explosive growth.

I have had the opportunity to review the scalability of cassava cultivated by some farms in Ethiopia. Through discussions with Ato Habetamu, senior management staff of Aleta Land Coffee PLC, one of Ethiopia's prominent cassava farms, I acquired in-depth insights into the company's strategic plan and its pilot operation. This initiative strategically positions Ethiopia to generate value-added revenue approaching \$500 million from cassava-derived products within a concise five-year implementation period. The company articulated a compelling vision for rapid industrial scaling. The project anticipates commencing with approximately 170,000 metric tons (MT) of cassava chips in Year 1, expanding to a diversified output of 1,000,000 MT, including chips, flour, and starch, by Year 5.

This trajectory, as outlined by the company, leverages Ethiopia's late-mover advantage to bypass the limitations of fragmented subsistence farming prevalent in much of West Africa. In my informed opinion, this approach signals a paradigm shift, enabling the nation to double the current value of its horticultural export portfolio and establish itself as a formidable player in global agro-processing.

The continental context reinforces this perspective. Nigeria leads global cassava production with over 60 million MT annually, while Ghana has attained yields of 18–20 MT per hectare under optimized conditions. Both nations have historically emphasized domestic consumption. Ethiopia, by contrast, is strategically positioned to prioritize high-productivity, export-oriented industrialization. Aleta Land Coffee PLC is implementing mechanized farming and high-starch, improved varieties such as Kello and

Qulle. These measures are projected to deliver yields of up to 60 MT of fresh roots per hectare, substantially exceeding the regional smallholder average of 8–10 MT/ha and outperforming many Asian benchmarks of 20–25 MT/ha. The model is engineered to direct approximately 85% of production toward international markets, with a primary focus on high-demand industrial sectors in East Asia.

My discussions with company management unveiled key insights into land utilization and operational scale. The company's holistic strategy emphasizes meticulous land preparation designed for optimal cultivation, bolstered by cutting-edge agronomic practices that elevate both productivity and sustainability. This robust foundation is vital for reaching ambitious production goals and ensuring a reliable supply to our processing facilities. The company highlighted the critical need to diversify transit routes for export logistics. Currently, logistics costs range from \$103 to \$105 USD per metric ton, which can pressure margins compared to established competitors like Thailand and Vietnam. To mitigate this, the project plans to leverage the Lamu Port corridor in Kenya, which is anticipated to enhance transit efficiency, lower costs, and strengthen Ethiopia's long-term competitiveness in global supply chains. In my opinion, this strategic infrastructure development is essential for converting Ethiopia's geographic advantages into real market access. Given Ethiopia's pressing need for foreign currency, the Ministry of Transport and Logistics should prioritize finalizing the road to Lamu Port to ensure seamless connectivity with the international market.

Pricing dynamics further strengthen the project's viability. According to operational manager Dr. Kendie, current CIF prices for dried cassava chips in East Asian markets are approximately

\$243 USD/MT. To safeguard farmers and industrial partners against commodity volatility, the strategy incorporates a strategic price. This mechanism promotes contractual stability, encourages investment in quality improvements, and supports predictable income streams for rural stakeholders. From my perspective, this prudent risk-management framework distinguishes the Aleta Land model and enhances its attractiveness to both domestic participants and international buyers.

Aleta Land transparently addressed health risk concerns surrounding raw cassava with a scientific emphasis. The Aleta Land approach mandates rigorous post-harvest protocols, including thorough washing, peeling, and controlled drying to achieve a target moisture content of 10–11%. These steps effectively mitigate cyanide risks. The project adheres to Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) standards, maintains consistency in particle size and dryness, and implements digital traceability through the "Golden Triangle" strategy. This system monitors every batch from cultivation to export container, ensuring compliance with international safety thresholds. Properly processed cassava products, as affirmed by established research, present no significant health hazards and meet stringent global requirements.

While efforts to intensify cassava production are underway in the Daasanach pastoralist areas of South Omo, where Aleta Land Coffee PLC is located, operational challenges, specifically poor road infrastructure, labor shortages, absence of electric power, and unreliable fuel supply, create substantial cost burdens for export-oriented businesses, especially for cassava and banana producers. To ensure the viability of export-oriented farming in these remote regions, it is essential to implement preferential

operational and targeted incentives for the foreseeable future.

Current Ethiopian cassava exports remain negligible, valued at roughly \$22,000, representing an extraordinary, untapped potential. In my assessment, successful implementation of cassava initiatives like the Aleta Land envisaged plan could catalyze substantial foreign exchange earnings and contribute meaningfully to national development objectives.

Beyond quantitative targets, the initiative's socioeconomic impact merits recognition. The project underscored projections for creating over 10,000 rural jobs across cultivation, processing, logistics, and support services. By integrating smallholder farmers into contract farming and its varied chains through input provision, technical extension, and guaranteed markets, the model promotes inclusive growth, resilience to climate variability, and poverty reduction. Cassava's inherent drought tolerance and adaptability to varied soils further amplify its strategic value in Ethiopia's lowlands. My review also prominently features sustainability considerations. Integrating mechanized practices with conservation-oriented techniques can enhance soil health and water efficiency. Generated revenues could further support ongoing research into bio-fortified varieties and circular applications, such as converting processing residues into bioenergy or livestock feed.

In summation, the transformation of Ethiopia's cassava sector—from a source of public apprehension to a cornerstone of industrial ambition—reflects a mature national development strategy. My discussions with project management reinforce my conviction that agricultural transformation and rural empowerment are interdependent. By embracing high-value processing and leveraging strategic assets such as dedicated land resources,

optimized export corridors like Lamu Port, stable pricing mechanisms, and rigorous quality controls, Ethiopia is poised to secure a prominent position in the global cassava supply chain.

As Ethiopia advances toward its 2031 horizon, cassava emerges not merely as a Cinderella crop of the lowlands but as a dynamic engine of economic transformation. This opinion is grounded in direct insights from project leadership, comparative analysis of regional and global markets, and a thorough evaluation of agronomic, logistical, and safety parameters. Realizing this potential will demand continued collaboration among government entities, private investors, research institutions, and development partners. With coherent policies, sustained infrastructure investment, and human capital development, Ethiopia can confidently aspire to become a global cassava industrial powerhouse—delivering prosperity, enhanced food security, and international competitiveness.

The transition from rumor-driven fear to evidence-based opportunity is both instructive and inspiring. In my considered view, the Aleta Land Coffee PLC initiative exemplifies how visionary leadership, grounded in practical execution, can reshape agricultural narratives and unlock enduring national benefits.

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Is this not hate speech against tomorrow?

By Befikadu Eba

I came across a journal article recently that really stopped me in my tracks. It was a look into how influencers on digital platforms are subtly downplaying education as a necessary input for success in life. It was both interesting and, if I am being honest, a little late. The prescriptions that the authors suggested to counter this trend felt urgent, the kind of thing that policymakers need to take as valuable input for any upcoming reviews and directives. Now, my purpose here is not to argue for or against these trends. My concern is the effect these shifts will have on the upcoming generation and the country at large. It seems to me that the magnitude of this issue is being given very little attention. We are watching a fundamental belief, that education as the bedrock of a good life, being quietly eroded, and we seem to be okay with it.

But I find myself troubled by all of this. And I have a feeling that I might not be alone. Because when I sit and think about what this truly means for a country like ours, a deep unease settles in my chest and refuses to leave. We have laws in this country that deal firmly with hate speech. We have witnessed people being called to account for their words, and I believe that is entirely proper. Those laws are designed to stop rhetoric that encourages discrimination and violence along the lines of ethnicity, religion, or other identities. It is a necessary legal framework for a nation as wonderfully diverse as ours, a place where words can indeed ignite real fires. But then that question arrived, and it has been circling my mind ever since. The question of whether this trend of playing down education should not be viewed as something even more serious than hate speech.

The question of whether it is not itself a form of hate speech directed at the nation's future, a deliberate attempt to cripple an entire generation. And the more I reflect on that question, the more I recognize that it has put its finger on something of profound importance, something we have been far too slow to acknowledge.

Let us define what we are really talking about here. Hate speech, in its traditional sense, is about dividing us. It tells one group that they are less than another. It dehumanizes and incites. It is a direct assault on social cohesion. But what about this new form of speech, the kind that comes wrapped in smiles and quick edits and catchy music? What about the influencer who tells a young girl that school is useless, that what matters is followers and flashy content? What about the young boy who watches a video that mocks university graduates as fools who wasted their precious years? What about the subtle but persistent message that expertise is overrated, that your personal experience is just as valid as a decade of rigorous study, that success is a shortcut and not a climb? Is that not also a form of incitement? Is that not a calculated attack on the very idea that knowledge is power?

If hate speech is defined by its capacity to harm, then what are we to make of harm that is slow, that is generational, and that is masked as entertainment? The target of hate speech is to make one group feel less than human, to justify their marginalization. But the target of this anti education rhetoric is far broader and, I would argue, far more devastating. It is to make an entire generation feel that their minds are not worth training, that their futures are not worth investing in, that the only path to success is a shortcut that requires no discipline, no sacrifice, and no depth. That is

not an attack on one ethnic group or one religious community. That is an attack on everyone. That is a collective downgrading of human potential. This is a hate speech against the nation's future. It is a slow motion attempt at killing the generation by starving their curiosity, by convincing them that the only thing that matters is the fleeting approval of strangers on a screen.

I am not suggesting that every influencer is a villain. Many of them are creative, hardworking, and genuinely trying to share something positive. The problem is not the platform or the individuals. The problem is the dominant narrative that rises to the top, the narrative that says education is optional, that says formal learning is a waste of time, that says you can have everything you want without paying the price of patience and persistence. This narrative is seductive because it is easy. It tells young people that they can have success without the pain of exams, without the years of reading, without the discipline of sitting in a classroom. It tells them that they are already enough, that they do not need to grow. And that, I believe, is the most dangerous lie of all.

But above all, we need to remember that governments have a paternal role. That is not a dirty word. That is a duty. A government that does not protect its children from a life of shallow thinking is a government that has abandoned its most sacred trust. Democracy and freedom of information are precious, but they should never be mistaken for recklessness in control. Freedom does not mean the absence of guidance. It means the presence of choice, but choice requires an informed mind. If we let this trend continue, we are not giving young people freedom. We are giving them a cage made of cheap entertainment and empty promises. In my view, the government should

extend the same seriousness to this issue as it does to hate speech. Offenders who actively promote the devaluation of education should be held accountable, just as we hold accountable those who spread ethnic or religious hatred. And alongside that accountability, there must be room for correction. Those who have been spreading this message should be given proper educational guidance so they can understand the harm they have been doing and become part of the solution rather than the problem.

So let us not be naive. Let us not pretend that this is just a harmless phase. Let us call it what it is. It is a war on the mind. It is a quiet erasure of ambition. It is a betrayal of every parent who dreams of a better life for their child. And it demands a response that is just as fierce, just as creative, and just as relentless as the forces that are spreading it. We cannot afford to be late to this fight. The generation is already here. The future is already unfolding. And we have a choice. We can let it be shaped by those who profit from ignorance, or we can shape it ourselves, with wisdom, with courage, and with an unshakable belief that education is not a luxury. It is a lifeline. And we will not let it be cut.

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Capital SPORT

Why are World Cup underdogs doing so well?

This 48-team World Cup has produced some intriguing match-ups and several impressive performances by lower-ranked sides against the world's top teams.

Cape Verde, Curacao, Ghana and South Africa - ranked 64th, 81st, 65th and 54th respectively - have taken points from Spain (3rd), Ecuador (29th), England (4th) and South Korea (28th) so far.

Are these early tournament surprises a matter of luck, or clever planning and execution?

A deeper delve into what happened in the games that produced those unexpected results reveals a number of common patterns.

Don't take the bait

Cape Verde's 0-0 draw against Spain was perhaps the biggest upset of the tournament so far and it was also perhaps the most tactically impressive. The third-smallest nation in World Cup history stifled Spain through their 4-5-1 defensive shape. Key to their success was the fact gaps between their midfield line and defensive line were very small.

Against such a challenge, high-possession sides look to pass the ball backwards, hoping to entice the opposition to step up the pitch.

When Spain passed it back, expecting the midfielders to engage and create space between them and the defenders, Cape Verde didn't take the bait, instead keeping their shape compact.

The Spain defenders then carried the ball forward looking to trigger a reaction but the Cape Verde players, again, held their shape until late.

Spain, as a result, found it difficult to find players inside the block. Their remaining solutions were therefore either around Cape Verde or over the top of them.

This exact pattern was seen in Ghana's defensive set-up against England too.

England under Tuchel have placed an even greater emphasis on dropping deep to entice pressure before quickly attacking the space that opens up.

Ghana prepared for this by setting up in a compact formation. Jordan Ayew took a position higher up the pitch to man mark Elliot Anderson but the rest of the side, like Cape Verde, set up in two lines just outside of their penalty areas, giving up no space between the lines.

Both sides' refusal to apply pressure when the opposition attempted to tease them out is best illustrated by a statistic that looks to quantify how intensely a team presses.

'PPDA' stands for 'opposition passes allowed per defensive action'. The higher the number, the less a team has been able to interrupt opposition spells of play.

In Cape Verde's draw to Spain, their average PPDA was 51.2 to Spain's 5.9. In the first 15 minutes of Ghana's match against England, their PPDA was 62.

Both underdog sides were passive and deliberately so.

Interestingly, both Ghana and Cape Verde did increase the amount they pressed as the game went on. This could partly be explained by teams, such as Ghana, looking to take greater initiative and risk, hoping to snatch the game at the end.

Cover the width of the pitch

To understand why some underdogs have done well, it makes sense to analyse where others have, in contrast, been exploited.

Saudi Arabia's loss to Spain best highlighted a key flaw seen across many sides who 'park the bus'.

On the face of things, five defenders suggest a team should be better equipped to defend - but the opposite was true.



Saudi Arabia in their back five lacked clarity and were drawn to the player on the ball too often.

In their low block, their midfield four shifted towards the ball-side of the pitch more than they should have. This meant they failed to cover the width of the pitch. Recognising this, Spain switched the ball well, often from left to right.

Lamine Yamal and Pedro Porro found themselves in two-against-one situations against the Saudi Arabia wing-back and this overload led to Spain's third goal.

The wide midfielder, drawn to the ball, struggled to get back across to apply pressure on Porro when the ball was switched. The wing-back failed to step out to Porro too, knowing that if he did, Yamal would have been free.

With time and space on the ball, Porro played a cross to the back post which was knocked into a more central

position for Mikel Oyarzabal to tap in. Sweden, ranked 36th and underdogs in their game against the eighth-ranked Netherlands, lost 5-1 because of the same defensive frailty. Having just three midfielders in their 5-3-2 shape gave them even less coverage of width in midfield, compared to Saudi Arabia's four-man midfield.

The Netherlands used their right-winger to pin Sweden's left wing-back deep.

As Sweden's midfield three moved towards the ball, Denzel Dumfries, from a deeper starting position, made good forward runs that were not picked up.

Sweden failed to cope with this two-against-one situation and improved only when they moved to a 4-5-1 shape - as Cape Verde and Ghana did - later in the game.

Attract the press then go long

And lastly, if teams are going to get results against strong opposition, they ideally need to pose their own threat on the ball.

South Africa took 14 shots to South Korea's seven in their match while only having 31% of the ball.

Their ability to get the ball up the pitch, in a more deliberate manner, rather than simply playing long from the goalkeeper was central to this.

Underdogs that have done well have often played short from goal-kicks, drawing pressure from the bigger nations who are more inclined to press high, before chipping it into clusters of players in space.

We have seen the likes of Cape Verde, Iraq, and South Africa all use short goal-kicks, interestingly positioning players far from one another.

The idea is that by creating large distances between players, opponents

who want to press man-for-man have to run big distances to close the opponent down. In the time that this takes, defenders can look to find midfielders and attackers in space.

Playing out from the back while keeping big distances between players increases the risk of losing the ball in dangerous areas. South Africa, against Mexico, and Iraq, against Norway, conceded goals from these situations.

They did however create numerous good chances too and better final actions could have swung the story of the game.

Football is a sport of trade-offs and when South Korea pressed South Africa high, the Bafana Bafana stuck to their principles, playing it forward in a more precise manner.

Once up the pitch, they attacked quickly and scored the goal that ensured they progressed into the next stage of the competition.

And a bit of quality

These examples highlight the increasing level of tactical quality nations possess, irrespective of their ranking.

Even with players of a lesser quality, teams can pose real challenges when setting up in the right way, pulling in a collective direction.

And even then, they probably need things to go their way.

In this tournament, 40 year-old keeper Vozinha captured the hearts of many for his brilliant shot-stopping display against Spain.

Curacao's keeper Eloy Room matched the World Cup record for most saves made in a game, at 15, to help his nation get their first point too.

Tactics can help the smaller nations bridge the gap and play on their own terms but the aura of the World Cup appears to bring out of players a level of performance that they perhaps did not know they possessed.

Gudaf Tsegay handed four-month doping ban

Former two-time world champion Gudaf Tsegay has been handed a four-month doping ban after admitting the presence of a prohibited substance in an out-of-competition test.

The 29-year-old Ethiopian won the women's 5,000m world title in 2022 and the 10,000m crown in 2023 after taking bronze over the shorter distance at the Tokyo 2020 Olympics.

Tsegay returned a positive test for a metabolite of Letrozole, which is listed under the category of aromatase inhibitors on the World Anti Doping Agency (Wada) prohibited list, in December last year.

Letrozole helps lower estrogen levels in the body and is used in the treatment of breast cancer.

After being notified of the finding by the Athletics Integrity Unit (AIU) in late January, Tsegay responded a day later explaining that she had been prescribed Letrozole to treat a diagnosed medical condition and also produced supporting medical



documents and evidence.

In February, Tsegay submitted an application for a therapeutic use exemption (TUE) to World Athletics, which subsequently confirmed her treatment met Wada's international standard requirements for TUEs.

However, her application to be granted a retroactive TUE for exceptional reasons was rejected by Wada. She entered a case resolution agreement with Wada and the AIU. An AIU statement said a four-month ban was "considered appropriate" under rules concerning no fault or negligence by the athlete.

The length of sanction was based on Tsegay's degree of fault, her prompt admission of the violation, the fact the presence of Letrozole met Wada's international standards on TUEs and the recognition she would have been granted a TUE if it had been requested in advance.

Her period of ineligibility, backdated to 1 June, will run until 30 September.



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