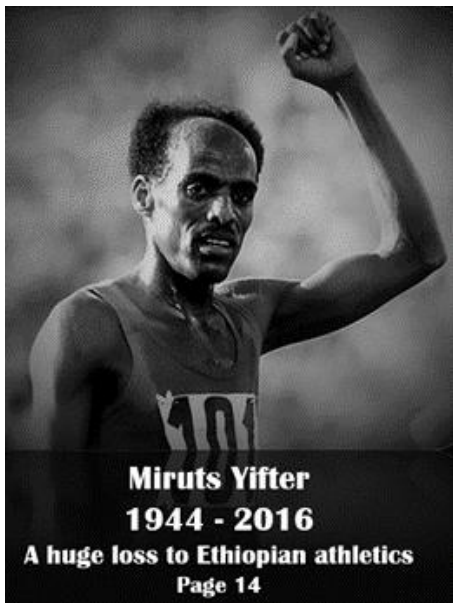




# Ethiopian News

December 2016 Issue



## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Gilgel Gibe III, tallest RCC dam in the world, inaugurated.....4
- Addis Ababa Light Rail Transit wins climate change award.....5
- Ethiopian spreads it wings in Asia with new flights.....6
- Ethiopia maintains positive growth - World Bank.....7
- Ethiopia's historic seed campaign.....8
- Bagir ships first order from Ethiopia to U.S. for H&M.....9
- BBC's Planet Earth II - the hyenas of Harar.....10
- UNESCO adds Gada system to Heritage list.....11
- Celebrations held for Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Day in London.....13
- Almaz crowned World Athlete of the Year.....15
- Elf Kid taking grime music to Ethiopia.....20

## ETHIOPIA IN THE NEWS

- TATLER: Why Ethiopia should be on your 2017 bucket list.....16
- CNN: Ethiopia bids to become wind capital of Africa.....18
- How community health workers save lives.....19

# Best wishes for the New Year

From all of us at the Ethiopian Embassy in London



Photo: Crafts at the Key Afer Market in the in the Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Region in Ethiopia. This colourful market brings together a kaleidoscope of cultures from the region, including the Aris, Hamer, Tsamay and Bena. © Ethiopian Tourism Organisation / David Kirkland

## Message from the Ambassador

The New Year is a time of to reflect on what has passed and to look ahead to the opportunities to come, and set new goals.

In my first year as Ambassador of Ethiopia to the United Kingdom I witnessed one of the most turbulent events in the country's history - the Brexit vote, which will impact far beyond the bounds of Europe and across the world, but more of that later.

In March, Ethiopia saw the world of coffee coming home as it successfully hosted the **World Coffee Conference** – the first time such a conference has been held in Africa. As you may all know, Ethiopia is the birthplace of coffee.

In June, I presented my credentials to Her Majesty the Queen at Buckingham Palace, where I spoke to the Queen about her visit to Axum in 1965 and the work the Ethiopian Embassy is doing in London.

In July, Ethiopia launched its new tourism brand - **Ethiopia: Land of Origins**, inviting the world to discover why Ethiopia is the origin of so much history and culture, vibrantly alive in a landscape of dramatic beauty.

In October, we saw the launch of the **Ethio-Djibouti railway**, setting a new standard for railway journeys in Africa. Africa's first electric railway, it will contribute a great deal to Ethiopia's growing economy, one of the fastest growing in Africa, indeed the world.

In late 2016, the government introduced measures to address demands for change, especially in employment and particularly for youths – mostly higher-education graduates - and considerable funding was made available for a range of projects. Good governance issues to do with land administration and delivery of public services were also addressed.

In November, the Prime Minister announced 21 new cabinet ministers, selected for their knowledge, experience and record on delivery. Leadership at various levels is also being re-assessed, with the participation of the public.

In December, Ethiopians in London and at home colourfully celebrated the **11<sup>th</sup> Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Day**, with a united message of goodwill and co-operation between the eighty plus nations and nationalities for which Ethiopia is home.

**Gilgel Gibe III**, the tallest RCC dam in the world, designed to produce 1,800MW of electricity, was also inaugurated in December as part of Ethiopia's efforts to become a regional energy hub.

During 2015/2016, Ethiopia maintained positive growth, despite facing the worst drought in fifty years, a huge achievement on which we will build.

Returning to the UK's Brexit vote, it has presented interesting lessons for developed and developing countries alike, and challenges too, but also **opportunities**. Ethiopia, and Africa in general, is keen to help foster partnerships that can bring prosperity to all concerned.

Africa is too often perceived as a 'problem' continent – one of the reasons for producing this newsletter is to present a more balanced view of our country, region and continent. Africans view their continent in a more optimistic light and recognise its potential. As elsewhere in the world, there is real progress being made and we see it more as a **continent of hope**. Let us all work together in the coming year and beyond to speed up the advance towards global prosperity.

Ethiopian Christians began 2017 with joyful Christmas celebrations as the holiday falls on 7<sup>th</sup> January. Looking ahead, I would like to encourage all Ethiopians, from all walks of life, at home and abroad, to come together so that we may bring about Ethiopia's renaissance.

On behalf of everyone at the Embassy, I would like to thank you, our readers, our friends, for your continued support throughout 2016 and we look forward to keeping you informed of Ethiopia's progress in 2017.



**H.E. Dr Hailemichael Aberra Afework**



# Editorial

## Ethiopia begins UN Security Council term



Following Ethiopia's landslide election for a non-permanent-member seat at the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) on 28<sup>th</sup> June 2016, our

man at the UN, Ambassador Dr Tekeda Alemu, officially began his two-year term representing Ethiopia on 1<sup>st</sup> January.

This will be Ethiopia's third term: the two previous ones being 1967-1968 and 1989-1990.



Ethiopia's candidacy had the full endorsement of the AU, which means that Ethiopia will be fighting her corner, not only for its national interest, but for that of Africa as a whole. Ethiopia's long history in diplomacy is redolent with unflinching support for decolonisation and the anti-apartheid movement.

Ethiopia played a leading role in the founding of the Organisation of African Unity – the precursor to the AU. It took an active part in the UN's earliest peacekeeping operations in the 1950s and 1960s.

The election is a vindication of Ethiopia's ever growing reputation for the maintenance of international peace and security. With an 8,321-strong military and police force on duty, Ethiopia remains a major contributor nation to UN peacekeeping missions around the world. Under the

auspices of IGAD and the African Union, Ethiopia has demonstrated its ability to coordinate and lead in the South Sudan, Somalia and Burundi crises.

Ethiopia's third term at the Council comes at a time when the country is calling for the enhancement of peacekeeping operations and the advancement of cooperation between the UN and regional and sub-regional organizations.

By underlining the necessity for further cooperation between the AU Peace and Security Council and the UN Security Council, Ethiopia is also keen to play a key role in the ongoing reform of the UN peace and security architecture.



The newly elected non-permanent members, including Ethiopia, will serve until 31<sup>st</sup> December 2018.



On the same day, the new UN Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres began his duties as the 9<sup>th</sup> Secretary-General and he did so with a strong appeal for peace in 2017.

## NATIONAL NEWS

### **Gilgel Gibe III, tallest RCC dam in the world, inaugurated**



The 1,870mw Gilgel Gibe III Hydropower Project, was inaugurated on 17<sup>th</sup> December 2016, in the presence of Prime Minister Hailemariam Dessalegn, senior officials and representatives from the construction companies and other stakeholders.

The \$1.5 billion power plant, built by Salini Impregilo, is the biggest hydroelectric dam in the country and the tallest of its kind in the world. It will almost double Ethiopia's power generation capacity, help modernise the economy and become a regional energy hub.

At the inauguration ceremony, PM Hailemariam hailed the project's contribution to cooperation among neighbouring countries as well as the social and economic benefits for local people. "This plant, with other on-going projects, fulfils our domestic power needs and will provide for foreign markets," the Prime Minister said.



"This is a very special day for Salini Impregilo and in particular for me," said Chief Executive Pietro Salini. "What was considered a dream – after years of hard work – has now become a reality.

"We are grateful to Ethiopian Electric Power and the Federal and Regional Governments for dealing with us as partners in development, and for trusting our capacity for completing Gibe III. Salini Impregilo is honoured to have given service both to them and to this great nation," he added.

Gilgel Gibe III will generate up to 6,500 GWh of electricity a year, increasing the country's production capacity by at least 80%. It is an extension of a greater complex that includes two other hydroelectric dams: Gibe I and Gibe II.

These three dams, along with the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) also being built by Salini Impregilo, are the product of an ambitious programme by the country to arrive at a generation capacity of 40,000 MW by 2035.

**Gilgel Gibe III is the first dam in Ethiopia to be built using roller-compacted concrete (RCC). Standing at 250 metres, it is the tallest of its kind in the world. Its crest length is 630 metres.**

The benefits of the project were already evident during its construction, contributing enormously to the local economy. It created jobs for a combined total of 20,000 Ethiopians during the various phases of its construction. Its complexity also called for the greatest expertise in the field, involving people from 32 countries.

The dam's inauguration is the latest success for Salini Impregilo in Ethiopia, where it has been present for nearly 60 years.

**Ethio-Djibouti Railway among the "most majestic infrastructure projects of 2016"**

The newly built Ethio-Djibouti Railway has been included in WIRED magazine's 7 most majestic infrastructure projects of the year.

Also included in the list are the World Trade Center Transportation Hub, the Second Avenue Subway in New York, the SR 520 Floating Bridge in Seattle, the Gotthard Base Tunnel in Switzerland, the Panama Canal Expansion Project, and the Yavuz Sultan Selim Bridge in Istanbul.



**The Ethio-Djibouti Railway is described as “BEST FOR BEACH LOVERS.”**

“Ethiopia opened [the] rail line to neighbouring Djibouti in October. It’s a pretty big deal for the East African country, and for its capital Addis Ababa. Ethiopia has one of the fastest growing economies in the world, and this new electric railway [has] connected the landlocked country to the ocean. It [has] cut travel times between Addis Ababa and Djibouti from three days to a mere 12 hours.”

**...joint company to manage railway**

Ethiopia and Djibouti have entered an agreement to establish a joint company to manage the railway.

The 750-km railway line linking Addis Ababa and the Red Sea state of Djibouti was formally inaugurated in October 2016.

Ethiopia’s Minister of Transport, Ahmed Shide, and his Djiboutian counterpart, Mohammed Abdulkadir Musa, signed the agreement. Headquartered in Addis Ababa, the company will provide passenger, freight and maintenance services for the route.

Since its October launch, the railway has created new manufacturing industries along the route,

improving transport and further opening up landlocked Ethiopia.

Minimizing the journey time, it is environmentally friendly and has replaced a diesel-powered Addis Ababa-Djibouti line. Ethiopia will build a further 5,000km of new lines across the country by 2020.

**Addis Ababa Light Rail Transit wins climate change award**

The Addis Ababa Light Rail Transit system, the first of its kind in sub-Saharan Africa (outside South Africa), won a climate change award for transportation during the fourth annual C40 Cities Awards in Mexico City.



Awards were handed out on the side-lines of a summit of mayors whose cities are among the 90 members of the C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group. Cities will need to shoulder the burden of both mitigating the causes of climate change and adapting to its impacts in this uncertain era.

“C40 cities around the world are setting a strong example for others, and the summit is a great chance for cities to share their progress, learn from one another and help the world reach the goals that were set in Paris,” said Michael Bloomberg, former mayor of New York, who is C40 board’s president.

Although Africa’s overall contribution to global warming is comparatively low, the continent is the world’s fastest urbanizing region — which means cities have the opportunity to act before locking in future emissions.

Addis Ababa was among 11 cities recognised for showing the way on fighting climate change.

The new transit system has proven hugely popular in the fast-growing capital city. Daily ridership at full capacity is 60,000 passengers an hour.

“The award means a lot,” said Yehualaeshet Jemere, who managed the project for the Ethiopian Railway Corporation. The light rail “passed through so many challenges and proved that a project like this can be done in sub-Saharan Africa.” Delegations from Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda have already visited the Addis light rail to learn from the city’s experience. Jemere hopes the award can help Addis apply for other international financing for low-carbon projects.

### **...E-ticketing to be introduced**

The light rail system, which began operation on 20<sup>th</sup> Sep 2015 with 41 trains, will soon implement an electronic ticketing system.

Just now, the only way to verify if a customer has paid is to have a person checking the train for tickets purchased manually at ticket booths so the transit authority has imported 100,000 electronic cards, which will allow for an E ticketing scheme.



About 120,000 dwellers in Addis Ababa use the LRT every day and over 45 million people have ridden it since it began operating.

Awoke Mulu, PR Head of the transit system, said the electronic ticketing machines will be situated in the Stadium, Abenet, Kadisco and Lem Hotel areas.

The LRT system earns about 400,000 birr a day and tickets cost two, four and six birr, depending on the distance of the trip. Though the fee is small, hopes

are that the system will eventually become profitable. “Ticket prices are based on a detailed study and we expect fares to remain in place for a while,” he said. Of issue is that some board the train without purchasing a ticket so the corporation will soon add 40 ticket controllers, with more to follow.

### **Ethiopian spreads it wings in Asia - new flights to Kuala Lumpur, Jakarta and Chengdu**

Ethiopian Airlines, the largest and fastest growing African airline, will start direct, non-stop services to Kuala Lumpur (Singapore), Jakarta (Indonesia) and Chengdu (China) from June 2017 using the ultra-modern Boeing 787.



Singapore’s Changi Airport is a major global aviation hub, with modern infrastructure and excellent hub transfer services and Singapore is one of the world’s pre-eminent financial hubs.

Jakarta is Indonesia’s economic, cultural and political centre and Indonesia is the 4<sup>th</sup> most populous country in the world. With these new routes Ethiopian Airlines will service all 5 of the most populous countries on earth.

Chengdu is the capital of China’s Sichuan province and is the 7<sup>th</sup>-largest city in China. Ethiopian was the first African carrier and the fourth in the world to fly to China back in 1973. In addition to the three weekly flights to Chengdu to be launched in June, Ethiopian operates daily nonstop flights to Beijing, 10 weekly nonstop to Guangzhou, and 6 weekly nonstop to Hong Kong.

Mr Tewolde GebreMariam, CEO of Ethiopian Airlines, said, “This will further connect Africa to

Asia, strengthening the tourism and trade ties between the two continents, continuing our efforts to connect Africa to its major trading partners around the world through direct services and with the youngest fleet of modern airplanes, offering direct, non-stop services to [these new locations].”

Ethiopian operates the continent’s youngest, most modern fleet, with an average aircraft age of less than 5 years, serving more than 90 international destinations across five continents with over 240 daily departures.

### **...receives \$159 million loan from AfDB**

Ethiopian Airlines will receive a \$159 million loan from the African Development Bank to help finance an expansion plan that includes doubling the size of its fleet and increasing its revenue to \$10 billion over the next 10 years.

AfDB said this support will allow the Airline to “keep up the momentum on its expansion plan, and stay on track on its route operating roadmap.”

### **Ethiopia maintains positive growth - WB**

According to the World Bank Groups’ 5<sup>th</sup> Ethiopia Economic Update, dated 6<sup>th</sup> December, Ethiopia has been able to maintain positive growth, despite facing the worst drought in fifty years.

“Economic growth remained at a respectable 8% in 2015/16, impressive especially compared to previous drought situations which often resulted in economic contraction,” said Carolyn Turk, World Bank Country Director for Ethiopia, Sudan and South Sudan.

Ethiopia’s growth momentum will remain and since the 2016 rains arrived as expected, the recent drought is unlikely to affect Ethiopia’s medium-term economic growth, it said in a press release.

In addition, the newly completed Addis Ababa-Djibouti railway line significantly eases trade logistics related constraints. The government’s increased focus on new industrial parks (Hawassa and Bole-Lemi Phase II), the increasing capacity in power generation and the completion of transmission lines to neighbouring countries (Sudan and Kenya) are also expected to improve

export performance and stimulate growth in the short to medium-term.

The report which provides an in-depth view of Ethiopia’s labour market and identifies challenges and opportunities for making it more efficient, reveals that Ethiopia also managed to keep inflation under control. This in turn helps to avoid the erosion of the purchasing power of wages for workers of all levels of education, keep real wages stable and ensures that returns on education in urban labour markets are positive.

The report identifies urban areas as key players in advancing structural change, as centres of innovation and industrial development. Well-functioning and efficient urban labour markets are a key ingredient for this transformation, to ensure that its benefits reach all segments of the population. As unemployment in Ethiopia is by and large an urban phenomenon, increasing the efficiency of urban labour markets in Ethiopia is not only key for structural transformation but also for overall economic development.

The report, which analyses the nature of urban labour markets and identifies the various factors that contribute to curbing their efficiency, provides five policy recommendations which can help make Ethiopia’s structural change more inclusive and contribute much more to poverty reduction.

Ethiopia should (i) encourage firm creation and growth of jobs for non-graduates in the service and manufacturing sectors, (ii) increase labour productivity in the low-skilled by addressing constraints in accessing capital so productivity increases and wages rise, (iii) invest further in job and technical training programmes for the low-skilled and at higher levels of education to increase productivity, (iv) introduce targeted urban safety nets and labour market programmes to invest in low-skilled employees and the unemployed and assist with their job search, and (v) enhance ICT use to provide information on job vacancies throughout Addis Ababa and reduce the cost of job searches.

The 5<sup>th</sup> Ethiopia Economic Update - *Why so idle? Wages and Employment in a Crowded Labour Market* can be downloaded at <https://goo.gl/Ver4wL>.



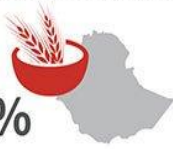


# ETHIOPIA MAKES HISTORY

## 2016 Emergency Seed Response

### RESPONSE

**\$** USD **35 million**  
raised by donors (e.g. USAID, ECHO, the Netherlands, Japan and others) for the largest emergency seed distribution in Ethiopian history

**1.5 million**   
**farming households**  
received seed   
for the critical *meher* season harvest  
which provides   
**85 %**  
of Ethiopia's entire local food production

### Ethiopia's historic seed campaign

The Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) says Ethiopia has completed the most widespread and impressive seed distribution campaign ever undertaken in the country's history, during an emergency. The FAO and over 25 NGOs and agencies reached 377 *woredas* across six regions with a historic 32,000 tonnes of seed, which restored depleted household supplies after the catastrophic El Niño induced-drought crisis of 2015 to 2016. Ethiopia's Government and humanitarian community, as a result, saved \$1 billion by enabling farming households to grow more of their own food.

### Sheffield NHS trust team visits Ethiopia



A team from SHARE (Sheffield Health Action Resource for Ethiopia), an International Health Link between Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (STH) and hospitals in the Tigray

Region of Ethiopia and in Addis Ababa, visited Ethiopia in November 2016.

Led by the Chair of SHARE Dr Cariad Evans, a Virology & Infectious Diseases Consultant, it included retired nurse Anne Russell, HIV nurse Simone Naylor, retired dentist Jane Boyce, Virology Lab Scientist Colleen Smedley, Bacteriology Laboratory Scientist Chris Megson and fund-raiser Jessica Wilkes.

The team visited St Paul's Millennium Hospital in Addis Ababa and met Provost, Dr Zerihun Abebe, to discuss further cooperation in the planning of the new national cancer hospital. Construction engineers have been invited to visit Sheffield Teaching Hospitals to observe its cancer services



and “learn about the specialist requirements for a 21<sup>st</sup> century cancer hospital.” The team discussed, with the chief nurse, the improvements made to nursing following her visit to Sheffield last year. At Mekelle hospital, SHARE supports ongoing infection prevention projects, the dental department, biomedical engineering and improvements in the microbiology laboratories.

The team met Hagos Godefy, Tigray Regional Health Bureau Head, to discuss further cooperation between his organisation, the new Tigray Health Research Institute, and Mekelle Hospital.

At Elshadai Wukro Children's Village, after a welcome with flowers and songs, Jane continued her work treating the teeth of the children and noted a marked improvement since she first examined and treated them 3 years ago.



The team “had a hugely memorable, busy and enjoyable experience and visited restaurants, friends’ homes and enjoyed coffee ceremonies.”

SHARE was set up in 2000, and for 16 years hospital staff have worked together to develop services to patients. The main partner hospital is the Mekelle University Ayder Referral Hospital in Tigray which teams of medical staff have visited every year and Ethiopian staff have visited Sheffield for training and experience in its hospitals. SHARE has helped improve patient care in Ethiopia and the staff of STH have gained valuable skills and experience through their visits to Ethiopian hospital staff.

Ethiopia welcomes the participation of medical staff in similar partnerships.

## TRADE AND INVESTMENT

### KEFI Minerals’ confidence in Tulu Kapi



“Ethiopia is still a role model of growth in Africa...The calm and pro-development situation in Ethiopia, combined with the financing

proposals being considered by KEFI, make the board confident that the Tulu Kapi Gold Project will start development in 2017,” Executive Chairman of KEFI Minerals Plc, Harry Adams said in an interview with Proactive Investors.

He said the government has encouraged the company to explore the district around Tulu Kapi and elsewhere in Ethiopia and targets have been identified for both satellite gold deposits and stand-alone development projects.

### Bagir ships first order to U.S. for H&M



**H&M** Bagir Group Ltd has completed its first international order of tailored trousers, for high-street retailer Hennes & Mauritz AB (H&M), from its manufacturing site in Ethiopia, with more orders currently in production.

The tailors said Ethiopia represented an important longer-term opportunity as benefits from highly competitive production costs, low energy costs, close proximity to European markets and duty-free export status for sales to both the US and EU.

“To produce formal trousers for export to the US is an important milestone for the Ethiopian site,” said Chief Executive Eran Itzhak.

“Alongside tariff free trade, the site has good connectivity for onward distribution, and we are confident Ethiopia will become an increasingly important part of our manufacturing base as it can produce top-quality garments for less,” Itzhak said.

### **...raises £2m to develop Ethiopia operations**

In December, the tailoring provider said it has raised nearly £2 million in share pricing to further develop its Ethiopian manufacturing plant.

Bagir said part of the proceeds will be used to cover the set-up costs of a currently unused production hall in Ethiopia, which can produce up to 3,000 trousers a day from its current capacity of 600 to 1,000. The capital will also upgrade the local market production hall by buying new sewing equipment.

"We're very pleased to have raised the new funds and are grateful to our shareholders for their continued support. Our Ethiopian manufacturing site only began production recently and is already attracting the attention of some of the world's leading retailers. This additional investment is therefore timely and should help generate significant returns," said Eran Itzhak, chief executive officer of Bagir.

### **Juniper Glass receives approval for \$70m factory in Debre Birhan**



Juniper Glass has received all necessary regulatory approvals for a \$70 million factory in Debre Birhan.

The factory should be operational within 18 months with a production capacity of 60,000 tonnes of glass annually - about 200 million glass bottles.

Local manufacturing will replace imports, with the surplus being exported to neighbouring countries.

### **Tanzania to import energy from Ethiopia**

Tanzania expects to begin importing electricity from Ethiopia in 2019 as part of the East Africa Power Pool. Director Felichesmi Mramba said they

hope to start with 200mw, slowly increasing to 400mw.

A transmission line linking the central town of Iringa to Shinyanga in the north will soon be completed, before contractors start work on a final link to Kenya, to be completed by 2018.



Tanzania, Kenya and Ethiopia form part of a 12-nation **Eastern Africa Power Pool** that's spending \$1.6 billion over the next decade to link their grids.

Ethiopia will raise almost \$20 billion in private investment by the end of this decade to increase generation capacity four-fold to 20 gigawatts by building plants including the 6,000-megawatt Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam, Africa's biggest.

## **TOURISM**

### **BBC's Planet Earth II - the hyenas of Harar**

The final episode of Planet Earth II – entitled 'Cities' – was aired on BBC One on 11<sup>th</sup> December, offering a unique look at life in urban spaces through the eyes of animals.

The episode featured the spotted hyenas of Ethiopia's walled city of Harar - famous for its hyena-feeding rituals. They are feared for their raids on towns...However the inhabitants of Harar have invited wild hyenas into their community for centuries, believing they consume evil spirits with each cackle.

It featured Yusef, a Harar resident who has a close relationship with the hyenas and calls them into his house and feeds them by hand.



In an interview on BBC Radio 5 Live before the episode aired, Fredi Devas, the producer of the episode said that tracking the hyenas was his most extraordinary shoot. “It’s the second largest predator in Africa, it’s ferocious and possibly the most vilified animal on our planet – yet they walk the streets freely and people welcome them in. It shows how man and beast can cohabit peacefully.”

You too can take part in this century-old tradition! As dusk falls over the city, Harar’s famous Hyena men emerge to feed wild hyenas at two sites: Aw Ansar Ahmed Shrine outside Argob Bari Gate and the Christian slaughterhouse outside Assumiy Bari Gate.



Visit the Ethiopia Land of Origins website at [www.ethiopia.travel/](http://www.ethiopia.travel/) for travel inspiration.

### Harar - background

Muslims refer to Harar as the City of Saints and the world's fourth-holiest city after Mecca, Medina and Jerusalem. Harar is also Ethiopia's most important Islamic landmark repository, with 82 mosques and 438 Awaach (shrines of important Islamic scholars) across 48 hectares. Its lively markets and unique *gey gar* (city houses) are relics of the many centuries when Harar was the most important trade

emporium in the Horn of Africa, linking Somali coast ports to the fertile Ethiopian interior. It became a UNESCO, World Heritage Site in 2006.

### UNESCO adds Gada system to Heritage list

On 30<sup>th</sup> November, the Gada system, an indigenous democratic socio-political system of the Oromo people in Ethiopia was inscribed on the UNESCO Representative List of the **Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity**, during its 11<sup>th</sup> session of the Intangible Cultural Heritage Committee held in Addis Ababa.



Gada is a traditional Oromo system of governance developed from knowledge gained by community experience over generations. The system regulates political, economic, social and religious activities of the community dealing with issues such as conflict resolution, reparation and protecting women’s rights. It serves as a mechanism for enforcing moral conduct, building social cohesion, and expressing forms of community culture.

President Mulatu Teshome opened the 11<sup>th</sup> session of the Intangible Cultural Heritage Committee on 27<sup>th</sup> November, at a gala evening featuring examples of the wealth of Ethiopia’s intangible cultural heritage, performed by more than 300 artists and practitioners.

“Ethiopia is Africa’s oldest independent country,” said the President. “More than 80 nations with distinct cultural traditions and values live here and speak more than 80 different languages. Ethiopia has been a member of UNESCO since 1955. We take heritage as our legacy from the past and we pass it on to the next generation. The Ethiopian

government is committed to preserving it and safeguarding it and UNESCO has been a longstanding partner in this endeavour.”

### **Danakil Depression win for Travel Photographer of the Year**

Congratulations to Joel Santos, crowned "Travel Photographer of the Year 2016".

Joel's portfolio, shot in Ethiopia's Danakil Depression, was the first win to be shot using a drone-mounted camera, giving a different perspective on the dramatic landscape and revealing remarkable detail not visible at ground level.



Commenting on his win, Joel said, "Ethiopia is an amazing country, with such a fantastic natural, historical and human richness. It's been fantastic to visit and photograph there in 2015 and 2016, and I hope the photos do justice to the stunning beauty of this country."

### **India's Sarovar Hotels enters Ethiopia**

India's Sarovar Hotels is to build its first hotel in Addis Ababa.

Speaking about the recent development, Sarovar's Executive Director, Ajay Bakaya said, "Being Ethiopia's biggest commercial hub and the host location of the African Union headquarters, Addis

Ababa has become a major destination for many travellers to the continent – business as well as leisure...We see great growth potential in this market with high demand and this development makes a momentous step in our growth and expansion strategy in the overseas market."



Sarovar Premiere Addis Ababa will offer 101 rooms and will be the company's seventh property in Africa, joining existing hotels in Tanzania, Kenya and South Sudan, and others under development in Kenya and Zambia.

### **Lucy spent much of her time in trees**

A new study published in the journal *PLOS ONE* has revealed that Lucy, the 3.2-million-year-old ancient ancestor of modern humans, probably spent at least a third of her day 'nesting in trees'.

Lucy, whose fossilized partial skeleton was discovered in Ethiopia in 1974, likely got around more like a modern chimpanzee than a modern human, the new study found.

Lucy had strong upper arms, suggesting she regularly climbed trees. She also had relatively weak legs that were not used for climbing and were inefficient for walking.

The combination of the two discoveries led researchers to conclude that Lucy probably nested in tree branches at night in order to avoid predators, used her arms to travel between trees and may have even foraged for food among branches.

Another recent study concluded that Lucy probably died from a fall from a particularly tall tree. The

study, published in the British magazine *Nature*, arrived at that conclusion after analyzing a bone fracture in Lucy's fossilized remains.



Long considered the longest living human relative, Lucy was dethroned of her status in 1994 following the discovery — also in Ethiopia — of Ardi, a female *Ardipithecus ramidus* who lived 4.5 million years ago. She is

the most ancient hominid fossil from the evolutionary branch that led to humans.

## DIASPORA CORNER

### Celebrations held for Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Day in London

Diaspora Ethiopians, friends of Ethiopia and diplomats celebrated Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Day on 10<sup>th</sup> December at the Embassy.



In a keynote address before a capacity audience, H.E. Amb. Hailemichael Aberra PhD said, "After nearly two-decades of protracted struggle against inequality and oppression, Ethiopians have succeeded in coming together under

the umbrella of the Federal Democratic Republic, creating a union of free and equal nations, nationalities and peoples.

The new 1995 constitution enshrines universal rights and freedoms and established a democratic, multicultural federal system that has embraced unity in diversity and peaceful coexistence where Ethiopians can celebrate their various cultures.

The theme was "Our Constitution for Democratic Unity and Renaissance!" and this year's celebrations were hosted in the historic city of Harar.

The Ambassador urged guests to enhance their link with Ethiopia by assisting with technology transfer

and image-building activities. He urged them to help eliminate anti-peace and anti-development conspiracies and warned against the dangers of false news on social media.




**In Harar**, at the official celebrations, PM Hailemariam urged the public to help realize the Ethiopian renaissance and called for support for the ongoing reform programme, mentioning the rapid economic growth of the past 15 years.

He added, "The Ethiopian people have overcome many challenges through unity in diversity. This Day demonstrates the commitment of the Ethiopian people to join hands to get rid of poverty and illiteracy and enhance development and prosperity.

The constitutional system had, he said, brought about a flourishing democratic nationalism that had strengthened the fight against poverty.

Leaders of foreign countries present at the celebration included Sudan's President Omar al-Bashir, Kenya's President Uhuru Kenyatta, Djibouti's President Ismail Omar Guelleh and Somalia's President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud.

### WorldRemit launches Ethiopian cash service

 Digital money transfer service WorldRemit has begun cash pickup services in Ethiopia. Pickup locations in Ethiopia will include all branches of a dozen banks.

"We want to give people the power to share money anytime, anywhere," WorldRemit founder and CEO Ismail Ahmed said. "Gone are the days of queuing in line at a high-street transfer shop and waiting several days for a money transfer to arrive. Now WorldRemit customers can send money with just a few taps on their smartphone."



## Ethiopian running legend, Miruts Yifter, passes away at 72

The Ethiopian Embassy in London was saddened to hear of the death of one of Ethiopia's greatest athletes of all time, Miruts Yifter who passed away on 22<sup>nd</sup> December in Toronto after being hospitalised with respiratory problems.

Affectionately known as "Yifter the Shifter", Miruts will be remembered for his achievements on the track, especially his historic double win at the 1980 Summer Olympic Games in Moscow where he won gold in both 5,000m and 10,000m at age 40. This is where he earned his nickname, for his rapid bursts of speed that helped propel him to victory. In both contests, Miruts surged and slowed to confuse his opponents.

Miruts made his Olympics debut at the 1972 Games in Munich, where he took the bronze medal in the 10,000m and continued to compete into the early 80s.

In addition to his Olympic medals, Miruts won 10,000m gold and 5,000m silver at the 1973 All-

African Games and won both the 5,000m and 10,000m at the inaugural African Championships in 1979. He ran with Ethiopia's gold medal winning team at the 1982 and 1983 International Cross-Country Championships.

Miruts' achievements on track inspired the next generation of Ethiopian runners, including long distance legend, Haile Gebrselassie.

**“Miruts has been everything to me and my athletics career...When I started running, I just wanted to be like him. He is the reason for who I am now and for what I have achieved.”**

**– Haile Gebrselassie**

Following his retirement, Miruts remained involved in the sport as a coach to athletes both in Ethiopia and in Canada, where he lived since 1998.

### ...Ethiopians in Canada honour Miruts



A Toronto Ethiopian Orthodox Church was packed for the funeral of running legend Miruts Yifter, before his body was sent to Ethiopia for the burial.

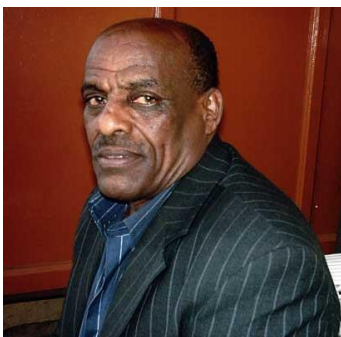
### ...Laid to rest in Addis Ababa

The body of the late Miruts Yifter, was laid to rest at the Holy Trinity Cathedral on 1<sup>st</sup> January. Senior government officials, athletes, the public and other guests were present at the burial ceremony.



Foreign Minister Dr Workneh Gebeyehu and officials receive the body of Miruts Yifter at the airport

Miruts is survived by seven children.



H.E. Ambassador Hailemichael Aberra Afework and all the staff at the Embassy in London would like to send our sincere condolences to his family members and all his fans, at home and abroad.

May He Rest in Eternal Peace.

### Almaz crowned World Athlete of the Year

Almaz Ayana was named female World Athlete of the Year at the 2016 IAAF Athletics Awards on 2<sup>nd</sup> December, becoming the third Ethiopian woman to win the award, following Genzebe Dibaba in 2015 and Meseret Defar in 2007.



Almaz Ayana and Usain Bolt, the 2016 IAAF World Athletes of the Year, with HSH Prince Albert II of Monaco and IAAF President Sebastian Coe

"I don't have words to explain my feelings right now, I'm so excited," Almaz said after receiving the award from the International Athletics Foundation Honorary President HSH Prince Albert II of Monaco.

Almaz had a record-breaking year, recording the fastest 10,000m debut in history in June 2016, and winning the Olympic title at the distance in a world record of 29:17.45. In Rio she also took bronze in the 5,000m, having recorded three of the eight fastest times at 5,000m. She ended the year as the Diamond Race winner for that discipline.

Congratulations Almaz!

### Ethiopians dominate Xiamen Marathon



Lemi Berhanu and Meseret Mengistu led podium sweeps for Ethiopia at the Xiamen International Marathon on 2<sup>nd</sup> January.



Lemi, the reigning Boston Marathon champion, won the men's race in 2:08:27, followed by compatriots Mosinet Geremew in 2:10:20 and Shura Kitata in 2:10:36.

Meseret won the women's contest in 2:25:58, followed by Workenesh Edesa in 2:26:273 and Tola Melkam Gizaw in 2:26:47. This was Meseret's second straight title in a row in China.

**Baysa and Berhanu to defend Boston titles**

Ethiopia's Atsede Baysa and Lemi Berhanu Hayle will defend their titles at the Boston Marathon on 17<sup>th</sup> April, by taking on former race champions.

Baysa will take on 2015 winner Caroline Rotich of Kenya and 2014 champion Buzunesh Deba of Ethiopia, while Berhanu will line up alongside 2014 winner Meb Keflezighi of the USA and 2012 victor Wesley Korir of Kenya.

Ethiopia swept the top podium spots for the first time in race history in the 2016 race.

**...Deba named rightful winner of 2014 Boston Marathon**



Race organizers formally declared Buzuneh Deba the 2014 Boston Marathon champion after Kenyan rival Rita Jeptoo was stripped of the title and banned from international competition for four years for doping.

Deba was also recognized as the current course record-holder with her finish of 2:19:59, which made it the

fastest women's race in Boston's 121-year-old history, besting the previous mark of 2:20:43 set in 2002 by Margaret Okayo of Kenya.

**First wheelchair basketball tournament held**

The first national wheelchair basketball tournament was held in Ethiopia. Organised by the Ethiopia Basketball Federation and International Committee of the Red Cross from 30<sup>th</sup> November to 3<sup>rd</sup> December, the 5-team wheelchair tournament

was held to celebrate the International Day of Persons with Disabilities.

One of the tournament's participants, Alemu Yosef, said playing wheelchair basketball has had a positive impact on his life. "Today, basketball has become my life. I love this game because it gives me happiness and strength," he said.



The Vice President of the Ethiopia Basketball Federation, Dr Tibebu Chekol, said: "Next year the number of participating teams will double to ten."

The ICRC delegation in Ethiopia supported the tournament providing wheelchairs and coaching. The support given to wheelchair basketball programmes worldwide is an integral part of the ICRC's rehabilitation programme, which promotes social inclusion and integration of persons with physical disabilities.

**ETHIOPIA IN THE NEWS**

**Why Ethiopia Should Be on Your 2017 Bucket List**

**TATLER** The nightlife king Guy Pelly, writes of his maiden trip to Ethiopia to track the elusive Ethiopian wolf - now numbering roughly 500, with about 250 existing in the southern Bale Mountains, one of the species' last strongholds.

"They are the world's rarest wild canid and only a lucky handful of visitors get to track and see them each year. I wanted to be one of them."





Base camp, deep in the Bale Mountains, was on a plateau, with safari tents and incredible views across the plain...Next morning, it was time to find wolves. After about 40 minutes of walking, there was our first wolf: slight, long-legged, with a rust-red coat. We saw 4 wolves that morning - which is incredible when you remember there are only about 500 left in the wild.

"...this trip wasn't about trophies. The prize was seeing things very few others have seen...churches in the clouds, vanishing predators, Ethiopian nightclubs. It was exhausting and inspiring and exhilarating."

Read more at <https://goo.gl/fdZAOT>.

### **Bale Mountain Lodge, Ethiopia**

**BAZAAR** The British owner of Bale Mountain Lodge tells Harper's Bazaar why she opened a hotel in one of Africa's last great wildernesses... It is the wolves!

"Calling all wolf lovers. There are only 250 of them living in the highest Afro-Alpine mountain areas of Ethiopia. A place where, incidentally, I now live, too. They are graceful, red, lithe-limbed animals who hunt during the day for the endemic rodents on the beautiful Sanetti Plateau, in the heart of Bale Mountains National Park. And 60% of them live on my doorstep...It is the wolves that attract most of the tourists. Yet the park is relatively undiscovered. There are spectacular volcanic plugs and peaks, lakes, rocky gorges, juniper forests, meadows and heather-covered moorlands. Volcanic rocks with names like trachytes, basalts and tuffs. Crashing waterfalls. Lush valleys, dramatic peaks, gorges and canyons.

Read more at <https://goo.gl/lO8IP3>

### **Genna - the unique traditions of Ethiopian Christmas**

**Selamta** "Christmas in Ethiopia falls on 7<sup>th</sup> January and, like most other Christian holidays, is celebrated in its own unique way, throughout the country.

"The main ceremonial activities of the holiday centre around local Ethiopian Orthodox churches, with late-night services on Christmas Eve lasting

well past midnight...Many people travel on foot from church to church, taking in services until the light of dawn announces the arrival of Christmas morning.

Ethiopian Christmas is associated with a sport called Genna, that is widely played during the holiday season.



According to legend, when the shepherds of the biblical Christmas story were informed of the birth of the Messiah, they expressed their overwhelming joy by using their staffs to break into a spontaneous game that resembles field hockey. Genna matches are played mainly by young men. There may also be horse racing."

Read more at <https://goo.gl/D3nvJ2>

### **Fabulous Food & Wine**

**africa** GEOGRAPHIC magazine A holiday to Africa is not only about spectacular safaris, beautiful beaches and lovely landscapes, but more and more it is the amazing food and wine experiences that have travellers coming back for more.

*In Ethiopia, taste traditional fare and drink cocktails in Lalibela.*

Perched on a hill in the ancient holy town of Lalibela is *Ben Abeba* restaurant a landmark and a building of such quirky design that it wouldn't look out of place in a Salvadore Dali painting. Whilst the rest of the buildings in Lalibela conform to a standard and traditional style, Ben Abeba stands out as being architecturally unique and is the perfect place to watch the sun go down over the sheer rock faces and dramatic landscapes surrounding the town.



Looking over Lalibela from Ben Abeba restaurant ©Sarah Kingdom

On the menu at Ben Abeba is a variety of traditional Ethiopian dishes, all with fresh ingredients sourced from local farmers. If you're feeling adventurous you can try the 'tej' (a mead-like drink made from honey - from non-alcoholic to rather potent!) or 'tella' (a local beer, made from barley and either maize or sorghum), which is traditionally drunk at religious festivals and weddings.

Read more at <https://goo.gl/86yPYO>

### 12 incredible African tribal traditions



Four tribes from Ethiopia's Omo Valley - the Mursi, Hamar, Bodi and Dassanech - feature in this CNN piece. "All across Africa, tribal communities maintain practices that have come to shape their respective cultures; traditions that have been passed down over centuries, even millennia."



Photo: Mursi, lip plates – Circular lip plates called *dhebi a tugion* are worn by some Mursi women near Jinka in Ethiopia's Omo Valley...The bottom lip is pierced with a wooden peg inserted, which is replaced with larger pegs thereafter. Once

the hole is big enough the first of a succession of ornamental ceramic saucers are inserted, stretching it over a period of years -- one example from the neighbouring Surma tribe measured 19.5cm wide.

The gallery can be accessed online at <https://goo.gl/g6TG9B>.

### Just Back From: Northern Ethiopia



Following his recent trip to Ethiopia, James Leask, Head of Sales from *Wild Frontiers Adventure Travel*, writes of his highlights - watching the sunset in Gheralta and sampling typical Ethiopian dishes.

"Ethiopia is just such a beautiful country. We were spoilt for views high up in the mountains in the Simiens, Gheralta and around Lalibela...Every day was so full and different that I came away feeling I'd been in Ethiopia for months not just two weeks...Ethiopia is like nowhere else you've been before."



**"If you want a trip that has a great balance of activity, culture and history, with amazing people and stunning scenery, this is it!"**

Read more at <https://goo.gl/pvIBAC>

### Riders on the storm: Ethiopia bids to become wind capital of Africa

"After a decade of rapid growth, Ethiopia's bubble is not bursting...Dubbed the 'African Lion' by economists, Ethiopia is the home of booming industry, new infrastructure, and showpiece summits. It has become a powerful force in the region and beyond."

To maintain this golden age, [Ethiopia] is pressing ahead with ambitious plans for renewable energy.

[It] was among the most daring signatories to the Paris Agreement on climate change, committing to cut carbon emissions by 64% by 2030. The government has ploughed billions of dollars into hydropower megaprojects such as the Grand

Renaissance Dam – to be the largest dam in Africa - and the freshly-inaugurated Gibe III Dam.

The next target is to become the wind power capital of Africa. Ethiopia inaugurated one of the continent's largest wind farms in 2013 - the \$290 million, 120-megawatt (MW) Ashedoga plant. This was followed by the even larger 153 MW Adama II facility in 2015.



Wind [accounts] for just 324MW of Ethiopia's total output of 4,180mw at the end of 2015, with the vast majority coming from hydropower. This picture is set to change with the government's second "Growth and Transformation Plan," which will see total output pass 17,000 MW by 2020."

The government has plans for at least five further wind farms, and potentially many more, aiming to deliver up to 5,200MW from wind power within four years. The cost is officially calculated at \$3.1 billion, although other estimates place it over \$6 billion."

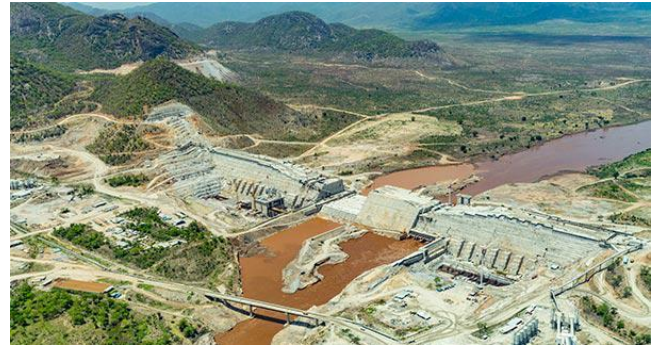
Read more at: <https://goo.gl/GbhZWQ>

### **GERD and Kyosha: The Dams of the Future**

#### ***Two big hydroelectric dams to turn Ethiopia into an energy hub***

The Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) and Koyscha are the two faces of Ethiopia's energy future, two large projects that will see the light of day in the coming years to take advantage of the country's hydraulic potential.

The GERD is well on its way to being completed and will become the biggest dam in Africa, among the top 10 worldwide.



Once it is put into service, the GERD will increase the amount of electricity produced in the country by 270% and bolster Ethiopia's role as an energy exporter to neighbouring countries. By transmitting electricity to Sudan, Djibouti, South Sudan and Yemen, it will be able to generate \$2 billion in revenue a year.

Koyscha is just as grand a project...With an installed capacity of 2,160MW and an annual production capacity of 6,460GWh, the Koyscha Hydroelectric Project is the fourth to be built along the Omo River. With the new Gibe III and the future GERD, it will [help] transform Ethiopia into one of the biggest producers of renewable energy on the continent.

Ethiopia's energy policy exploits its most precious natural resource: water. The government's 2<sup>nd</sup> Growth and Transformation Plan [2015-2020] aims to use the country's natural resources to transform Ethiopia into a renewable energy hub for the entire East Africa region.

Read more at: <https://goo.gl/slPnaJ>

### **'If it wasn't for them I would have died: How community health workers save lives**

Ethiopia's rural health extension workers have helped halve the country's child death rate, writes Ina Skosana for *Bhekisisa*.

Since the health extension programme started in 2003, there has been a "significant reduction of maternal and child death" and a dramatic uptake of "hygiene and environmental health-related activities". More than 38,000 health extension workers operate mostly in the rural [areas] and they're all recruited to serve in the communities where they live.

Health Extension Workers undergo a year of training to treat infectious diseases such as malaria as well as provide family planning and maternal and new-born care.

Read more at <https://goo.gl/jMajbs>

### **Africa most affected by refugee crisis**



As Germany, France and other European countries contend with an unprecedented influx of refugees from Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere, shocking tales of women and children drowning in the Mediterranean are repeated by media networks.

But the distress over refugees landing in Europe has overshadowed the efforts of African countries also grappling with refugee emergencies. While European nations seek to limit the “economic” refugees as opposed to asylum seekers, Ethiopia is taking in [tens of] thousands of refugees from neighbouring countries.

According to the UN, developing countries, mostly in Africa, are taking in a disproportionate number of refugees - currently 80% of the world’s refugee population. Refugees hosted in developing countries put enormous pressure on water and health care systems in host communities.

Ethiopia hosts nearly 740,000 refugees, mostly from Somalia, Eritrea, Sudan and South Sudan, the largest refugee population in a single African country. The country maintains an **open-door policy** that welcomes refugees and allows humanitarian access and protection.

Read more at <https://goo.gl/wWtdzL>

## **NEWS IN BRIEF**

### **Elf Kid taking grime music to Ethiopia**

Elf Kid, an upcoming grime artist from Deptford, South London, recently travelled to Ethiopia as part of ASOS’ new global initiative, **ASOS Supports Talent**.

While in Ethiopia, Elf Kid worked with local musicians and shot a specially commissioned video, *Reload That*, which is inspired by Addis Ababa’s growing electric music scene, mixing traditional sounds with modern beats.



Elf Kid on location in Ethiopia’s Danakil Depression

**“...We’re going out there to collaborate with some local musicians...we’re [bringing] this thing from South London to Ethiopia.”**

Check out his new music video, shot in Ethiopia, at <https://goo.gl/vYZI1L>

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