



Ethiopian News

September 2010 Issue

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PM Meles Zenawi at New York MDG Summit

Prime Minister Meles Zenawi addressed the UN Summit on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) on 21st September 2010, making Ethiopia's development trajectory abundantly clear in his speech.



Ethiopia is making headway in bringing about sustainable development and has drawn up its latest five-year plan – the Growth and Transformation Plan – which will be instrumental in achieving the MDGs. The country has also been registering double-digit economic growth for the past seven consecutive years.

A panel discussion was held between PM Meles, Norwegian PM Jens Stoltenberg, German Chancellor Angela Merkel and World Bank President Robert Zoellick, on input-output balance among aid donor and recipient countries. PM Meles said sub-Saharan nations cannot register economic growth

as rapid as that of Asian countries because of a lack of sound policy and strategy, as well as limitations in execution capacity. He called on donor countries to extend developmental support on a target-oriented basis.

World Bank President Robert Zoellick said the number of world nations living in abject poverty has decreased from 52% to 25%. He added that African and Asian countries would have a better opportunity to achieve MDGs in the years to come as the world economy is showing growth.

With only five years left until the 2015 deadline to achieve the MDGs, PM Meles, who has long championed African solutions, said that he is confident Ethiopia will achieve the MDGs and also said that it was time for developing countries to take ownership of their own development.

Convened by the General Assembly, the summit was aimed at spurring action towards achieving internationally agreed goals to reduce hunger, poverty and disease.

For the Prime Minister's full speech, please visit our website www.ethioembassy.org.uk or send an email to info@ethioembassy.org.uk

PM Meles invited to attend G-20 Summit

South Korea, the host of this year's second summit of the Group of 20 leading nations (G20), has invited Prime Minister Meles Zenawi to participate at the Summit to be held in Seoul in November.

Leaders from Malawi, Spain, Singapore and Vietnam as well as seven international organisations, including the United Nations, International Monetary Fund and the World Bank were also invited to participate at the event.



Ethiopia, as the chair of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and Malawi, as the chair of the African Union, will strengthen the representation of the African region at the Summit, the organising committee said.

Leaders around the world will discuss how to support non-G20 members in the course of economic development by strengthening private capacity and infrastructure building.

SaKong II, chairman of Seoul's presidential committee for the G20 Summit stressed that advanced countries should not only provide aid to developing countries, but also share their experience of successful economic development.

PM Meles at World Leaders' Forum



On 22nd September, Prime Minister Meles Zenawi delivered a keynote address entitled, *"The Current Global Environment and its Impact in Africa"*, at the World Leaders' Forum at New York's Columbia University.

PM Meles' speech focused on African economic growth and globalization, and was followed by a Q+A session in which he discussed details of the recent Ethiopian election, the demise of the brutal Derg regime, freedom of speech and the press, and the ruling party's track record on development. The full video of the lecture can be found on Columbia University's YouTube Channel:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vWoEPK9njWY&feature=player_embedded#!.

Established in 2003 by Lee C. Bollinger, the World Leaders Forum is a year-round event series aimed at advancing lively, uninhibited dialogue on the large economic, political, and social questions of our time.

Foreign Minister Addresses UN General Assembly

Minister for Foreign Affairs, Seyoum Mesfin, addressed the general debate of the sixty-fifth Session of the United Nations General Assembly on September 29, 2010.

In his speech, he reviewed the salient aspects of Ethiopia's political and economic transformation, most notably its democratization process, which is now in its second decade. He noted that democracy has taken deep root at state level and in the society at large. Ethiopia's development strategy, he said, envisages democracy not as an option but as a means of survival for the country, as it is the cornerstone of political and economic governance.

For the full speech, please log on to our website, www.ethioembassy.org.uk.

Ethiopia to join middle income nations in 5 years

Prime Minister Meles Zenawi said Ethiopia is expected to achieve the World Bank's lower-middle income level classification by 2015, under the recently launched Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP) – a new strategy aimed at creating 15% growth in the economy over the next five years.

PM Meles added that, in ten year's time, Ethiopia will be among the upper-middle income countries in the world.

The new plan predicts a huge expansion in infrastructure, with the country's power production set to increase from 2,000MW to 10,000MW and the construction of 2,395km of railway lines. If the plan succeeds by the end of 2015, Ethiopia will not need foreign food aid.

Government makes good progress on education

A new Overseas Development Institute (ODI) report shows that access to education in Ethiopia has improved considerably, with primary school enrolment increasing by more than 500% between 1994 and 2009.

The report cites a number of factors that resulted in the country's success.

"Benefiting from sustained growth, the Ethiopian Government, in partnership with donors, has invested heavily in improving access to education," it said. "Key measures have included abolishing school fees, increasing expenditure on school construction and maintenance and hiring and training of new teachers, administrators and officials."



"This has been complemented by a shift to mother tongue instruction and by the gradual decentralisation of the education system to

progressively lower administrative levels. This has likely contributed to improved service delivery."

The government has also focused on increasing the number of girls at school as well as children from rural areas and pastoral communities.

The publication is based on research funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

ODI is an independent British think tank focusing on international development and humanitarian issues. The full report is available on their website: <http://www.developmentprogress.org/>.

Construction of massive railway network launched

Ethiopia has launched the construction of a 5,000km railway complex which aims to link the capital, Addis Ababa, to various regions of the country.

Officially launching the project stretching out in eight directions across the country, Director General of Ethiopian Railway Corporation (ERC), Getachew Betru, said that the project will be constructed in two phases.

The first phase will be the construction of five railway tracks, which will create job opportunities for over 300,000 citizens nationwide, and will cost an estimated 6 billion Birr (\$336 million) annually. In addition to this, the Addis Ababa light train project will open employment to 5,000 people.

Upon completion, the railway system will boost the country's trade flow. "The new network would help a timely stream of goods across the nation and the swift transaction will help traders save time, energy and it will also reduce transport costs," ERC Board Chairman, Hailemariam Desalegn said.

The railway project is part of Ethiopia's five year Growth and Transformation Plan which is aimed at creating a 15% growth in the economy over the next five years.

82,600km of roads, new expressway to be constructed

The Ethiopian Roads Authority (ERA) said that 82,600km of road will be built at a cost of 122 billion birr over the coming five years as part of the five year Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP).



The programme includes improvement and construction of feeder roads, improvement of overcrowded roads and making the industry sector competitive.

By the end of 2015, Ethiopia's total road coverage will rise from the existing 49,000km to 136,000km.

While visiting the project, PM Meles said the construction of the 80km Addis-Adama Expressway would open a new chapter in the history of the country and would further speed up development.

The expressway, estimated to cost \$612 million, is part of the GTP. \$350 million of the budget will be secured from the Chinese government in the form of a loan, while the balance will be covered by the Ethiopian government.

Construction of the expressway is expected to be finalised within three years.

Over 20,000 vehicles commute along the Addis-Adama road daily, making it the busiest route in the country.

Ethiopia to supply power to Sudan

Ethiopia will start supplying power to its neighbour, Sudan, beginning in October 2010.

The Ethiopian Electric and Power Corporation (EEPCo) indicated that the power supply to Sudan

will begin as soon as maintenance work on Gilgel Gibe II hydro-power production plant is completed.

Ethiopia is undertaking a multi-billion dollar investment in hydro-electric projects, and is planning to generate around 10,000 MW by 2015. Currently, Ethiopia generates about 2,000 MW of electricity and this will rise to over 3,000 MW by 2011 when on-going projects are finalised.

In 2008/2009, Ethiopia signed an electricity export agreement with Sudan, Djibouti and Kenya. The 230 kilo-volts Ethio-Sudan transmission line interconnection project, which is about 321km long, is already completed. A 280km Ethio-Djibouti 230 kilo-volts interconnection is expected to be commissioned in the near future. This will enhance regional economic integration.

FDI flow increasing in Ethiopia

The flow of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) has increased by \$141.8 million during the last three years according to the National Bank of Ethiopia. According to the Deputy Governor of the bank, during 2007/08, the FDI flow was \$814.6 million, while in 2008/09, the amount reached \$893.7 million. The 2009/10 amount has reached \$956.5 million. The Deputy Governor expressed his belief that FDI flow will continue increasing, as it did not halt even during the global economic crisis.

IFC to provide loan guarantees to coffee farmers

The International Financing Corporation, the private sector lending arm of the World Bank, has started up a loan-guarantee facility worth up to \$30 million for NIB International Bank in a bid to boost the capacity of Ethiopian coffee farmers.

The guarantee is expected to result in lending to an additional 70 coffee cooperatives in the first year and the production of an extra 3,542 metric tonnes of beans, and the creation of 2,000 jobs over three years.

The guarantee will enable NIB to provide loans worth as much as \$12.5 million for the 2010 coffee season, increasing to \$25-30 million by 2013.

The deal will support the Ethiopian Coffee Initiative which targets 160 cooperatives representing 90,000 farmers.

According to the Ministry of Trade and Industry, Ethiopia, Africa's largest coffee producer, earned \$528 million from shipments of coffee in the year to 7th July 2010.

Tourism

Foreign tourists to increase to one million by 2020

The Ministry of Culture and Tourism said the number of foreign tourists in Ethiopia will increase to one million by 2020.

The current tourist flow is less than half a million and there are plans to double that number according to Ambassador Mohamud Dirir, Minister of Culture and Tourism.

The number of tourists who visited Ethiopia in 2009 was 412,341 and the revenue secured reached \$211.5 million.

Ethiopia has unique sites to attract tourists and eight of its sites are on the UNESCO heritage list.



Tourist attractions in Ethiopia: The rock-hewn churches of Lalibella

The expansion of infrastructure has made a significant contribution to the development of the

tourism industry. The government has given prime attention to the private sector and now the number of hotels, lodges and tour operators are on the rise. Various projects are being carried out to expand the industry with a \$35 million loan obtained from the World Bank.

Two new national parks in SNNP State

The Southern Nations, Nationalities and People's State has established two new national parks in Gurage and Sidama zones.

The Gibe Sheleko National Park, in Gurage zone, covers 248km², while the Loka National Park in Sidama covers 500km². Both parks have huge concentrations of wildlife.

The establishment of the new parks raises the number of national parks in the state to seven and contributes to the growth of the tourism industry. The SNNP State secured more than 39 million Birr from tourism last Ethiopian budget year.

The new parks will be open for visitors soon.

Events

Travel Event: *Ethiopia – A Journey to the Lost Kingdom*



Royal Geographical Society
with IBG

Advancing geography
and geographical learning

The Ethiopian Embassy, London, in collaboration with the Royal Geographical Society (RGS) presents "*Ethiopia – A Journey to the Lost Kingdom*".

The event will take place at the RGS in London on the evening of Wednesday 10th November.

Broadcasters Jonathan Dimbleby ("*An African Journey*", BBC) and Gus Casely-Hayford ("*Lost Kingdoms of Africa*", BBC), will discuss the ancient,



modern and often misunderstood Ethiopia. Guests will have access to the RGS Ethiopia collection of historical maps, books and pictures, and there will be films, photo exhibitions, Ethiopian drinks and a coffee ceremony.

Tickets start from £10 which includes the debate and a drink. A cash bar will also be available after the talk.

For tickets and further information, please log on to: <http://www.rgs.org/travel>

Addis to host 15th International Trade Fair

The Addis Ababa Chamber of Commerce and Sectoral Associations (AACCSA) have announced that the 15th Addis Chamber International Trade Fair will be held in Addis Ababa from 10th February 2011.

The trade fair, to be held under the theme *'Women Entrepreneurship for Development'*, will help to promote investment opportunities in the country.

A total of 300 companies are expected to participate in the fair, 150 of which will be foreign participants drawn from 25 countries.

More information on this event can be found on our website, www.ethioembassy.org.uk

Sports

Athletes gear up for the Great Ethiopian Run

The Great Ethiopian Run's (GER) international 10km race will take place in Addis Ababa on Sunday 21st November. This year, the event will be celebrating its 10th edition.



Around 35,000 participants are expected to take part in the race, a slight increase on the 33,000 who participated last year in the biggest race ever seen on the African continent.

On 24th September, the Great Ethiopian Run, in partnership with the United Nations, launched its fundraising and awareness campaign for children for 2010 – *'I'm Running For a Child – Narrow the Gap to Meet the Goals'*.

The campaign seeks to raise a minimum of one million Birr for social protection and welfare projects, including those run by two local NGOs, Mary Joy and Abebech Gobena.

The fundraising campaign is organised in the context of the 5-year countdown to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). It will highlight the positive achievements in Ethiopia as well as stimulate debate on strategies to address the remaining challenges to meet the MDGs by 2015.

GER participants are encouraged to join the campaign by using their race participation to raise sponsorship for the charities and be part of the efforts to achieve the MDGs.

Online registration for the race started in June and is still open. Visit www.ethiopianrun.org for further information.

Ethiopians take Great North Run titles, excel at Berlin Marathon

Haile Gebreselassie, rated the greatest distance runner of all time, not only honoured his 10-year-old promise to compete at the Great North Run but also won it crossing the line in just 59 minutes 33 seconds.

For the women, Berhane Adere, a former world champion over 10,000m and a winner of the Great North run in 2006, came in first in 68m 49s ahead of Portuguese duo Ana Dulce Felix and Marisa Barros.

Gebreselassie could have clearly threatened the course record of 59:05 had he had company, "I needed someone to push the pace...it would have

been faster if I had had someone with me over the last two kilometres,” he said.



Aderu said, “It was a strong race...my tactics were to push the pace after 15km but it was very tough in the rain, but I am in good shape and happy with the time.”

Meanwhile, in the Berlin Marathon on 26th September, Aberu Kebede won the women’s race in a new personal best time of 2:23:58. The 22-year old, who also won the Rotterdam Marathon earlier this year, controlled the race from the 25km mark to take victory ahead of compatriot Bezunesh Bekele in 1:00:03. In the men’s race, Bezu Worku finished third in a personal best of 2:05:25. The 20-year old, who smashed the world junior best for the marathon two years ago in the Paris Marathon, was more than two and half minutes ahead of compatriot Yemane Tsegaye in fourth, but 17s behind race winner Patrick Makau of Kenya.

News in Brief

Ethiopia introduces its first one Birr coin



The National Bank of Ethiopia (NBE) has introduced one birr coins in a bid to replace birr notes that are relatively costly to produce due to their short life cycle.

The new one birr coin becomes the highest denomination in circulation, which began at the dawn of the Ethiopian New Year (last month).

The introduction of the coin comes after a study concluded that the cost to the national treasury of printing and circulating the one birr note amounted to more than its value. The average life cycle of a birr note is limited to only 18 months. The new coin can last up to forty years without any more cost.

According to NBE, 411.6 million coins have been minted and are in circulations as of the new Ethiopian New Year.

SoleRebels founder invited to speak at the 2010 Clinton Global Initiative

Former American President Bill Clinton, invited Bethlehem Tilahun Alemu, founder of Ethiopia’s environmentally-sensible footwear brand, to participate as a panellist at the Clinton Global Initiative meeting which was held in New York from 20th – 23rd September.

Clinton Global Initiative is a non-partisan initiative set-up in 2005 by the William J. Clinton Foundation, founded and chaired by former US president Bill Clinton. Bethlehem is the first African entrepreneur to be invited as a speaker at the annual event, which brings together global leaders from various industries to address the world’s pressing social issues.

SoleRebels footwear, Ethiopia’s first fair trade fashion product and winner of the 2010 Eco-Bold Green Award, is produced using indigenous practices such as hand-spun organic cotton and artisan hand-loomed fabric. Tyres are also recycled and used for soles. The end result is environmental friendly, vegan footwear.

Participating in the ‘Supply Chains of Opportunity’ meeting, Bethlehem offered insights into how her company has constructed its supply chain for

business, with a focus on indigenous production techniques and local and recycled materials.

The panel explored how corporations can increase profits and build better products by improving the lives of people and enhancing the sustainability of places along their supply chains.

Ethiopia marks 3rd Flag Day



The third national Flag Day was marked colourfully on 20th September 2010.

The day is celebrated as it symbolises the success and renaissance of Ethiopia, established by equality and the consensus of all its nations, nationalities and peoples.

The celebration took place after the 4th National Elections had been conducted peacefully and democratically and on the morrow of the Government's announcement of the grand 5-year Growth and Transformation Plan.

Ethiopian Christians celebrate the Finding of the True Cross

The followers of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church celebrated the Finding of the True Cross by Empress Eleni on Sunday 26th September.

The *Meskel* celebration includes the burning of a large bonfire, *Demera*, based on the belief that Empress Eleni had a revelation in a dream. She was told that she shall make a bonfire and that the smoke would show her where the True Cross was buried. So she ordered the people of Jerusalem to bring wood and make a huge pile. After adding frankincense to it, the bonfire was lit and the smoke rose high up to the sky and returned to the ground, on the exact spot where the Cross had been buried.



The celebration held at Meskel Square in Addis Ababa was addressed by the Patriarch of the Ethiopian Orthodox Churches, His Holiness Abune Paulos. He welcomed the people attending and expressed his respect and love to everyone who came to celebrate the day with Ethiopians.



Thousands of Ethiopian Christians, diplomats and tourists gathered to celebrate the occasion.

**A version of this newsletter is also available
online at www.ethioembassy.org.uk.**

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