



# Ethiopian News

January 2017

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# #DrTedros4WHO

Dr Tedros on final shortlist for top WHO post

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## Dr. Tedros Adhanom

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“I envision a world where everyone can lead healthy and productive lives, regardless of who they are or where they live.”

– DR TEDROS

## **Dr Tedros secures WHO Director-General nomination**

H.E. Dr Tedros Adhanom secured his nomination for the post of Director-General of the World Health Organisation (WHO) following a vote held on 25<sup>th</sup> January by WHO’s Executive Board.

Joining Dr Tedros on the shortlist are Dr David Nabarro of the UK and Dr Sania Nishtar of Pakistan. Originally six candidates were vying for the position, which carries a five-year term.

Over three decades, Dr Tedros has been a distinguished leader who has saved and improved lives in Africa and around the world. He was the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia from 2012-2016 and previously he served as Ethiopia’s Minister of Health, from 2005-2012. He is recognised worldwide as an experienced, collaborative and diplomatic leader whose reform programs within Ethiopia and at the head of global health organisations achieved significant impact.

Other notable roles and qualifications include:

- Chair, Global Fund to Fights AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria Board
- Chair, Roll Back Malaria Partnership Board
- Co-Chair, Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health Board
- PhD in Community Health, Master of Science in Immunology of Infectious Diseases
- Globally recognised expert and author on health issues, including health workforce strengthening, emergency responses to epidemics, and malaria

The African Union endorsed his candidacy a year ago, and he is the preferred candidate of African nations including the Togolese government and Democratic Republic of Congo, as well as other global organisations and leaders who advocate that an African should take the helm at WHO.

All Member States will choose from the 3 nominees by vote at the World Health Assembly in May 2017.

If selected, Dr Tedros is set to become the first African to fill the position of WHO Director-General.

The new Director-General will take office on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2017.

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# Editorial

## The African Union Summit



The 28<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session of the African Union (AU) Heads of State and Government began on 22<sup>nd</sup> January at the AU Headquarters in Addis Ababa with a three-day meeting of the Permanent Representatives Committee. The 30<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session of the Executive Council of the African Union's Foreign Ministers opened on 25<sup>th</sup> January and the 9<sup>th</sup> Gender Pre-Summit and other meetings were held on the margins of the main summit.

The theme of the Summit was: **Harnessing the Demographic Dividend through Investment in Youth**. The AU Executive Council emphasized the importance of upholding human rights, especially women's rights, in Africa for an integrated, prosperous, and peaceful Africa under the Agenda

2063 framework. Ethiopia praised the theme of the Summit as a timely topic to achieve sustainable development. The country's foreign minister said "We in Ethiopia understand the critical importance of engaging the youth in the socio-economic as well as the political sectors." Ethiopia is already working on structural transformation, aiming to ensure inclusive growth by creating jobs for youths. In the three-day meeting, all agreed that the Continental 50-year Agenda, Agenda 2063, could only be successful if it effectively unlocked "the potential, the creativity and the talents of our young women and men". Delegates unanimously agreed that Africa's future lay in its youth, and they must therefore be given greater voice in decision-making and in realising the continent's renaissance.



The Summit also covered the issues of economic, peace and security, and African integration, the funding of the African Union and the elections for Chairmanship of the AU Commission. The summit stressed that Africa must revive and strengthen the values and spirit of Pan Africanism, including putting Africa first; commitment to the African people, their dignity and aspirations; and Africa's passion for democracy, peace, integration, development and building unity of purpose, even in the face of difficult challenges and within “a single institution to which we all belong”. The AU must remain dedicated to its integration and development agenda to unlock the potential, the energy, creativity and talents of Africa's youth. It must strengthen democracies, governance and human rights, and operationalise Africa's Governance Architecture. The key challenges and opportunities for Africa's development, good governance, peace and security, were also discussed in depth.

The summit elected H.E. Alpha Conde, President of Guinea, as the new Chairperson of the African Union, H.E. President Idriss Deby of Chad handed over the Chairmanship to President Alpha Conde on 30<sup>th</sup> January.



The Hon. Moussa Faki Mahamat, the Chadian foreign minister, was elected as incoming Chairperson of the African Union Commission, the fourth chairperson from francophone Africa out of five heads since 2002. The AUC Chairperson can discharge the AU vision, which is to build an Africa that is driven by its citizens, and he stressed its

relevance to this year's theme: "Harnessing the Demographic Dividend through Investment in Youth." The leaders recalled aspiration 6 of Agenda 2063, which clearly states the African Union position of achieving “an Africa whose development is people driven, relying on the potential of the African people, especially its women and youth, and caring for children”. The summit also elected eight Commissioners to a variety of posts.

## **ON THE AU SIDELINES**

### **Morocco re-joins AU after 33 years of absence**

Morocco has re-joined the African Union more than 30 years after it withdrew from the Organisation of African Unity (OAU).



Speaking at the closing ceremony of the AU Summit, King Mohammed VI of Morocco told African leaders that “It is a beautiful day when one returns home after too long an absence. Africa is my continent and my home. I am finally home and I am happy to see you. I missed you all...We have never broken the ties. We have always been there and you could rely on us.”

King Mohammed VI of Morocco vowed to work in partnership with the rest of African Union member countries to ensure that African resources are utilized by African people.

### **Ethiopia receives award in recognition for its commitment and innovation in the fight against malaria**

Ethiopia was among eight countries recognised for efforts to reduce malaria incidence and deaths at the African Leaders Malaria Alliance (ALMA), held on the side-lines of the 28<sup>th</sup> African Union Summit.

The 2017 ALMA Award for Excellence was awarded to Ethiopia for its impact on malaria incidence and mortality. Ethiopia is on track to eliminate malaria by 2020 and reduced malaria incidence by more than 40% between 2010 and 2015. The significant reduction in malaria in the three high-burden

countries (DRC, Ethiopia and Uganda) demonstrates what can be achieved with political commitment, adequate financing and implementation of technically sound and evidence-based vector control and case management interventions, even where malaria transmission is high.



"Thanks to strong African leadership and innovative new partnerships, we are making unprecedented progress in the fight against malaria," said H.E Idriss Déby Itno, President of Chad and outgoing Chairperson of the African Union. "The success of these countries shows the powerful impact that dedication and sufficient funding can have."

### **African Heads of State make historic commitment to advance immunisation**



On 31<sup>st</sup> January, African Heads of State endorsed the **Addis Declaration on Immunisation** to ensure that everyone in Africa – regardless of who they are or where they live – receives the full benefits of immunisation.

The Declaration calls for countries to increase political and financial investments in their immunisation programmes and includes 10 commitments, including increasing vaccine-related funding, strengthening supply chains and delivery systems, and making universal access to vaccines a cornerstone of health and development efforts. The full declaration can be found on the AU website.

"Immunisation is one of the smartest investments a country can make in its future," said H.E. Professor Yifru Berhan Mitke, Ethiopia's Minister of Health. "We must do more to protect all our children from preventable diseases – not only because it is the right thing to do, but also because it makes economic sense. When our children are healthy, our families, communities and countries thrive."

### **UN Secretary-General lauds African countries for accepting refugees**

Antonio Guterres, the UN Secretary-General, commended African countries for opening their borders to refugees fleeing conflict and persecution.

**"African nations are among the world's largest and most generous hosts of refugees...African borders remain open for those in need of protection when so many borders are being closed, even in the most developed countries in the world."**

The UN chief made a particular mention of Ethiopia, the largest refugee-hosting country in Africa, that, he noted "for decades has been keeping its borders open to hundreds of thousands of refugees from its neighbours, many times in dramatic security situations."

According to the UN Refugee Agency, Sub-Saharan Africa hosts more than 18 million refugees, about 26% of the world's refugees, who have fled conflicts in Somalia, Central African Republic, Nigeria, South Sudan and Burundi.

## **NATIONAL NEWS**

### **PM Hailemariam attends the World Economic Forum**



Prime Minister Hailemariam Dessalegn attended the 47<sup>th</sup> World Economic Forum (WEF) in Davos, Switzerland, which was held under the theme "Responsive and Responsible Leadership".

During his visit, the Prime Minister told journalists that Ethiopia's uninterrupted participation at annual meetings of the Forum over the last few years has helped the country to reflect seriously and usefully on its national and continental agendas.

The PM attended a series of meetings with development partners and held fruitful discussions with the leaders of various countries including Switzerland, China and the United Kingdom.

The Prime Minister's meeting with President Leuthard of Switzerland focused on bilateral business and investment ties between Ethiopia and Switzerland and also on Ethio-EU cooperation. They also discussed pressing continental and global issues including migration. President Leuthard commended Ethiopia's role in working for peace in the Horn of Africa in particular, and across the continent. Underlining Ethiopia's efforts to become a climate-resilient middle-income country by 2025, Prime Minister Hailemariam called on Swiss investors to take advantage of Ethiopia's favourable investment climate. President Leuthard promised to extend support to Ethiopia's green-growth strategy.

The Prime Minister also met with investors and representatives of international companies and held discussions focusing on four major areas: the creation of more jobs through modernizing the agriculture sector; developing locally manufactured products to substitute for imported pharmaceutical products; encouraging companies to engage in the ICT area; and attracting companies engaged in health activities to work especially in tertiary health services.

He said Ethiopia had been able to take advantage of the Forum to attract more companies in these priority areas and had reached consensus with various leaders to further enhance investment and development ties. A number of participants at the Forum had expressed readiness to invest in Ethiopia in power generation, tourism and other sectors. He described his discussions with potential investors as fruitful.

### **...Ethiopia's request to host World Economic Forum**

While in Davos, PM Hailemariam also met with Professor Klaus Schwab, Founder and Executive Chairman of the World Economic Forum, to officially request that Ethiopia host the World Economic Forum on Africa in 2018.

If Ethiopia's offer is accepted, it would be the second time the country will host the meeting.

The annual Forum attracts hundreds of global political and business leaders to collaborate on global issues.



Professor Schwab said that Ethiopia's request to host the meeting will be answered in the meeting in Durban, South Africa in accordance with the procedure.

Ethiopia's readiness and success in hosting international and continental conferences, including the 22<sup>nd</sup> World Economic Forum would help it to win the bid, he added.

### **Ethiopia's Foreign Minister addresses the UN Security Council**



The Minister of Foreign Affairs, H.E. Dr Workneh Gebeyehu, addressed the ministerial-level UN Security Council Debate on Conflict Prevention and Sustaining Peace on 10<sup>th</sup> January, where he stressed the timeliness of such a high-level debate given the challenges in the maintenance of peace and security.

He said, "in view of the enormous peace and security challenges we are facing today, [only] prioritising conflict prevention is not really an option."

While expressing his appreciation to Ban Ki-moon for his tireless efforts and key achievements during his tenure, Dr Workneh said the leadership role of the new UN Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres, will be imperative in bringing fresh impetus to the pursuit of solutions to the many conflicts and crisis situations around the world.

The Minister however, noted that the efforts of the Secretary-General will not be fruitful without the full support and cooperation of all member states. Equally important is the need to address institutional fragmentation and ensure coherence across the entire UN system.

In such regards, Dr Workneh pledged Ethiopia's strong commitment to extending support to Mr Guterres. Ethiopia, the Minister said, had been playing an active role in the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts.

As the UN cannot address the myriad of global peace and security challenges alone, Dr Workneh underlined the need to enhance strategic partnerships with regional and sub-regional organisations across the whole spectrum of conflict cycles, including prevention, peacekeeping and special political missions, conflict resolution and peace-building.

"In this regard, we appreciate the strong commitment the Secretary-General has shown to the partnership between the United Nations and the African Union," the Minister added.

At the UN headquarters in New York, Dr Workneh met various officials including UN Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres, Italy's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Angelino Alfano, and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan.

### **Ethiopian ruling party holds dialogue with opposition**

Ethiopia's ruling party, the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), met with the nationally registered main political opposition for a dialogue aimed at long-term stability, following PM Hailemariam's promise to engage with the country's opposition.

Around 23 opposition parties attended the discussion, the first in a series of others to come,

that are agreeing on procedural and protocol issues followed by substantive issues.



"The move is excellent for bringing about durable solutions in the country," Chane Kebede, head of the Ethiopian Democratic Party (EDP), a major opposition party, told local reporters.

### **Ethiopia's former Health Minister is new CEO of Roll Back Malaria**



Dr Kesete Admasu, Ethiopia's former Minister of Health, has been appointed Chief Executive Officer of the Roll Back Malaria (RBM) Partnership, following an extensive global search and selection process supported by executive search firm Egon Zehnder.

Dr Kesete will play a critical role as the global face of the new Partnership on a day-to-day basis, including establishing and leading a new Partnership Management Team and ensuring that regions and countries are empowered to address the global fight against malaria.

Dr Winnie Mpanju-Shumbusho, Board Chair of the RBM Partnership said "As a champion of innovation, task-shifting and implementation at scale, Dr Kesete has the experience required to lead this global Partnership into a new era and drive momentum to end malaria for good. We are incredibly excited to welcome him on board."

Dr Kesete will officially commence duties on 1<sup>st</sup> February and move into the new RBM offices at the Global Fund in Geneva on 1<sup>st</sup> March. The RBM Board Leadership will support him in the phased

recruitment of remaining members of the new Partnership Management Team during 2017.

“I am excited to join RBM Partnership as the CEO. I look forward to working with all the RBM partners in the effort to relegate malaria to the history books,” said Dr Kesete.

### **Maternal and infant mortality rates reduced**

An integrated family health programme, which has been implemented in six regional states of Ethiopia, has played a crucial role in reducing maternal and infant mortality rates in the states concerned, said the Ministry of Health, according to a report by the Ministry tabled at a workshop organised in connection with the completion of the programme in the states of Amhara, Tigray, Oromia, Benishangul-Gumuz, Ethiopian Somali and the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' (SNNP) Region.

The eight-year project, which was launched in 2008, has benefited 37.8 million people. Improving quality health services, increasing awareness of the need for the community to seek health services, and building institutional and personal capacity are the major objectives of the project.

State Minister of Health, Dr Daniel Woldemichael, said the programme had contributed to efforts to reduce maternal and infant mortality, which had declined to 6,000 per 100,000 and 55,000 per 100,000 respectively, from 16,000 and 178,000 respectively five years ago.

Activities carried out by health extension workers to urge pregnant women to deliver their babies in health institutions had contributed to this success.

According to the State Minister, the activities carried out helped encourage rural communities across the country to seek medical treatment.

The head of the Integrated Family Health Programme, Dr Mengistu Asnake, said the programme had helped to expand family planning services in the areas covered. The programme had been implemented with \$110 million in financial support from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

### **Ethio-Welsh relations strengthened on Ambassador's debut trip**



H.E. Ambassador Hailemichael Afework led a delegation on an official visit to Wales on 24<sup>th</sup> January, accompanied by Mr Ababi Demissie, Head of Public Diplomacy and officers from the Diaspora department.

This was Ambassador Hailemichael's first visit to Wales, aimed at promoting Ethiopia's image and investment potential, as well as establishing partnerships with a range of institutions.

The delegation met with the First Minister of Wales the Rt. Hon. Carwyn Jones AM, representatives from the University of South Wales and Cardiff University and with members of the Ethiopian Diaspora.



(l-r) AMs John Griffiths and Jayne Bryant, Cllr Omar Ali, First Minister Carwyn Jones, Ambassador Hailemicheal Abera and Ababi Demissie, Head of Public Diplomacy

Following a visit to the Welsh Assembly, where the delegation attended the First Minister's Question and Answer session, the First Minister said Ethiopia is an independent country with a rich history and a fast growing and vibrant economy. He appreciated Ethiopian Airlines' world-class services and competitiveness. The First Minister said he will encourage Welsh businesses to invest in Ethiopia and universities and democratic institutions to establish linkages with their Ethiopian counterparts, adding that there is a big opportunity for UK investors and Wales is striving for global partnerships.



Ambassador Hailemichael spoke of the century-old historic and multifaceted relations long enjoyed by Ethiopia and the UK. The Ethiopian Embassy in London was Africa's first UK Diplomatic Mission and the UK was one of the first countries to open an Embassy in Addis Ababa. This partnership has led to effective development cooperation.



Ambassador Hailemichael with Newport Deputy Mayor Councillor David Fouweather

Ethiopia and the UK share common international obligations such as fighting terrorism and extremism, maintaining regional and international peace and security, reducing the impact of climate change and building resilient green economies, democracy and protection of human rights, tackling human trafficking and managing migration, and transforming our world through implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

The Ambassador thanked the Welsh government and the people of Wales for their support for Ethiopia and for Emperor Haileselassie who, following the Italian occupation of Ethiopia, lived for a short period in nearby Bath.

Ambassador Hailemichael later outlined areas of potential partnership with representatives from the University of South Wales and Cardiff University. Cardiff University offered educational placements for Ethiopian students and both universities agreed to establish links in the near future.

In a presentation to council dignitaries, investors and members of the Diaspora, the Ambassador detailed Ethiopia's current situation and the government's encouragement of private investment and promotion of the inflow of foreign capital and

technology into Ethiopia. Incentives are granted to both domestic and foreign investors, the Ambassador said, adding that opportunities exist for investment in manufacturing, agriculture, energy, mining, pharmaceuticals, food and drink, construction and tourism. Members of the Diaspora as well as potential investors at the presentation expressed their keen interest in investing in Ethiopia.

Newport Cllr Omar Ali, who is of Ethiopian origin, played an important role in organising the visit and bridging the two nations. His engagement in Ethiopia's image-building is exemplary. The visit was an eye opener and was deemed very successful on both sides.

### **DFID's Economic Development Strategy to help create new jobs in Ethiopia**

The UK Department for International Development launched its first Economic Development Strategy, which sets out how investment in economic development will help developing nations speed up their rate of economic growth, trade more and industrialise faster, and ultimately lift themselves out of poverty.

By helping the world's poorest countries grow their economies, this investment will help create the UK's trading partners of the future, boost global prosperity and address some of the root causes of global issues such as mass migration and instability that affect the UK, the report said.

In Ethiopia, UK aid will help create new jobs for refugees.

"Ethiopia hosts 750,000 refugees, the greatest number in Africa. To assist these refugees and the Ethiopian economy, the UK will provide £80 million in partnership with others to create 100,000 new jobs - up to a third of which will be available to refugees. This will help build two industrial parks and provide training, strengthen Ethiopia's manufacturing ambitions, foster growth, and contribute to tackling the global migration crisis," the report says.

In an interview with ITV's Rageh Omar, the International Development Secretary Priti Patel said that it is in Britain's interest to create jobs in Ethiopia.



Speaking while on a trip to the vast new industrial park in the town of Hawasa, Ms Patel told ITV news that the UK is focused on helping countries move away from aid-dependency towards becoming modern middle-income trading nations, which is where the Ethiopian economy is heading within the next nine years.

She also stressed that helping countries like Ethiopia “get on their feet” economically and industrialise was important to Britain in the “post-Brexit” world.

“These are the kinds of countries we will need to trade with” she said.



The full report, *Economic Development Strategy: prosperity, poverty and meeting global challenges*, can be accessed on the DFID website at <https://goo.gl/pRriC9>

## INFRASTRUCTURE

### Over 5 bn Birr to be spent on road projects

According to the Ethiopian News Agency, the Ethiopian Roads Authority (ERA) has signed over 5 billion birr road construction and upgrading agreements with local and international contractors.



The Addis – Adama Expressway

Director-General of ERA, Araya Girmay, said that the 357km of roads to be constructed and upgraded are in the regional states of Oromia, Somali, Southern Nations Nationalities and Peoples, and Benishangul-Gumuz.

The projects will connect rural areas with regional cities and towns and are part and parcel of the second Growth and Transformation Plan. They will create more than 3,000 jobs.

### Ethiopian plans record expansion with seven new destinations in the first half of 2017!

Africa’s largest airline group, Ethiopian Airlines, has announced that it will launch **seven new destinations within five months** during the first half of 2017. This is one of the greatest expansions in Ethiopian’s long and illustrious history.

From February to June, Ethiopian will launch new services to Victoria Falls (Zimbabwe), Antananarivo (Madagascar), Conakry (Guinea), Oslo (Norway), Chengdu (China), Jakarta (Indonesia) and Singapore. With the addition of these stations, Ethiopian will have services from Addis Ababa to **98 different international cities** located across the world.



Mr Tewolde GebreMariam, the CEO, said: “Africa’s share of global aviation is currently the smallest at around 3%. As the largest airline group on the continent, we are highly concerned by this low base of air connectivity and are therefore setting record expansion in progress to enable Africans to enjoy safe, reliable and economical air connectivity both within the continent and between the continent and the rest of the world. Looking beyond the current economic slowdown, especially in the oil export dependent economies of Africa, we firmly believe that the continent will become a magnet for foreign direct investment, trade and tourism, which are the engines of air travel growth. In turn, efficient air connectivity also drives socio-economic development and we are happy to contribute our share to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century African Transformation.”

In 2016 alone, new flights to Moroni (Comoros), Windhoek (Namibia) and Newark (United States) were launched, as well as to three cities in Ethiopia: Hawassa, Kebridahar and Dembidolo. Ethiopian is one of the fastest growing airlines in the world. The airline envisages **reaching 120 international destinations by the year 2025 - 98 down, 22 to go!**



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## **Djibouti side of the Addis-Djibouti railway inaugurated**



The new Ethiopia-Djibouti Railway, Africa's first electrified standard gauge railway, is now open for business following the inauguration on the 100km line within the borders of Djibouti. Prime Minister Hailemariam Dessalegn attended the inauguration of the railway line, which is part of the 756km railway that connects the capital of Ethiopia with the port of Djibouti.

The 656km of railway that lies within the borders of Ethiopia was inaugurated in October 2016 in the presence of Prime Minister Hailemariam Dessalegn and Djiboutian President Ismail Omar Guelleh. Ethiopia started trial services that month, and a regular service is expected to begin this year.

Aboubaker Omar Hadi, chairman of the Djibouti Ports and Free Zones Authority, said the railway marked a "new dawn for Africa's integration into the global economy".

"From today, millions more Africans are linked to Djibouti's world-class port facilities," he said. "Connecting Africa, Asia and Europe, Djibouti is at the heart of the world's trade routes, and we are proud to play a vital role in developing the region and wider continent."

The electrified Ethio-Djibouti railway line has a pivotal role in enhancing the imports and exports of the two countries and will help foster the all-round integration of the two countries, beyond boosting their economic relations.

## **...Service to start in February**

The Ethiopian Railway Corporation (ERC) announced that the Ethiopia-Djibouti Railway will start services from February.

According to the Corporation's CEO, Dr Eng. Getachew Betru, preparations are nearing completion, including a test run, installation of electric lines and construction of roads linking the stations with the main roads.

## **TRADE AND INVESTMENT**

### **Ethiopia to offer foreign firms stakes in some state firms**

At a press conference held in early January, Prime Minister Hailemariam Dessalegn said that Ethiopia will offer foreign firms stakes in some state-owned companies, such as the Ethiopian Shipping and Logistics Services Enterprise, to help modernise the businesses and drive growth.

### **PM Hailemariam named 2017 Africa CEO Forum Guest of Honour**

Prime Minister Hailemariam Dessalegn will be Guest of Honour part at the **AFRICA CEO FORUM 2017** alongside more than 1,000 international and African economic decision-makers, including 300 influential investors.



As the second largest African market, Ethiopia is one of the most robust and best performing economies on the continent, with a double-digit growth rate over the past 10 years (a 10.8% annual average since 2005).

Accompanied by a delegation of Ethiopian CEOs, the Prime Minister will present the strategic orientations of his economic policy as well as several concrete investment projects in high potential sectors. The Ethiopian Government has launched significant programmes in sectors such as transport, telecommunications, energy and industry, especially the textile industry, to accelerate the structural transformation of the country's economy.

The Ethiopian Prime Minister will also participate in the “Head of State panel” where he will discuss Ethiopia’s economic outlook, highlighting the private sector’s role in its growth dynamic. In 2016, the Presidents of Côte d’Ivoire and Ghana participated in this unique panel which has since become a highlight of the Africa CEO Forum’s programme.

### **Dangote ready to invest in Ethiopia’s sugar industry**



According to local reports, the CEO of Dangote Group, Aliko Dangote, said he wishes to diversify his investments in Ethiopia, and is considering

packaging and sugar production.

The Nigerian tycoon met with Prime Minister Hailemariam Dessalegn, who told him that Ethiopia is fully committed to supporting the Group in its efforts towards diversifying its investments.

PM Hailemariam said that the government encourages companies such as the Dangote Group to engage in Ethiopia so as to boost employment opportunities and knowledge and technology transfer as well as economic development.

Active in Ethiopia since 2015, Dangote Cement is the biggest cement factory in East Africa and Ethiopia.

The Group will also establish a huge packaging plant in Ethiopia over the coming few months to substitute importing cement bags from abroad.

### **...Ethiopia to stop importing sugar**

Ethiopia will stop the import of sugar from the coming fiscal year as the newly constructed Omo Kuraz I and II as well as Beles I sugar factories are set to commence production.

Doctor Girma Amente, Minister for Public Enterprises, said the government is also undertaking work on other sugar factories to bring about full-scale sugar production. The Ministry is also revising its plans, to avoid further delays in the construction of 10 new sugar factories.

Ethiopia is also aiming at the export market.

### **Two new textile industrial parks to be constructed**

The Industrial Parks Development Corporation (IPDC) of Ethiopia announced that two new industrial parks, Bole Lemi II and Jimma, are set to be constructed for the textile and garment industry.

The Bole Lemi II Industrial Park will be constructed in the southern part of Addis Ababa within 12 months, while the Jimma Industrial Park will be built in the Oromia Regional State in Jimma town within nine months.

During the contract signing ceremony between contractors and the government, IPDC CEO Sisay Gemechu said the government gave number one priority to the textile and garment industry. “It is a light industry which is labour intensive. And it uses locally produced raw materials,” he said.

Since its establishment in 2014, IPDC has successfully completed the construction of two industrial Parks - Bole Lemi I and Hadassah. The corporation is also developing the Mekelle, Kombolcha, Adama and Dire Dawa industrial parks.

## **TRAVEL AND TOURISM**

### **Condé Nast boss speaks highly of Ethiopia**



Nicholas Coleridge, President of Condé Nast International which publishes magazines such as *Vogue*, *Tatler* and *Vanity Fair*, recently spoke highly of Ethiopia following a trip he made with his family

during the Christmas holiday.

He spent Christmas Eve visiting the monolithic rock-hewn churches in the holy city of Lalibela, and afterwards decided to take a trip to the town’s famous Torpedo bar.

**“...Ethiopia is the most amazing – and very safe – place to visit. More people should go on holiday there because it is spectacular and we had the most wonderful time.”**

## **Ethiopian Christians celebrate Genna and Timkat**

Tens of thousands of Ethiopian Christians gathered to celebrate Genna (Ethiopian Christmas, 7<sup>th</sup> January) and Timkat (Epiphany, 19<sup>th</sup> January).

Although celebrations take place country-wide, the historic town of Lalibela is the best place to see unique Genna festivities, where pilgrims travel from all over the country to the famous rock-hewn churches for mass.



In his Christmas benediction, patriarch of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church, Abune Mathias, emphasized the need to foster peace.

"Every good thing pivots around peace and we should uphold that idea in our hearts in everything we do," the patriarch said. "We ought to extend a hand of generosity and show compassion to one another."

Genna or *Ledet* is preceded by an all-night vigil following 43 days of fasting. It is a family-oriented holiday that in some areas is marked by traditional dancing or a hockey-like game called *Yegenna Chewata*, supposedly played by local shepherds on the night Jesus was born. It is traditional to eat the national dish *doro wot* (chicken stew) over Genna.

Lalibela is one of Ethiopia's holiest cities, second only to Aksum.

### **...Timkat colourfully observed**

Timkat, the greatest Christian festival in Ethiopia, celebrates the Baptism of Jesus Christ in the River Jordan by John the Baptist. Festivities include a three-day affair. The rituals and ceremonies are

centred around the replicas of the Ark of the Covenant and have evolved in relative isolation from the rest of the world, resembling scenes from the Old Testament. Celebrated across Ethiopia, it is particularly special in Gondar where the festivities culminate in a crowded and colourful afternoon re-enactment of the first baptism at the 17<sup>th</sup> century Fasil's royal bathing pool.



In Addis Ababa, many marquees are pitched in the grassy field at Jan Meda, northeast of the city centre.

Flamboyant and spiritually uplifting, Ethiopia's religious festivals give you the chance to be part of an authentic experience unlike any other, and to leave with enduring memories. For travel inspiration, visit the Ethiopian Tourism Organisation website at <http://www.ethiopia.travel/>

## **SPORTS**

### **Almaz Ayana nominated for top award**



Ethiopia's Olympic champion, Almaz Ayana, has been nominated for yet another sports award – the Laureus 2017 World Breakthrough of the Year Award.

Ayana was recently named the female World Athlete of the Year at the International Association of Athletics Federation's Athletics Awards in 2016.

She had a record-breaking 2015. After recording the fastest 10,000m debut in history in June, she went on to win the Olympic title at the distance in a world record of 29:17.45. She also took bronze in the 5000m event in Rio, her only loss of the year. Having recorded three of the eight fastest times at 5000m, she ended the year as the Diamond Race winner for that discipline.

The eventual winners for the award, as voted for by members of the Laureus World Sports Academy, will be revealed in Monaco on February 14.

Good luck Ayana!!

### **Kenenisa and Tirunesh to lead Team Ethiopia at the London Marathon**



Triple Olympic Ethiopian running legend Kenenisa Bekele tops the list of world-class contenders announced for the men's elite race at the 2017 Virgin Money London Marathon on 23<sup>rd</sup> April.



The double world record holder became the world's second fastest marathon runner of all time when he won the 2016 Berlin Marathon last September. Bekele missed the world record by just six seconds when he crossed the finish line in two hours three minutes three seconds. It was the fastest marathon time in the world in 2016 and broke Haile Gebrselassie's Ethiopian record.

Bekele will seek to become only the third Ethiopian man ever to win the coveted London Marathon title and the first since two-time winner Tsegaye Kebede in 2013.

"London is the greatest marathon in the world and I would love to win there," said Bekele. "The field is always the best and victory means so much. After

finishing third last year, I know what I need to do to win."

Joining Bekele are Tesfaye Abera, Tilahun Regassa and Asefa Mengstu.



In the women's race, triple Olympic and five-time world track champion, Tirunesh Dibaba a.k.a the "Baby Faced Destroyer", will be joined by her namesake, Mare Dibaba, who finished sixth last year.

Tirunesh finished third on her marathon debut in London three years ago. The 2015 London champion Tigist Tufa, who was second last year, three-times Berlin Marathon champion Aberu Kebede, who has also won the Frankfurt, Tokyo and Rotterdam marathons, and the 2010 London champion Aselefech Mergia, who has triumphed three times in the Dubai Marathon in recent years, finish the five-strong Ethiopian contingent.

### **Tamirat Tola breaks Dubai Marathon course records; leads Ethiopian sweep**

Ethiopia's Tamirat Tola broke the Standard Chartered Dubai Marathon course record on 20<sup>th</sup> January, finishing the race in 2:04:11. Compatriot Worknesh Degefa won the women's race in 2:22:36, making it a sixth consecutive Ethiopian double.



Olympic champion, Kenenisa Bekele was meant to make a world record attempt at the race, but had to pull out after falling at the start of the race.

Tamirat, who earned the bronze medal in the 10,000m at the Rio 2016 Olympic Games, led an Ethiopian sweep in the men's race with Mule Wasihun finishing second in 2:06:46 and Sisay

Lemma third in 2:08:04. Apart from Kenya's Mark Lokwanamoi finishing fifth, Ethiopia took the top 10 spots.

It was a similar finale in the women's race, with Ethiopia taking the top 10 spots again. Workneh Degefa won in 2:22:36 – the 12<sup>th</sup> fastest marathon debut in history – while Shure Demise clocked 2:22:57, the second-best time of her career. Compatriot Yebrgual Melese completed the Ethiopian sweep with a PB of 2:23:13.

### **Meskerem Assefa wins Houston Marathon**



Meskerem Assefa won the women's race at the Houston Marathon for the first time in 2:30:18, extending Ethiopia's winning streak in Houston to 11.

In the men's race, Ethiopia's Yitayal Atanfu Zerihun finished second followed by Abayneh Ayele Woldegiorgis. It is the first time since 2009 that Ethiopians lost in the men's Houston Marathon race.

### **Ethiopia set to relaunch national teams**

The President of the Ethiopian Basketball Federation, Ashebir Woldegiorgis Gaye, said one of his main priorities will be to relaunch the national teams.

It is over 50 years since Ethiopia's men's national team participated in a FIBA AfroBasket tournament.

With the popularity of the game growing steadily in recent years in Ethiopia, Ashebir insists it's time to put Ethiopian basketball back on the international map.

"I am so passionate about basketball and sport, and of course, it is painful for us we don't have [a] national team," Ashebir told FIBA.com. "That was

why I included it as one very important item at our first Executive Committee meeting. And the outcome was positive."

"Hopefully, Ethiopian basketball will be back on track. I am here to support our game to share my little knowledge and experience."

## **NEWS IN BRIEF**

### **International Development Minister visits Ethiopia**



The Rt. Hon. Priti Patel MP, UK Secretary of State for International Development, visited Ethiopia in January, where she attended the AU Summit and met with government officials to discuss bilateral issues.

While in the country, she also paid a visit the new Hawassa Industrial Park, where several renowned multinational corporations are installing textile machineries.

### **Ethiopia-born Irish actress, Ruth Negga, nominated for Oscar**



Ethiopia-born Irish actress, Ruth Negga, has been nominated for the prestigious Oscars for her role in the 2016 film, *Loving*, in the 'Actress in a Leading Role,' category.

*Loving* is a historical film which tells the story of Richard and Mildred Loving, the plaintiffs in the 1967 U.S. Supreme Court decision *Loving v. Virginia*, which invalidated state laws prohibiting inter-racial marriage.

Negga was born in 1982 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, to an Irish mother and an Ethiopian father. She lived in Ethiopia until she was four and moved to Limerick, Ireland.



## Young IT enthusiasts launch Ethiopia's first coding academy



In an attempt to popularise coding culture in Ethiopia, young IT enthusiasts have teamed up to launch a coding academy, the first of its kind in Ethiopia, that will provide and facilitate relatively new technology-driven opportunities for Ethiopian youths.



Founders of iCog Labs, a start-up IT business that specialises in Artificial Intelligence, met up with Bethlehem Dessie, project manager and founder of Anyone Can Code (ACC), and brainstormed the establishment of the coding academy in Ethiopia.

Launching the academy, Getnet Assefa, Co-founder and CEO of iCog Labs, and Bethlehem said that the academy targets children aged between six and 13 and will give them the opportunity to become coders at early age. The age group is selected because that is when children are expected to be more intuitively active for computing.

Situated in the International Leadership Institute, the new academy will accept 30 children who will be trained in year-long coding courses. According to the founders, the academy will provide training in areas of robotics and artificial intelligence, coding and programming.

## Ethiopia ratifies Climate Change Agreement

Ethiopia ratified the **Paris Climate Agreement** in January. A parliamentary standing committee pointed out that Ethiopia being part of the agreement will help limit global warming to well below two degrees centigrade. The agreement plans to limit the temperature increase to 1.5 degrees

above pre-industrial levels, recognizing that this would significantly reduce the risks and impacts of climate change. It was noted by the committee that the agreement has an encouraging article on carbon trading among countries, from which Ethiopia can benefit.

The Paris Climate Agreement is an agreement within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

The agreement currently has 194 UNFCCC members that have signed the treaty, 125 of which have ratified it. It was created on November 4, 2016.

## 30% of construction sites to be green

The Ministry of Urban Development and Housing has started implementing a strategy that compels construction sites to reserve 30% of their allotment for green areas to help prevent urban air pollution.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which were adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 2015, stipulate that construction activities undertaken in urban areas should take into consideration green development.

## Ethiopia to launch satellite in three years

The Ministry of Science and Technology has said Ethiopia is working on launching a medium-sized satellite launching rocket within the next three years, joining countries competing to launch satellites at the equator.

The Ministry's Public Relations Director Wondwosen Andualem, said satellite-building capability is growing owing to knowledge and technological exchanges with development partners.

Efforts are ongoing to manufacture both the satellite and its carrier rocket locally, said the Director, who indicated its significance for security, weather forecasting and other services.

In October 2006, Ethiopia set up a Space Science Council and Institute and the Ethiopian Space Science and Technology Institute (ESSTI), chaired by the Prime Minister, to facilitate the development of the country's space and aerospace sector.

## Toronto University launches class on Ge'ez

The University of Toronto has become one of the only places in the world where students can learn Ge'ez, the ancient Ethiopian language.



Professor Robert Holmstedt welcomed 25 students and members of Toronto's Ethiopian community to the first day of an introductory course on Ge'ez which, like Latin, is only used in religious services, in this case for the Ethiopian Orthodox and Catholic churches.

The programme came about through several significant donations, including from *The Weeknd* (singer Abel Makkonen Tesfaye), a Canadian Grammy-award winning artist of Ethiopian origin, the Ethiopian community and the Faculty of Arts & Science.

Department chair **Professor Tim Harrison** has said that he hopes, with continued support, that the University will eventually add more courses and be positioned to launch the first Ethiopian studies programme in North America.

## Ethiopia bans medicalisation of FGM

As part of its endeavours to ensure the health and wellbeing of its people, including women and children, Ethiopia has committed to eliminating female genital mutilation (FGM) and early marriage by 2025. In line with this, the Ministry of Health banned medicalisation of FGM in all public and private medical facilities in the country. Medical personnel who engage in any form of FGM in medical facilities will be subjected to legal action.

## ETHIOPIA IN THE NEWS

### Epiphany celebrated in Ethiopia - in pictures

Carl Court shares his images of the annual Timkat festival in *The Guardian*. During the festival, tabots, models of the Ark of the Covenant, are taken from churches around the city of Gondar and paraded through the streets to Fasilides Bath.



Orthodox priests carry a tabot, a model of the Ark of the Covenant, on a procession through Gondar



Women pose for a selfie during the celebration

See more photos at <https://goo.gl/x9Nk83>

### The World's Best Sesame Seeds Come from Ethiopia

**SAVEUR** Did you know that the making of the most buttery tahini you could imagine starts in Tigray, Ethiopia, where the world's BEST sesame seeds come from?



“Of the dozens of sesame varieties, it’s the buttery, complex Humera seeds that produce the best tahini, prized throughout the Middle East and beyond...Worldwide demand for sesame has surged 20% in each of the last two years, much of it going into the production of oil, sesame-topped breads and cakes, and, increasingly, tahini—a creamy paste made from the pure ground seeds. Ethiopia, where sesame is the second most profitable export after coffee, still lacks the resources to process the seeds on a large scale, so most tahini-destined harvests are shipped to Israel or Turkey for refining and packaging.

Read more at <https://goo.gl/9nB8cU>

### **The warmest place on Earth? Photos of colourful sulphur lakes where miners search for 'white gold'**



Alex Wheeler shares stunning photos by Carl Court of the colourful Danakil Depression where, for centuries, merchants have travelled across the vast, cracked desert basin with caravans of camels to collect blocks of salt.

More photos at <https://goo.gl/5evs8b>

### **The five best restaurants in Addis Ababa that only locals know about**



“One of the best things about Ethiopian food is that no other cuisine in the world is quite like it,” writes Kerry Sullivan. “Traditional cooking here blends unique combinations of spices to create distinct flavours...spices are the key ingredients.”



Photo credit: Uncornered Market

Ethiopian restaurants can be found the world over, but none compare with the food made in Addis Ababa...Vegetables are locally sourced, and so is the meat. Nothing here is mass produced, and every dish is made fresh to order. Addis is the best place in the country to try Ethiopian food, and these are the five best restaurants that only locals know about”

Read more at <https://goo.gl/0k53kz>

### **Africa's skateboarding scene is on the rise**



Addis Ababa is swiftly becoming a centre for Africa's skateboarding scene.

Thanks to **Ethiopia Skate**, Addis Ababa recently built its first skate park. Ethiopian cities Bahir Dar and Awassa also have skate collectives, thanks in part to smooth roads which locals say are perfect for indy grabs.



**Ethiopia Skate** – With the help of Make Life Skate Life, an NGO that helps build concrete skate parks around the world, young Ethiopians have built themselves the country's first skate park, in Addis Ababa.

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

## Wake up and smell the coffees of the world

Here is how Ethiopia enjoys its coffee...



“Coffee is the national drink of Ethiopia. Coffee drinking is somewhat a ritual for locals that can take up to an hour to complete. Coffee is served in three rounds, *abol*, *tona* and *baraka*. Ethiopians inhale the aroma before they drink the coffee.”

Read more at <https://goo.gl/6CC6Hq>

## 5 Wicked Facts About Ethiopia



*Travelers Today* feature a list of top 5 facts about Ethiopia that prospective visitors ought to remember:

1. Unconquered Nation: Ethiopia has “repelled every known prospective invader”
2. First African Gold Medalist: Every long-distance runner aspires to be like Abebe Bikila (but none would want to do it barefooted like he did).
3. Birthplace of Mankind: “Lucy” was a quintessential scientific counterpart of the Biblical Eve.
4. African Vegan Center: A haven for vegetarians due to the country's predominant Orthodox Christianity
5. Soul of Reggae Music: Ethiopia has single-handedly inspired almost all aspects of reggae culture.

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

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