



Ethiopian News

The Monthly Publication from the Ethiopian Embassy in London

August – September 2009 Issue

Ethiopia celebrates New Year



Eighty million Ethiopians ushered in the Year 2002 on the 1st of Meskerem (11th September 2009). This date is a reminder that Ethiopia has its own calendar comprising 13 months and is seven years and eight months behind the Gregorian calendar - evidence that Ethiopia is one of the oldest civilizations.



Young girls with yellow flowers that symbolize the New Year

Ethiopia's New Year's Day (or *Enkutatash* meaning 'gift of jewels') is celebrated in September towards the end of the big rains, the time of the return of the Queen of Sheba after a journey to Jerusalem.

The Ethiopian government used modern technology and the country's New Year celebrations as an opportunity to encourage citizens and their families to get tested for HIV. "New Year, new life! Test for HIV, test with your partner, get your children tested and brighten the future of your family! Free testing. Happy New Year!" read the text message sent to

subscribers of the national telecommunication provider, the Ethiopian Telecommunications Corporation, by the Federal HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control Office (HAPCO), ahead of the New Year celebrations.

Ethiopia to represent Africa at Copenhagen Conference on climate change

Ethiopia has been selected to represent Africa in the upcoming Copenhagen Global Conference on climate change in December. For the first time in its history, Africa will field a single negotiating team empowered to negotiate on behalf of all the member states of the African Union, which will be chaired by PM Meles Zenawi.



Ethiopia was selected from eight nominated countries because of the outstanding role it played in ensuring the interests and benefits of the continent were upheld at the G20 and G8 Summits, as well as in other international fora, Ethiopia is among the few countries that have enshrined environment protection in their constitutions and holds a strong position in mitigating climate change.

On 3rd February, in Addis Ababa, a Special Session of the African Partnership Forum on climate change was held. (The APF was established in November 2003 to strengthen partnership efforts for Africa's development). Environment Ministers from Sierra Leone, DRC, Uganda, Burkina Faso, Rwanda, Cameroon, Sudan, Kenya, Mozambique and Algeria attended along with Mr. Jean Ping, Chairperson of the African Union and Lord Nicholas Stern,

Chair of the Grantham Research Institute on Climate Change and the Environment.

On 24th August 2009 at the AU headquarters, leading African experts again held discussions, this time to consolidate Africa's Common Position on climate change, which will be presented in Copenhagen. PM Meles outlined the position that Africa will take at the Copenhagen conference. "Over fifty countries, more than a quarter of the member states of the United Nations, will be speaking with one voice, that should make the negotiations much more manageable. Africa's interest and position will not be muffled as has usually been the case when each African country speaks for itself, or tries to do so, on behalf of Africa without the necessary mandate."

"Africa's prime interest is prevention", he said, because "Africa's eco-systems are amongst the most fragile in the world and hence highly vulnerable to catastrophic changes due to small changes in temperature". He added "We understand that a certain degree of global warming is already happening and... we will live with the damage caused by the unavoidable levels of global warming and seek compensation and assistance to limit the damage. Africa will squarely and unequivocally side with those who are committed to limit global warming to the unavoidable minimum level. We Africans have contributed virtually nothing to global warming but we want to keep our forests intact and re-forest those that have over the years been degraded... precisely because such an approach is economically more rewarding and sustainable."

"We also want to quickly adopt green technologies. Africa is a green field for investment because it is the least developed region in the world. By partnering with us on green development, the developed world could create a more robust market and overall environment for the mitigation efforts that it alone must shoulder. In other words Africa wants to be part of the solution even on matters of mitigation if it is enabled and assisted to do so."

"We will reason with everyone to achieve our objective... We will use our numbers to

delegitimize any agreement that is not consistent with our minimal position. If needs be, we are prepared to walk out of any negotiations that threaten to be another rape of our continent." He then added "But with your support I know none of that will be necessary. I am confident that in the coming months we will be able to build the necessary consensus to prevent any such disruption."

The PM's full speech is available on our website at www.ethioembassy.org.uk

Eritrea-Ethiopia Claims Commission: Final Award on Damages

On August 17th 2009, the Eritrea-Ethiopia Claims Commission issued final damage awards in its complex and detailed arbitration of the claims submitted after the conflict which followed Eritrea's illegal invasion of Ethiopia in May 1998.

The Commission, which said it took into account regional poverty in making its awards, ruled Eritrea would have to pay Ethiopia some \$10 million in compensation. A statement from the Ethiopian Government noted that this amount of compensation was scarcely commensurate with the damages Ethiopia sustained from being dragged into war by Eritrea's illegal use of force.

The commission found that Eritrea had violated Article 2(4) of the United Nations Charter when it invaded Ethiopia in May 1998. The commission said, "**The Respondent (Eritrea) violated Article 2, paragraph 4, of the Charter of the United Nations by resorting to armed force on May 12, 1998 and the immediately following days to attack and occupy the town of Badme, then under peaceful administration by the Claimant (Ethiopia), as well as other territory in the Claimant's Tahtay Adiabo and Laelay Adiabo Weredas.**"

Eritrea raised a number of reasons to justify its unprovoked aggression and to try to dissuade the Commission from arriving at this unambiguous decision. The Commission rejected them. In explaining its findings, the Commission specifically rejected Eritrean arguments that it was entitled to use force simply because it was claiming some of the

territory concerned. The Commission said, "...the practice of States and the writings of eminent publicists show that self-defence cannot be invoked to settle territorial disputes." Therefore given the absence of an armed attack against Eritrea, the attack cannot be justified as lawful self-defence under the UN Charter.

Though the finding of the Commission that Eritrea violated international law by its illegal use of force is a significant achievement in terms of setting the record straight and exposing the real nature of the Eritrean regime, many other aspects of the Commission's awards, both at the liability and damages phases of the proceedings, are equally important. The Commission recognised the immense loss and suffering inflicted by conflict on civilian populations and prisoners of war. The entire Claims Commission process demonstrated the devastating consequences of war on populations and their economies.

Somali delegation visit a success

Authorities from the Somali Regional State of Ethiopia visited London from 21st to 26th August. The delegation was led by H.E. Mr Abdulfatah Abdulahi, Chairperson of the ruling party in the region, the Somali Peoples' Democratic Party (SPDP), who is responsible for the region's Capacity Building Bureau.

During their stay in London, the delegation met members of the Diaspora community from the region in a general meeting that took place on 22nd August.

The delegation used the meeting to inform the community of the political and economic transformations that have been taking place in the region in the last ten years, especially in the last five years – significant growth in school enrolment, development of infrastructure and the provision of basic health services and the development of agriculture.

Also underlined in the meeting was the role of the Diaspora community in promoting trade and investment as well as in facilitating the transfer of knowledge and technology to the

region. The community issued a communiqué outlining its support of the region.

The delegation also had interviews with the BBC World Service Somali Programme and BBC Focus on Africa and also with Universal TV and ETN TV – Somali television stations. In his media interviews, H.E. Mr Abdulfatah Abdulahi gave detailed information on the political and socio-economic development programmes under implementation in the region. He also highlighted how the current peace and stability in the region has created an environment conducive to the promotion of trade, investment and tourism.

In related news, Somali State Chief Dawd Mohammed Ali, has announced that there were promising results during the past budget year. Best ever results were registered in good governance and other domains - health service coverage has reached over 70%, while education and potable water coverage hit 46% and 40% respectively.

Both education and potable water coverage will surpass 60% during the current budget year. Efficient service to residents of the state will come through the implementation of business process re-engineering (BPR).

Ethiopia to set environmental code of conduct for agriculture investors

The Ethiopian Government is preparing the first ever code of conduct for investors engaged in large-scale agriculture and mechanised farming, with a view to conserving the environment.

State Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development (MoARD), Dr. Abera Deressa, said that the policy is part of the effort to boost the agriculture sector and produce bio-fuel as an alternative source of energy.

The government is providing support to investors to enable them to exploit the extensive arable land available in regional states. MoARD is also preparing an environmental code of conduct on the activities of investors. The draft code will be sent to the Federal Environmental Protection

Authority (FEPA) and all stakeholders for them to deliberate on it and make recommendations.

MoARD has so far acquired over 1.4 million hectares of land from Oromia, Amhara, Benishangul, Gambella and Tigray regions.

EPRDF working for fair 2010 elections; holding discussions with opposition

Affiliates of the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) are undertaking a range of activities to ensure that the up-coming national elections are fair, peaceful and democratic.

The affiliates included members from The Gambella People's Democratic Unity Movement (GPDUM), the Afar National Democratic Party (ANDP), the Somali People's Democratic Party (SPDP) and the Benishangul-gumuz People's Democratic Unity Front (BPDUF).

The GDUM chairman said that various capacity-building training is being offered to all members of the leadership and public servants in the Gambella State over the next month. The BDUF chairman said that public conferences and training aimed at enhancing awareness are being organised and that activities were being carried out to merge four nationality parties in the state.

In related news, EPRDF also said it is holding discussions on the election code of conduct with political parties which have seats in the national parliament.

The discussion will centre on regulations to be followed by contestant parties during the election. EPRDD has also conducted a series of televised discussions on issues related to political space and anti-terrorism law.

Praise for Ethiopia's peacekeeping mission role

The increasing participation of the Ethiopian Army in multi-national peacekeeping missions has enhanced the international image of the country.

The Chief-of-Staff, General Samora Yunus, said the Ethiopian Army has won appreciation for its valiant performance and its consideration of the culture and values of people in areas where it has been deployed.

Ethiopia has provided more than 1,800 soldiers in the Darfur peacekeeping mission including infantry battalion, a medium transport company, a multi-role logistics company and a number of staff officers, mainly in West Darfur. In 1994, Ethiopia took part in the peacekeeping mission in Rwanda during the genocide and in 1998, Ethiopia also offered steadfast support to the establishment of the OAU Panel of Eminent Persons that investigated and documented the genocide of the Tutsi of Rwanda. And in 2003, Ethiopia also took part in the peacekeeping mission in Burundi to help disarm, demobilize and integrate Burundi's ex-rebels into new defence and security forces. Ethiopia continues also to participate in the multifaceted peacekeeping mission in Liberia.

WB: Ethiopia's road sector a success

The World Bank has said Ethiopia's Road Sector Development Programme (RSDP), which was launched in 1997 to improve development, has achieved many successes in infrastructure and policy reform.

The programme, which encourages private companies in the road development sector, upgrades and expands roads and preserves the natural environment, has boosted Ethiopia's economic development.

In the 1990s, the Government of Ethiopia knew a major expansion of the road network was necessary for it to meet its development goals. With this in mind, Ethiopia formulated the 10-year Road Sector Development Programme (RSDP 1997 – 2007), a two-phased integrated package of investments, reforms and institutional reorganisation. The programme was later extended to include a third phase up to the end of June 2010.

The WB said that rural people have now doubled their access to all-weather roads, which has reduced their transport burden, increased women's empowerment and

improved agricultural incomes. "These outcomes are the result of combined contributions by Government, investing in regional rural roads, and development partners in restoring the main road network. The classified main roads have nearly doubled to about 45,000km with the increase in roads in good condition."

In addition to infrastructure changes, the programme's institutional development impact has been substantial, thanks to the re-establishment of the Ethiopian Roads Authority (ERA), the project's implementing organisation.

The World Bank and other donors have provided grants and loans to the programme since 1998. The World Bank has so far supported over \$1.1 billion for the same cause. Partners of the project include the EU, the African Development Fund (ADF) and the development arm of the UK, Norway, Germany, Japan, Italy and the Netherlands.

Ethiopia signs compact CAADP

Ethiopia has signed up to a Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) which helps define and accelerate the implementation of its agricultural development targets.

The State Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development said that the government is fully committed to the overall African Union/New Partnership for Africa's Development (AU/NEPAD) vision and strategy framework, objectives and principles.

The signing of the compact symbolises the stakeholders' agreement to work together to realise the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The CAADP-Ethiopia implementation began last year with the assignment of a focal person and the establishment of a national steering committee.

ECX: 2.8 billion Birr secured from coffee trade

The Ethiopia Commodity Exchange (ECX) has announced that 2.8 billion Birr was secured from the coffee trade conducted with its members

during the recent Ethiopian budget year. This figure was secured from the trading of 136,000 tonnes of coffee.



The introduction of coffee to the exchange market has registered encouraging results in a short time period, said Dr. Eleni Gabremedhin, CEO of ECX. She added that wide-ranging activities aiming at curbing the shortage of warehouses and improving the quality of coffee have been carried out.

ECX is a recent initiative in Ethiopia. It is an organised marketplace, where buyers and sellers come together to trade, assured of quality, quantity, payment and delivery.

Ethiopia coffee's sector received a major boost when Japan said it was willing to resume importing large quantities of coffee. The Ethiopian government is hoping to export as much as 30,000 tonnes to Japanese buyers in 2009/10.

As Africa's biggest coffee producer, Ethiopia expects a bumper harvest in 2009/10 thanks to good rains. Ethiopia prides itself as the birthplace of coffee. 15m smallholder farmers grow beans (95% of Ethiopia's output), mostly in the misty forested highlands of its western and south-western regions.

Flower export brings in over \$138 million

The Ethiopian Flower and Horticultural Products Association (EFHPA) says Ethiopia obtained \$138 million from export of cut flowers during the past 11 months from the export of two billion cut flowers.



Cut flowers are becoming one of Ethiopia's top income-generating products. In spite of the current global economic slowdown, the amount gained from the sector is 20% up on last year. Cut flowers were exported only to the Netherlands and Germany before last year, but are now exported to Britain, Sweden, Norway, Japan, Russia and South Africa.

Many investors are engaged in flower farming in Ethiopia, and 3,000 hectares of land are ready for investors interested in the sector.

Ethiopia secures \$100m from precious minerals

Ethiopia has secured almost \$100m from the export of almost 5.6 tonnes of gold, silver, tantalum and platinum concentrates and white marble.

The minerals were sold on the world market in the past fiscal year by the National Bank of Ethiopia (NBE) and MIDROC-Gold, an Ethiopian private mining firm.

The Ministry of Mines and Energy (MoME) has enhanced the capacity of traditional mining and trading of precious materials and recently introduced a proclamation to regulate the industry.

Ministry to provide 60ha land for footwear zone

The Ministry of Trade and Industry will provide 60 hectares of land for investment projects in footwear - 10ha in the Akaki/Kaliti sub city and 50ha in Adama.

Footwear has become one of the major leather industry exports, with export earnings from the

sector steadily growing to over \$10 million last year, up from \$2 million some three years ago.

The government has put in place an ambitious strategic plan that will see export earnings from footwear reach \$175 million in 2010/2011. The production of footwear is projected to reach 20 million pairs of shoes by then.

The ministry has also secured 1000ha of land in Kombolcha for investment projects in **textiles**.

Ethiopian Airlines hits a record 1.3 billion Birr profit despite cut-throat competition

Ethiopian Airlines secured a net profit of over 1.3 billion birr, an all-time high, in the just ended Ethiopian fiscal year.

Its CEO, Girma Wake, said the airline generated a profit increase of 165% compared to last year.



THE NEW SPIRIT OF AFRICA

It generated 12.2 billion birr in revenue, a 32.8% increase against the previous year's. It also transported 2.8 million passengers during that year, registering an increase of 12.3%.

Girma added, "The overall performance of the airline is noteworthy and rewarding considering the numerous challenges we have had to cope with – cut-throat competition in the industry, the global economic crisis, escalating operational and capital costs and shrinking trends."

Ethiopian Airlines recently placed firm orders for five B777-200 LRS from the Boeing Company, and twelve A350-900s from Airbus, making it the first African carrier to order and operate the ultra-long-range B777-200LR. The A350-900 is designed to confront the challenges of high fuel prices, rising passenger expectations and environmental constraints.

Girma said, "Ethiopian Airlines remains focused on its vision for 2010 and is very optimistic of realising its defined objectives sooner than the end of the current budget year."

Holland Car to manufacture bio-gas cars, rolls out three new models

Holland Car Plc of Ethiopia, which assembles and distributes cars in Ethiopia has announced a plan to manufacture new environmental-friendly bio-gas cars. The first model will be launched in November.

Holland Car has agreed with three foreign companies to work jointly to establish a bio-gas plant.

Announcing the plan, Taddese Tesema, GM and co-founder of Holland Car Plc, said Ethiopia spends a huge amount of foreign currency buying fuel, adding that bio-gas is about 25% cheaper than petrol and is more environmentally friendly.

Holland Car Plc was established in 2005 and is a joint venture between the Dutch company Trento Engineering BV and the Ethiopian company Ethio-Holland Plc in Addis Ababa with a 50% share each. The company combines the expertise of equipment production and processes and the knowledge of the local market. Its production site is in Modjo, 65km south from Addis Ababa. The company is well known for its ABAY, AWASH and TEKEZE brands, named after famous Ethiopian rivers. On 7th September it unveiled three keenly anticipated most technically advanced cars.

The new models will go on sale in the local market from the Ethiopian New Year (mid-September). The three new models are ABAY Executive, TEKEZE Executive and AWASH Executive, prices from 189,500 Birr.

ETC - fibre network in 14 towns, nets 2.4bn Birr

The Ethiopian Telecommunications Corporation (ETC) has announced that it is installing a fibre network in 14 towns with a view to making the telecom sector more reliable.

Installation of the fibre network is required as the existing fixed telephone lines cannot support integrated sound, picture and data messages services.

573 cable boxes and 298km of cable have so far been installed, with a 597m Birr budget in Addis Ababa alone. Installation of the fibre network in the 14 towns will conclude next month, and activities are underway to carry out similar works in 61 towns across the nation.

The corporation has allocated a huge budget for eight other projects, which will significantly upgrade the telecom service.

ETC made 2.4bn Birr profit during the past budget year, obtaining 5.662bn Birr in revenue from regular, mobile and internet services, 71% higher than last year.

Ethiopia at first East African Independent Producers Forum

The first Eastern Africa Independent Producers Forum opened in Nairobi, Kenya on 13th August. It brought together participants from eight countries – Burundi, Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda, Somalia, Sudan and Uganda – to discuss and make recommendations on the setting up of an East African Independent Producers Organisation.

Selected themes and topics, reflecting the key vision, mission and objectives of the Forum, were addressed through discussions and presentations, among which were:

- theoretical and political implications, modalities, expected results and working methods towards an East African Independent Producers Organisation and an East African Convention on Cinematic Collaboration;
- historical challenges of independent production in Africa;
- the role of government in the development of an audiovisual media sector and assessment of necessary regional instruments;
- towards a common vision and common voice: how to facilitate unity among Eastern African independent producers; and

- the role of broadcasters in the development of the East African audiovisual media sector, with special focus on national and public service broadcasters;

The three-day forum was supported by UNESCO within the framework of its Audiovisual E-Platform and took place during the Lola Kenya Screen Festival 2009.

Education

Adama University a model international university

The founder and President of Adama University (AU), Prof. Dr. Herbert Eichele said Adama University has registered encouraging achievements since March 2008, and is becoming a well-established model university. The transformation is guided by a framework which is fully approved by the Ethiopian Government.

The university provides services not found elsewhere and has launched a Tropical Disease Centre.

AU has become the only university in Ethiopia which provides round-the-clock wireless internet connection services to the community of the university; has many partners who have entered cooperation agreements with it; enjoys student administration support systems; connects Adama campus with its Asala campus by fibre optics; and did away with the former university procurement chain in favour of a more effective one. It has also created job opportunities for students on the campus.

The inauguration of the Tropical Diseases Research Centre in Asala campus is part of an expansion and improvement programme. The centre also contributes to the prevention of tropical diseases in the town.

AU is already recognised as a strong brand in Ethiopia's higher education system. The government is planning to set up ten new universities in addition to the existing 21. These new universities will be established according to the AU paradigm.

In line with the Ethiopian Higher Learning Institutions policy instruments, capacity building at the existing universities has been given particular emphasis. Accordingly, AU prioritises engineering, technology and natural science courses, giving them 70% of the space.

Adama University was founded as Nazreth Technical Teachers College 16 years ago in Adama town.

Tourism

24,000 tourists visit Lalibela

About 24,000 foreign tourists visited the Rock Hewn Churches of Lalibela during the past budget year, the Town's Culture and Tourism Department head, Belete Wodaje, said.

Six million Birr income was secured from the tourists.



In addition to the Rock Hewn Churches of Lalibela there are several other Rock Hewn Churches in Lasta Woreda.

The number of tourists visiting the historical heritage sites has been steadily increasing.

Ato Belete said more than a hundred trained tour guides provide reliable information about the sites to tourists. The number of good standard hotels has also increased.

Aim to add Yeha Temple to UNESCO list

The Tigray State Trade, Industry and Transport Bureau has disclosed that it has launched activities to inscribe the ancient Yeha Temple on UNESCO's world heritage list.

Being the centre of the earliest civilization in northern Ethiopia, the tantalizing and towering ruins of Yeha's Temple of the Moon were built more than 2,500 years ago, in Sabaean times.



Bureau Tourism Development-work process owner, Gebre-egziabiher Nay-egzi, said that a plan to register the Yeha Temple on the world heritage list is being submitted to the pertinent body.

Registering the ruins of Yeha, a large pre-Christian temple erected around the fifth century, on the world heritage list would play a vital role in providing proper care to the site to preserve it for the next generation. It would also help attract tourists to the site.

Scientific methods of documentation will also be employed for logging 1,000 ancient heritage sites in the new budget year. The scientific documentation would help identify, inspect and preserve the ancient historical sites.

Over 50m birr was obtained from over 57,460 local and foreign tourists who visited the Yeha Temple, the Axum obelisk, Mekelle Museum and other tourist attractions in the state over the past budget year.

The lost city of Ethiopia

The recent discovery of the remains of a number of ancient cities in Ethiopia has rekindled debate about Ethiopia's remarkable past.

An ancient Muslim trading city, believed lost for 1,000 years, has been discovered by a team of French archaeologists. The city is called **Gendebelo**.

Gendebelo was a medieval Muslim trading centre, believed to be located about 30km from Ankobar. While Ethiopia is famous for being the second oldest Christian country in the world after Armenia, about half the population is Muslim, and the two communities have lived side by side for centuries. Gendebelo was a place of peaceful trade between the Christian and Muslim cultures.

French archaeologists Francois-Xavier Fauvelle-Aymar and Bertrand Hirsch discovered the site as a medieval city now known as Nora, which had been abandoned for years except for the mosque, which is still being used by local farmers.

The pair based their explorations on a fragment of the chronicle of the Muslim Kingdom of Shoa, which the Italian scholar and Ethiopia expert, Enrico Cerulli, found in a souk in the walled city of Harar in 1936. This Ajami manuscript – a form of Arabic supplemented with Amharic script – described the legendary city and was being used as packaging for sugar. They also studied the writings of a 16th century Venetian traveller called Alessandro Zorzi, who wrote of finding a lost city in Ethiopia.



The ruins of Gendebelo are a bit out of the way for modern travel, but planned excavations will almost certainly reveal some fine remains. In the meantime, one great Muslim centre is still very much in use – **Harar**. Situated in the

eastern part of Ethiopia, Harar is considered to be the 4th holiest sight for Muslims after Mecca, Medina and Jerusalem.

Harar was founded more than 1,000 years ago and is still enclosed by a city wall, which is now a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Besides the walls, there are three mosques dating back to the 10th century, and the house of French poet Rimbaud, who lived there when he was working as a gun runner. Another popular sight is the nightly feeding of the hyenas.

Sport

Team Ethiopia ranks 7th in the IAAF World Championships; Kenenisa Bekele makes history



Kenenisa Bekele claimed his fourth successive 10km world title with a stunning performance at the World Athletics Championships in Berlin.

Bekele, who has never been beaten in the 10km in his career with 12 wins in 12 races, set a new championship record of 26 minutes 45.11 seconds, to add Berlin gold to his previous success in Paris 2003, Helsinki 2005 and Osaka two years ago, matching compatriot Haile Gebrselassie for the most world championship titles won.

And on Sunday August 23rd, he added yet another chapter to his incredible career winning gold in the men's 5,000m race to secure the same double he won in the 2008 Olympics. Bekele is the first Ethiopian to win the 5,000m world championship gold. He finished the race in 13 minutes 17.09 seconds.

"It was a hard race; I'll never forget this race. I never made a double in the Olympics and World Championships. I'm so happy," Bekele said.



Bekele's gold in Berlin adds to an unbelievable medal haul from the Olympic Games and world cross-country championships. He is also world record holder over both the 5,000m and 10,000m.

In the women's 10km, held on the first day of the event, Meselech Melkamu and Wude Ayalew claimed 2nd and 3rd places, with fellow Ethiopian Meseret Defar in 5th.

Deresse Mekonnen also finished with a Silver medal in the 1,500m on 19th August, during the world athletics championships in Berlin. His time of 3:36.01 was enough to beat the defending champion Bernard Lagat who was third. It was the first time Ethiopia won a world medal at 1,500 meters.

Tsegay Kebede won bronze in the Men's marathon held on the 22nd, with a time of 2:08:35. Aselefech Mergia also won a bronze medal in the women's marathon.

Unstoppable Kenenisa wins 5000m, gets share of \$1 million jackpot

Kenenisa Bekele returned to the track in Zurich on 28th August 2009, to win yet another 5km race in 12 minutes 52.32 seconds – just five days after his last race in Berlin at the World Athletics Championship. This feat was part of the AF Golden League.

The AF Golden League is a series of six athletic meets where elite athletes of the world compete for a \$1 million prize; the winners of all 6 races from various athletic fields share the \$1 million award.



And on 4th September, Kenenisa secured a share of the \$1 million Golden League Jackpot by winning the 5,000m in Brussels, to finish six-for-six in the top European meets. He will take home \$333,333, sharing the jackpot with Sanya Richards of the US (400m) and Yelena Isinbayeva of Russia (Pole Vault) who all won six-for-six.



Kenenisa Bekele (Centre) with Yelena Isinbayeva of Russia (L), and Sanya Richards of the U.S. (R)

Kenenisa is the winner of 24 world and Olympic titles, more than anyone in athletics history; the breaker of six world records; unbeaten in his career of 10,000m; undefeated in three years and 26 track races over 3,000m or more; the greatest cross country runner ever with 11 global titles. He is the first person to ever win a double 5,000m and 10,000m at World Championships.

According to Addis Fortune magazine, Kenenisa Bekele plans to invest the money in several projects, saying: "I am building a hotel and a modern athletics centre. These two projects need a total investment of about \$15 million. These prizes will go towards that." Bekele also acknowledges that world-class runners still earn significantly less than athletes in other sports.

Team Ethiopia at IAAF World Athletics Final

Double world and Olympic champion Kenenisa Bekele outspurred Bernard Lagat of the United States with victory over 3,000m at the world athletics final in Thessaloniki, Greece on September 12th. Bekele clocked 8 minutes and 3.79 seconds to beat Lagat again into second place.



After the race, Bekele said, "I ran pretty well but it was not an easy race after a very long season. I am very tired and so I will not run the 5,000m." With the withdrawal of Bekele from the 5,000m race, compatriot Imane Merga managed to snatch first place ahead of Micah Kipkemboi Kogo and Edwin Cheruiyot Soi in a sprint finish.

In the women's race, Meseret Defar added the women's 3,000m to the 5,000m on September 12th, taking away \$60,000 for her two victories at the World Athletics Final.

News in Brief

Tekeze hydroelectric power dam set for trial run

The two billion Birr Tekeze hydro-electric power project is expected to begin generating electricity in the next few weeks. The dam is expected to generate 75MW of power from one of its turbines.

The dam has four turbines each with a capacity of generating 75MW. When completed, Tekeze is expected to add 300MW of power to the national grid, bringing the generating capacity to a total of 1,170MW.

Female investors receive licenses for 385m Birr

Female investors with over 385 million birr of combined capital have received licenses during the past Ethiopian budget year to engage in investment activities in Amhara State.

The investors will engage in agriculture, hotel and tourism, the education and health sectors. Upon going fully operational, the investment projects will create jobs for more than 13,500 citizens.

Since 1993, some 513 investment projects owned by female investors have been licensed in the state. The projects, which have registered over 1.6 billion birr combined capital, have the capacity to create jobs for 37,000 citizens.

Haile Gebreselassie donates to National Eye Bank of Ethiopia

Ethiopia's superstar athlete, Haile Gebreselassie, presented a cheque to the National Eye Bank of Ethiopia to cover the cost of ten cornea transplant operations at the Menelik II Hospital. Haile also announced that he will donate his own corneas to the National Eye Bank and urged others to do the same and help fellow Ethiopians who need them.

During the ceremony, he pointed out that the donation was merely a gesture on his part to fulfil his national duty as a citizen.

According to a report by the Eye Bank, 6,000 Ethiopians, including President Girma Wolde-Giorgis, have so far pledged to donate their corneas.

The National Eye Bank of Ethiopia, the first eye bank in the country's history, opened on 28th June 2003, in partnership with the International Federation of Eye and Tissue Banks (IFETB), the Federal Ministry of Health, the Addis Ababa City Administration Health Bureau, the Menelik II Hospital and the Department of Ophthalmology of the Medical Faculty of Addis Ababa University. The eye bank was developed by ORBIS, a non-profit humanitarian organisation dedicated to saving sight and avoiding blindness worldwide.

Association endeavouring to export over 50,000 tonnes of honey

The Ethiopian Honey and Beeswax Producers and Exporters Association (EHBPEA) said it is making relentless efforts to export over 50,000 tonnes of quality honey this budget year.

The Association President said that the quality accreditation certificate the association received from the European Union (EU) in February 2008 contributed to the increase in the volume of honey it is exporting. The Association in collaboration with the Netherlands Development Organisation (SNV) has offered training on apiculture to 1,500 beekeepers in Oromia and SNNP states in a bid to attain the set target.

The demand for Ethiopian honey is steadily growing in Europe, Middle East countries and the USA. The current honey production is estimated at 24,600 tonnes per year and is almost exclusively used to satisfy local demand. Ethiopia is the World's 10th biggest honey producer and the 4th largest beeswax producer after China, Mexico and Turkey. Annual production of wax is estimated at 3,200 tonnes. Export of Ethiopian beeswax has increased spectacularly and represents 1.2% share in world market.

Owing to its varied ecological and climatic conditions, Ethiopia is home to some of the most diverse flora and fauna in Africa, making it highly suitable for sustaining a large number of bee colonies. Ethiopia has the largest Bee population in Africa with over 10 million bee colonies, out of which about 7.5 million are confined in hives and the remaining exist in the forest. The honey is organic and there is no usage of herbicide and pesticides. Ethiopia uses its honey for both basic and luxury goods, for medicinal purposes and it is the key ingredient in the country's famous national drink, a sweet wine known as *Tej*.

A full version of this newsletter is available at www.ethioembassy.org.uk. Please email us if you would prefer to receive an email version at info@ethioembassy.org.uk

Published by the Press Office

