



Ethiopian News

May 2011 Issue

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National Day colourfully marked across Ethiopia

The 20th anniversary of the National Day of Ethiopia, celebrated on 28th May, a day that heralded the demise of the dictatorial Derg regime in 1991, was colourfully celebrated across Ethiopia.

Tens of thousands of supporters gathered in Addis Ababa's main square, Mesqel Square, to listen and express support of Prime Minister Meles Zenawi, who promised the completion of the Great Ethiopian Renaissance Dam and vowed to eradicate poverty from Ethiopia.

"Our people have shown us the unshakeable commitment to realise the construction of the Great Renaissance Dam...I have no doubt that our people will make poverty history," he said.

Present at the occasion were senior government officials, including Kuma Demeksa, Mayor of Addis Ababa city, Abadula Gameda and Kassa Tekleberhan, speakers of the House of Peoples Representatives and House of Federation respectively, and members of the diplomatic corps.

Addressing the rally, Mayor Kuma said that 28th May was the date on which the foundation for democracy, peace and unity was laid in Ethiopia.

Religious institutions also took the opportunity to commemorate the day in which they said religious freedom was guaranteed in the constitution.

The square was filled with people dressed in a variety of traditional clothes, some waving the national flag and flags of the different nations, nationalities and peoples of Ethiopia. Costumes and artistic designs had been specially made to mark the occasion.

On this anniversary, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II sent a message of congratulations to President Girma Woldegiorgis and the people of Ethiopia. "On the occasion of your National Day, it gives me great pleasure to send President Girma Woldegiorgis my warmest greetings, together with my best wishes for every success for the people of Ethiopia in the coming year," said the Queen.

PM Meles at the G8 Summit

The 37th G8 summit was held on 26th and 27th May in the commune of Deauville in France. On the last day of the G8 Deauville Summit, the world's most developed nations focused on promoting partnership with Africa.



NEW WORLD NEW IDEAS

Prime Minister Meles Zenawi was invited by French president Sarkozy to attend the G8 meeting in his capacity as the chairman of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). The premier has

been advocating on behalf of Africa at these meetings and is a sought-after leader by most of the G8 leaders for his understanding of the problems of Africa and developing countries in general.



The premier was joined by the leaders of Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa and Cote d'Ivoire, attending as special guests. Prime Minister Meles is also currently serving as a spokesperson for Africa on climate change and environmental issues. He was re-elected last January to represent Africa on the world negotiation on climate change and its impact in Africa.

Key issues on the summit's agenda included international security, joint efforts in the fight against terrorism, nuclear security issues, the situation in the Middle East and North Africa, the consequences of the earthquake in Japan, and internet development and its impact on society and the economy.

The summit resulted in the adoption of the first ever G8/Africa Joint Declaration "**Shared Values, Shared Responsibilities**", approved by the leaders of the G8 countries, Algeria, Egypt, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Senegal, and South Africa, and the African Union Commission. The document outlines the main principles for guaranteeing peace and security and fostering economic development and growth in the region.

The United States will host the next G8 summit in 2012.

A copy of the G8-Africa Declaration is available on demand, please send an email to info@ethioembassy.org.uk

UN Conference on the Least Developed Countries in Istanbul

The fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (LDC-IV) (9th-14th May) was held in Istanbul, with Turkish President, Abdullag Gul, chosen as chairman of the conference.

Under the theme "Partnership against Poverty", the purpose of the conference was to assess the results of the 10-year action plan for the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) adopted at the Third United Nations Conference on LDCs in Brussels, Belgium, in 2001; and to adopt new measures and strategies for the sustainable development of the LDCs into the next decade.

Thousands of guests including ministers, parliamentarians, representatives of the private sector, scientists and members of non-governmental organizations from 192 UN-member countries attended the event.

A high-level Ethiopian delegation led by Prime Minister Meles and Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Hailemariam Desalegn were among dozens of African leaders attending the conference, which discussed issues relating to trade, development and investment in the least developed countries. PM Meles gave a statement to the conference on 11th May.

H.E. Hailemariam spoke during the general debate in the Conference Plenary, noting that although LDCs generally have registered a commendable growth since the adoption of the Brussels Plan of Action, their growth was certainly not fast enough. One of the reasons for this was that the global partnership the Plan had envisioned had not materialized. He underlined the point that extreme poverty and inequality were likely to spawn instability that transcended boundaries. He also

called for more effective mechanisms to implement global partnerships and suggested the creation of a new international development architecture that would address the challenges that the LDCs face today.



At a separate event on Resource Mobilization and Global Partnership at which he was a keynote speaker, Prime Minister Meles spoke of the need for LDCs to fully exploit their domestic potentials, especially taxation, arguing that “the ability to collect taxes goes to the very heart of the legitimacy of every government.” Mobilizing local resources should be seen as a primary driver of local economies. Foreign aid, grants and loans would remain important but the Prime Minister made a distinction between partnership that aimed at a win-win approach and the “philanthropic” mentality which saw aid as an altruistic gesture. It is the former, obviously, that should be the basis of future partnership between rich and poor countries. The latter did more harm than good. While massive dollar savings were “milling around” in the developed countries, LDCs faced enormous shortages of finance to build their productive capacities.

There are 48 least developed countries in the world with a population of nearly 900 million. These countries are struggling against chronic structural problems in their economy, development and human resources. There are 33 African, 14 Pacific and a Latin American state among those countries.

A copy of the PM’s speech can be obtained by emailing info@ethioembassy.org.uk.

Ethiopia joins the rest of Africa in celebrating Africa Day

The 48th Africa Day was marked on 25th May in Ethiopia as well as the rest of Africa and in the Diaspora, under the theme: “Accelerating Youth Empowerment for Sustainable Development”. Each year, people all over the world celebrate the diversity, culture and beauty of the African continent while spreading awareness of the progress made in the Pan-African movement.



The African Union (AU) joined the rest of the continent to observe the day in the presence of the Chairperson of the AU, Mr. Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo, the Prime Minister of India, Dr. Manmohan Singh, the Chairperson of the African Union Commission (AUC), Mr. Jean Ping, African Heads of State and Government, Ministers and other high officials attending the Africa-India Summit, which ended on the morning of 25th May.

Africa Day is the annual commemoration of the 1963 founding of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU).

30,000km of roads constructed in 20 years

Owing to the endeavours made to fulfil the public’s need for road infrastructure to accelerate the economic growth of Ethiopia, the Ethiopian Roads Authority (ERA) said that over 30,000km of high-standard roads have been constructed at a cost of more than 64 billion Birr over the past 20 years.

“The incumbent government inherited only 18,000km of roads when it overthrew the Derg regime and the national road network has now



reached 49,000km,” Samson Wondimu, Authority Communication Director, said.



More than 100,000km of rural feeder roads were also built through the active involvement of the rural community.

A significant expansion of the road network was registered at national level in particular, following the implementation of the Road Sector Development Programme (RSDP) in 1997, he added. And the improvement of the road sector has contributed to the speedy economic growth registered during the past seven consecutive years.

ERA is currently implementing a five-year road sector development programme that takes into consideration the five-year Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP). Under the plan, more than 99,431km at federal level and 11,212km all-weather roads will be built at a cost of 121 billion Birr over the coming five years, with more than 60% of the total costs being covered by the government, while the balance will be secured by the Road Fund, lenders, donors, and other sources.

Ambassador visits Leeds Metropolitan University

Ambassador Berhanu Kebede, Ethiopian envoy to the UK and Ireland, held talks with officials at Leeds Metropolitan University in a day-long tour which took him to the different campuses including Business and Law and the Carnegie faculties.

The Ambassador was given a warm welcome by Terence Moran, Associate Dean of the Business and Law Faculty, and later joined the Faculty leadership and professors at a meeting where he gave a briefing about the change and transformation

taking place in Ethiopia focusing on education and infrastructure development.

The ancient African nation which remained independent and was a beacon of hope and freedom for those who were under the grip of colonialism, he said, embarked upon a new era of development after the fall of the military regime. The incumbent has carried out poverty eradication schemes which have lifted millions out of poverty. He explained in detail measures taken to empower citizens through the expansion of education opening up opportunities at all levels.

Currently, over 19 million students are in school and Ethiopia is on track to achieve universal education by the year 2015, as part of its bid to meet the MDGs. Ethiopia’s economy, one of the fastest in Sub-Saharan Africa, has been growing at a rate of 11 per cent over the past seven years.

He told professors at the Faculty that social, political and economic policies and programmes require a massive change in the education sector.

The number of universities in the country has now reached 21 from only a few in 1991. Ten more are now under construction bringing the total number to 31, and the intake up to hundreds of thousands a year. Ethiopia earmarks about 25 per cent of its budget to education, thereby investing in the future of the country.

The Government has drawn up a new Five Year Growth and Transformation Plan, which further promotes investment, trade, health, education and communications to realize the objective of joining the community of middle income nations in a relatively short period.

Ambassador Berhanu said it was essential to establish strong working relations with higher learning institutions like Leeds Metropolitan University to reinforce Ethiopia’s efforts to improve

an educational system for peace, development and a democratic order, creating equal opportunities for all.

Dr. Barbara Colledge, the Dean of the Faculty of Business and Law, said the university, which has been involved in a number of engagements with African countries, is keen to forge cooperation with Ethiopia. She noted that it is in the interest of the university to nurture relationships in the sphere of education and reinforce endeavours for growth and development.

The Ambassador also had consultations and discussions with university Deputy Vice Chancellor, Dr. Paul Smith, and instructors from various faculties, focusing on training for lecturers, university rectors and quality of education. He was also briefed by Dr. Malcolm Shaw who took part in a number of projects pertaining to quality of education in higher learning institutions.



Dr. Shaw mentioned his participation in joint projects with Addis Ababa, Adama and Bahir Dar universities and announced bench-marking studies - on certificates awarded and the quality of courses - are now in their final stage.

His colleague, Dr. Terence Moran, underlined the urgency of the benchmarking scheme to provide for standardized higher education, particularly in the face of Ethiopia's rapid economic growth and the

stiff competition it faces. Both parties have agreed to forge co-operation to boost the quality of education and training of university instructors.

Axum University nears completion

The final stage of the expansion of Axum University will be completed in June, at a cost of 264 million Birr.

The construction project includes dormitories, lecture and seminar halls, an administration centre, libraries, roads and water supply lines.

Axum University, 1,010km north of Addis Ababa, was constructed on a 107 hectare plot. The first phase of the expansion started in April 2006, and was completed in September 2007, at a total cost of 38.3 million Birr. The second phase started in February 2007 and finished in January 2008, at a cost of 34.2 million Birr. The third phase kicked off in November 2008 and was completed in December 2008 at a cost of 700,000 birr.

Ethiopia has 21 state universities. Expansion projects are being carried out on nine, while the construction of 10 others was started in 2010.

Events

Art to East Africa 2011 launches in the Horn of Africa: Ethiopia



Art to East Africa will be hosting its first ever event taking place on Sunday 19th June at Queen of Hoxton, Shoreditch.

A mix of creative British artists from across the UK will be taking part in this ground breaking event to collectively elevate art and creativity amongst children and communities in East Africa.

The event will be celebrated with a variety of visual artists who have been featured on ITV Fixers, Street Fest, Channel 4, the British Film Institute, as well as musicians and dancers. The live art will be hosted on the rooftop, together with a BBQ. There will also be live music from 6.30pm onwards in the basement.

Established in 2010, Art to East Africa's mission is to enable and provide a lasting change for children in disadvantaged communities through art and creativity. British artists will travel to East Africa reaching out and supporting children by running art workshops to instil the main values of art.

For more information on the event, contact Ruweyda Dool on Ruweyda1@aol.com.

Sports

Gebrselassie wins Great Manchester Run



On 15th May, Legendary Ethiopian runner, Haile Gebrselassie won his fourth Great Manchester 10km race in a time of 28 minutes and 10 seconds, only pulling away from British runner-up, Chris Thompson, in the closing two kilometres.

38-year old Gebrselassie, unbeaten in 10km road races going back to 1994, said of Thompson, "I didn't expect that from Chris Thompson...in the future, he'll be the one to watch... My big challenge right now is trying to be better than the youngsters." 30 year-old Thompson, the 10,000km silver medallist at last year's European Championships, said "I could sense when I was next

to him I had him a little bit worried and that was a nice feeling...I really want to race him again next year, I want another crack."

Before winning the race, Haile Gebrselassie was invited by Manchester United to attend the training ground on 13th May, before attending Bupa Great Manchester Run press conference.



Pictures were taken 1hr after Haile had landed in Manchester on Friday the 13th. Top picture - Haile with the whole Man U team, and with Sir Alex Ferguson, Rio Ferdinand and Ryan Giggs.

Organisers said that it was fantastic for Haile to attend a Great weekend of Sport in Manchester which included the Bupa Great Manchester Run, the British Gas Great Salford Swim and the Powerade ION4 Great City Games as well as Manchester United winning the Premiership title and Manchester City winning the FA Cup.

Gerbada wins Stockholm Marathon



Shumi Gerbada of Ethiopia won the Stockholm Marathon in 2 hours, 14 minutes and 7 seconds.

Gerbada passed Dominic Pius Ondoro of Kenya and was ahead of other runners until the last five kilometres. Ondoro ended second in 2:14:23.

Over 16,000 runners from 80 countries participated in the 33rd marathon in Stockholm.

Other News

Bethlehem Alemu of *SoleRebels* finalist for African Business Magazine Outstanding Businesswoman Award

The African Business Awards London 2011

Finalists for the fourth edition of the African Business Awards 2011 have been announced. Winners will be revealed at a gala

ceremony on 22nd June in London.

This year's selection boasts an impressive list of contenders with several newcomers in the running.

This year's Award for Outstanding Businesswoman features a crop of stellar candidates who have made a significant mark on the business landscape in Africa and abroad. They are Sandie Okoro with Barings Asset Management; Stella Kilonzo, Chief Executive of the Kenya Capital Markets Authority;

Pedu Adebajo of the Mouka group in Nigeria; and Bethlehem Tilahun Alemu, founder and Managing Director of footwear company *SoleRebels* of Ethiopia, the sole Ethiopian person or company to be shortlisted.



Bethlehem Alemu created Sole Rebels in 2005, making shoes from old truck tyres in Addis Ababa's poorest and most disadvantaged area, she became one of the country's most remarkable international success stories.

Her commitment to development and trade has made the 30-year-old an inspirational figure at home and abroad. In March, she was selected as a Young Global Leader by the World Economic Forum; in May she joined Archbishop Desmond Tutu as a speaker at the WWF 50th anniversary conference in Switzerland. She also addressed the fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries [LDC's] in May, the first Woman from the African private sector to address this policy forum. The UN LDC-IV Special Event, "Aid for Trade for the LDCs: Policy Reform, Effectiveness, and the Private Sector" aimed to identify ways in which the World Bank, other multilateral institutions, and bilateral donors might further assist the LDCs with respect to trade facilitation reform and aid for trade effectiveness.

Bethlehem presented her views on opportunities to expand trade in developing countries over the next decade. Her remarks focused on shedding insight as to policy and reform priorities for the LDCs in terms of trade facilitation and competitiveness based on her own experiences in business and interactions with country governments.

The African Business Awards brings together prominent business leaders, entrepreneurs, heads



of state and other high-ranking government officials from across the world to celebrate the achievements and successes of those who have played a pivotal role in driving Africa’s economic development forward. Now in its fourth year, the African Business Awards has established itself as a key annual event for the African business community.

The winners have made an outstanding contribution to the development of the continent, the economic aspirations of its citizens and the transformation of Africa’s image in international markets, while displaying high standards of good corporate citizenship and social and environmental responsibility.

The full list of nominees can be found at www.african-business-awards.com

The winners will be announced at a gala dinner at the Grosvenor House hotel in London on Wednesday 22nd June.

Sammy Handmade in Ethiopia: A luxury brand that shows Ethiopian culture and helps women in need

Sammy Handmade in Ethiopia is a luxury brand from Ethiopia which infuses Ethiopian traditions with modern influences. Supported by the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO), Italian Cooperation and USAID, Sammy works with a co-op of women in Addis Ababa to help AIDS-affected families. Each product is hand-woven, dyed and embroidered by these skilled workers, ensuring integrity, beauty and uniqueness.

Their fashion and home accessories include scarves, throws, pillows, covers, runners, bags and curtain panels. All of the accessories have a fresh and funky feel to them.

The scarves are lightweight and have beautiful colours and patterns which are perfect for summer. Each product shows Ethiopia’s culture of weaving, embroidery, cotton spinning and dyeing, while infusing the tradition with new inspiration.



Sammy’s products are all handmade and designs developed from Ethiopian culture, which creates trends that differ from traditional luxury brands across the globe. Sammy Handmade in Ethiopia products are found at major stores in the U.S and many other countries. In London, Ally Capellino and Liberty stock Sammy’s products. For more information, visit their website www.sammyethiopia.com

New international hotel chain in Addis

Radisson Blu, a subsidiary of Rezidor Hotel Group, will open a hotel in Ethiopia this year, the third international hotel chain to do so.

The new hotel will have 204 bedrooms including 44 business class and 16 luxury suites, including one presidential suite.

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