



# Ethiopian News

February 2010 Issue

The Monthly Publication from the Ethiopian Embassy in London

## **Meles, Brown to co-chair new Advisory Group on Climate Change**

Prime Minister Meles Zenawi and his British counterpart, PM Gordon Brown, will co-chair a new high-level Advisory Group on Climate Change financing to mobilize the finance promised for climate change during the UN Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen last December.

UN Secretary General, Ban Ki-moon announced the establishment of the group on 12<sup>th</sup> February 2010 during a video conference with both Prime Ministers.

The group will work with governments, central bankers and finance experts to find ways to cooperate with public and private companies in raising funds pledged at the climate talks in Copenhagen.

With a balance in representation between developing and developed countries, the group members have been appointed for a period of 10 months and will produce a mid-term report in May and a final report, containing recommendations, before the next Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Mexico in December.

As part of its work, the group will develop practical proposals on how to significantly scale up long-term financing for mitigation and adaptation strategies in developing countries from public as well as private sources. While some of the existing mechanisms can be scaled up, the group will in particular focus on the need for new and innovative long-term sources of finance, in order to fill the gap in international climate financing.

Although the Copenhagen Summit ended without a legal treaty to curb carbon dioxide emissions, leaders of developed countries agreed to support a goal of jointly finding \$100 billion a year to help poorer nations as of 2020.

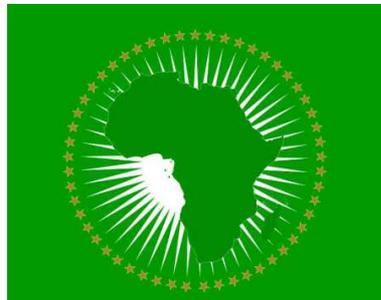
Meles said that financing is crucial to enabling developing countries to avert the challenges of climate change and benefit from technology. He added that the number of countries which have announced their plans in support of the Copenhagen Agreement has now reached 66.

Meles believed that the group will complete its activities successfully.

## **African Union Heads of State commit themselves to move Africa from poverty to prosperity**

The 14<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union officially ended on 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2010, under the Chairmanship of the new Chairperson of the African Union, Dr. Bingu Wa Mutharika, President of the Republic of Malawi.

The theme of the 14<sup>th</sup> AU Summit was *"Information and Communications Technologies in Africa: Challenges and Prospects for Development"*.



*The new AU flag. The green background symbolises hope of Africa and the stars represent Member States.*

In his closing remarks, Dr. Wa Mutharika said that ICTs should be taken very seriously within the Union's development agenda. He endorsed the slogan: *"no child should die of hunger and malnutrition"* and outlined the following priority areas to be considered as an immediate plan of action for the next three months. These include:

- The putting in place a food security programme to alleviate poverty in the next five years;
- The need to develop transport and telecommunications, and connect countries through ICTs;
- The development of energy

President Wa Mutharika hailed the AU initiative for naming 2010 the year of peace in Africa. He hoped that concrete steps would be taken to restore peace and stability in conflict areas in the near future.

The 14<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session of African Heads of State and Government will hold the 15<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session AU Summit in July 2010 in Kampala, Uganda.

#### **Summit nominates Meles as AU Chief Negotiator at global climate change conferences**

The 14<sup>th</sup> AU Summit unanimously nominated Prime Minister Meles Zenawi to represent Africa in international fora in the coming global climate conferences.

The Summit commended the leading role of PM Meles at the Copenhagen Climate Change Conference where it was difficult to negotiate with many stakeholders. African leaders expressed their appreciation to Meles for the outstanding contribution he made to maintain and further the benefits and interests of Africa. The Summit also endorsed the Copenhagen Accord.

Meles will maintain his role as Africa's chief negotiator in the upcoming climate change

conferences in Mexico this year and in South Africa in 2012.

#### **Ethiopia can achieve MDGs: Sufian**

Finance and Economic Minister, Sufian Ahmed, has said that Ethiopia has reached a stage where it can achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

While responding to questions raised by members of parliament during the regular session of the House of Peoples Representatives, Sufian said that development policies and strategies are being implemented effectively.

He further added that its 1998-2002 plan is being implemented effectively, while efforts are being made to implement a future five-year plan.

Among the MDGs, reducing extreme poverty by 45.5%, he said that Ethiopia has managed to reduce poverty by 30.6%.

He added that a country should attain an annual economic growth of 7% to be able to reduce poverty – Ethiopia is attaining more than this.

Concerning education, Ethiopia has managed to increase its primary education coverage to 100% before the MDG time schedule of 2015.

Regarding gender, Ethiopia has also been able to ensure equality of women. He said that there is also an indication that Ethiopia will manage to reduce the number of child and maternity deaths significantly.

#### **53 parties to contest Ethiopia's 2010 election**

The National Electoral Board of Ethiopia (NEBE) has announced that 53 political parties, including the ruling party, are registered to take part in the upcoming national election.

The Board said that all preparations have been finalised and political opponents have already begun their campaigning.



In Addis Ababa, residents have elected public observers in 1,728 polling stations; five observers are elected in each constituency.

An agreement between the contesting parties has also been reached on the allocation of media airtime and each political party will have its own airtime share based on the number of seats it has in parliament and the number of candidates it has.

Ethiopia is due to hold the national elections on 23<sup>rd</sup> May and over 30 million voters have been registered across the nation.

The NEBE said it has prepared a code of conduct and working procedures for international election observers.

The directive states that the legitimacy of the election will be approved by the rule of law and the people of the country.

The direction was prepared to enable election observers to discharge their responsibility in accordance with the rule of law and election law.

The directive states by whom the election observers are invited, procedures to follow while they are on duty and how they can comment.

It acknowledges the contribution of election observers, who should carry out their responsibilities in a neutral and transparent way.

### **Meles nominated as Man of the Year 2009**



Prime Minister Meles Zenawi was nominated as Man of the Year 2009 by the Ethiopian Political Civility Forum for his outstanding contributions made in bringing about sustainable development and promoting Ethiopia in international fora.

The nomination was announced on 12<sup>th</sup> January at a meeting the Forum held to discuss national issues with Ethiopians in the Diaspora. According to the Forum, PM Meles was nominated for his outstanding efforts in lifting Ethiopia out of poverty and backwardness. The Forum said that the achievement gained under his wise leadership demonstrates his maturity.

The achievements gained as a result of the efforts made by Meles at the Copenhagen Climate Summit led to his nomination.

The Ethiopian Political Civility Forum is a non-governmental organisation which coordinates homeland development activities by Ethiopians in Diaspora.

### **Ethiopia keen to exploit geothermal energy**

Mining and Energy Minister, Alemayehu Tegen, has reaffirmed the Ethiopian government's commitment to developing geothermal energy resources in the country as they represent a renewable and environmental-friendly energy source.

Ethiopia aspires to utilise geothermal energy resources that exist in the Rift Valley region through multilateral and bilateral cooperation.

The government is fully aware that active participation of the private sector remains crucial in order to develop the sector, the minister said.

Ethiopia has the potential to produce up to 5,000MW of electricity from its geothermal energy resources.

### **Multi-billion Birr hydropower project inaugurated**

Gilgel Gibe II hydropower project, constructed 250km southwest of Addis Ababa at a cost of over 5.2 billion Birr, was inaugurated on 13<sup>th</sup> January, in the presence of top government officials and resident ambassadors.

The Gilgel Gibe II project, the largest power station ever built in Ethiopia, can generate up to 420MW of electricity.

Prime Minister Meles Zenawi, along with the Italian Foreign Affairs Minister, Franco Frattini, inaugurated the project.

Speaking at the inauguration, PM Meles said the victory of development has begun but is not yet finished. He indicated that the government is committed to doubling Ethiopia's existing energy stock in the coming five years. He expressed appreciation to those project workers who had selflessly laboured for the success of the project.

Also speaking at the ceremony, Frattini said that the Italian government was proud of financing such a huge power plant, which has a significant importance in meeting Ethiopia's growing energy demands. He also expressed the Italian government's readiness to continue to work with the government of Ethiopia by extending all necessary support for developing similar projects.

Gilgel Gibe II uses water from Gilgel Gibe I hydroelectric power plant on the Omo River to

exploit the large difference in altitude that exists between the two sites.

The project was constructed by Italian company Salini construction. More than 4,000 professionals took part in the construction of the project - 214 professionals were foreigners from 37 countries.

Gilgel Gibe II will increase electric power coverage by 33%. The new dam brings the power-generating capacity to almost 2,000MW.

Meanwhile, 95% of construction of the Tana Beles power generation project has been completed. The project, which will be inaugurated in March, will generate 460MW of electric power.



Gilgel Gibe III electric power project is 35% completed and is expected to be fully finalised in 2013.

Construction of the 120MW Ashegoda Wind Power project has also begun.

A memorandum of understanding has been signed to generate a total of 420MW electric power from wind power projects. Ethiopia plans to spend \$12 billion over 25 years to improve its power-generating capability.

### **Ethiopia keen to develop science, technology**

Prime Minister Meles Zenawi has said that the Ethiopian government attaches keen attention to the development of science and technology as part of ongoing efforts to fight poverty.

Meles said that the incumbent government upgraded the then Science and Technology Commission to ministry level in a bid to boost the development of the sector in years to come.

The premier made the statement while holding talks with United Nations Education, Science and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) Director General, Irina Bokova.



He said that the government strongly believes that science and technology play a key role in reducing poverty and bringing about rapid and sustainable economic development.

Meles reiterated Ethiopia's remarkable achievements in expanding primary education service coverage across the nation. The government has also undertaken multi-faceted activities to improve the secondary and tertiary education service coverage in the years ahead.

The number of state-owned higher learning institution coverage has increased to 22% but more institutions are needed to meet the desired goal.

Meles commended UNESCO for its remarkable contributions to the homecoming of the Axum Obelisk from Italy.

Bokova on her part said that UNESCO will continue to assist Ethiopia toward ensuring quality education and improving girls' enrolment at the various levels of the education system as part of UNESCO's effort to meet the Millennium Development Goals.

### **Ethiopia, UK sign \$400m grant accord**

Ethiopia and the United Kingdom signed a \$400 million grant agreement as part of the two countries' development cooperation in Addis Ababa on 19<sup>th</sup> February.

The agreement was signed by the Ethiopian Minister of Finance and Economic Development, Sufian Ahmed, and representative of the Department for International Development (DFID) in Ethiopia, Dr. Haward Teller.

According to the agreement, the money will be used for the next four years for Ethiopia's safety net programmes which currently support around seven million Ethiopians in various regions of the country. The grant will also be used to tackle drought.

### **Mission says visit to Ethiopia acquires first hand information on investment climate**

Members of the British and International Trade and Investment Mission said their recent visit to Ethiopia has enabled them to acquire first-hand information on the investment climate there.

The Ethiopian Embassy in London, the British Embassy in Ethiopia and the Eastern Africa Association (EAA) jointly organised the visit scheduled from 23<sup>rd</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> February. The Ethiopian Embassy in London assisted in selecting companies to be included in the delegation and organised a range of meetings with government officials.

The mission comprised of nearly 40 British and international companies from a wide range of sectors including finance, consumer products, agriculture, security and trade.

John Small, CEO of EAA, said that interest in Ethiopia is increasing and the country is viewed as having one of the most rapidly growing, stable economies in the region offering a variety of opportunities for foreign investors in a number of sectors.

Small said the mission held discussions on the investment climate in Ethiopia with Prime Minister Meles Zenawi, officials of the Investment Agency, the ministers of Trade and Industry, of Mines and Energy and of Agriculture & Rural Development.

The British Ambassador to Ethiopia, Norman Ling, said the mission was the largest British-led investment mission to visit Ethiopia in the 170-year long history of bilateral relations between the two countries.

### **Construction attracting local, foreign investors**

The Ethiopian Investment Agency has said that the number of local and foreign entrepreneurs willing to invest in the construction sector has been steadily increasing over the last few years.

Investors have received investment licences for more than 4,000 construction projects with a combined capital of 141.4 billion Birr during the last five years.

Some 55 of the construction projects have already gone operational, 66 are presently under construction, while the remaining ones are will soon enter the construction phase.

According to the Director of Investment Promotion and Public Relations, the newly-licensed

construction projects will create jobs for 468,308 people when fully operational.

The head attributed the success mainly to the ever-increasing local market in the sector, provision of timely and efficient services to investors, the government's all-round assistance to entrepreneurs and the existence of dependable peace and stability across the nation.

### **Ethiopia starts trading premium coffee locally**

The Ethiopian Commodity Exchange (ECX) announced on 17<sup>th</sup> February that it has launched **Direct Specialty Trade (DST)**, a new platform in which producers of specialty coffee can transact directly with international buyers seeking to purchase premium beans on a fully traceable basis.

CEO of ECX, Dr. Eleni Gebremedhin, said that DST is an innovative way of enabling direct trade that is reliable, fully traceable, transparent and sustainable.

By coordinating buyers and sellers, DST fully supports both farmers, who can benefit from greater competition, and buyers, who can access truly exquisite coffees. DST also enables trade of certified coffees such as Organic certified, Fairtrade and Rain Forest, among others.



Premium coffee will now be traded once a month in Addis Ababa with international buyers given the chance to test the coffee (cupping) before bidding and can order samples.

A condition for participation in DST is that farmers will receive a minimum of 85% of the final export price – a historic first for Ethiopia’s coffee farmers who normally receive below 40%, among the lowest share of the final price in the world.

Some 27 international buyers from the United States, Europe and Japan registered to take part in the first DST session on the 17<sup>th</sup> February. There were 44 lots of specialty coffee presented for sale, representing 35 primary cooperatives and nine commercial growers. More than half of the coffees were graded above a specialty cupping score of 85, indicating top quality.

Ethiopia, which is the birthplace of coffee, had been talking to key players in the global specialty coffee industry since November on how best to handle the trading of premium coffee brands. ECX was set up in 2008 to replace the auction system that was often abused by market players.

### **Ethiopia seeks to boost tea output**

As competition for both regional and international markets intensifies, Ethiopia is striving to boost its tea output.

Statistics show that Ethiopia currently produces about seven million kilos of tea from three privately run estates, and its Agriculture Ministry projects this could swell substantively in the coming years now that it has identified some 50,000 hectares of land suitable for production of tea.

In April 2009, an Ethiopian firm signed a \$300 million joint venture deal with a Dubai-based firm to develop 5,000 hectares of land for a tea plantation in Illubabor, Oromia State. East Africa Agri-business and Dubai World Trading Company plan to produce close to 423,000kg of black tea there by 2012.

In December, the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) predicted that the global tea market would

witness a shake-up in terms of supply and demand as producing countries rush in to expand areas under the crop.

Managing director of the Tea Board of Kenya (TBK), Sicily Kariuki, said that “many countries in the region are looking to expand their tea industries, but our immediate attention would be on Ethiopia because we share similar soil and climate and the quality of their tea is largely similar to ours.”

### **\$10 million secured from textile exports**

The Textile and Garments Tailoring Institute said that Ethiopia had secured over \$10 million from the export of textile products by 30 companies engaged in the sector over the last seven months – 40% up on the same period last year.

The industrial sector of the economy, which was slow in the past, has shown growth recently, the success being attributed to the government’s industrial development strategy.

### **Ethiopia’s reputation for producing quality skins**

Ethiopia has gained international recognition for producing good quality sheep and goat skins, says Trade and Industry Minister Girma Biru, because of its large resource base in hides and skin, favourable investment opportunities and comparative advantages.

Opening the 17<sup>th</sup> Session of the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO) **Leather and Leather Products Panel**, he said that the government was seeking to significantly decrease the export of semi-processed leather and increase the export of finished leather over the next five years.

He called on stakeholder and development partners to help Ethiopia upgrade and improve the competitiveness of its leather and leather product

companies, build the capacity of Ethiopia's Leather and Leather Products Training Institute, and assist tanneries to ensure cleaner production and environmental-friendly waste disposal systems.

UNIDO's Senior Industrial Development Officer, Auriela Calabro, said Ethiopia was selected to host the panel in recognition of the country as a supplier of the best sheep and goat skins, a very vibrant industrial strategy and a responsive leather and leather products industry.

Ethiopia is among the top 10 countries with respect to livestock resources, has an attractive market and investment environment, and conditions favour the development of the sector.

The four-day session, the second of its kind to be held in Sub-Saharan Africa, sought to provide guidance in the development of technical cooperation programmes, in accordance with the current world leather industry trends.

The panel, which comprises major producers, exporters and consumers of leather and leather products worldwide, will confer on future trends and future status of the sector, the European Union's normative documents and legislation for tanning industries in developing countries, and the future of pertinent training institutions.

## **Tourism**

### **Ethiopia holds conference on eco-tourism**

A two-day international conference on enriching the development of tourism in Ethiopia opened on 28<sup>th</sup> February and discussed the development of community-based and environmental-friendly tourism in Ethiopia.

The conference was organised by the College of Development Studies of Addis Ababa University.

Addressing the conference, the Director-General of the Ethiopian Environmental Protection Authority, Dr. Teweldeberhan Gebreegziabher, said that Ethiopia was rich in remains of human pre-history, including cave painting, the whole range of hominid and hominine remains and the biggest assemblage of stone tools and pot chards in the world. The remains of pre-history had in the past been relatively inaccessible to tourists, but with road infrastructure now expanding fast, most parts of the country were accessible.

Department Dean, Dr. Mulugeta Fisseha, said a team of researchers drawn from the Departments of History and Heritage Management and Biology and Earth Sciences from Addis Ababa and Mekelle Universities, have been conducting research into community-based eco-tourism development in Ethiopia for the last five years, producing detailed studies on tourist resource mapping, linking research outputs to development and proposing implementation packages based on the research outputs at grassroots level.

Research has been finalised on implementation of community-based tourism in Adwa, one of Ethiopia's most historic sites. Similar research is also underway in Meqdella.

The conference discussed ways in which the research team, universities, culture and tourism bureaux can work together, gathering feedback and preparing similar tourism resource mapping in other areas.

Representatives from all universities in the country, and from regional culture and tourism bureaux, and other stakeholders, attended the conference.

### **Over 3 million Birr earned from tourism**

The Simien Mountains National Park has, over the past six months, earned more than 3 million Birr from tourism, according to the park office.

Tourism Officer, Sisay Mequanint, said that the revenue was earned from 6,412 foreign and 527 local tourists. The number of tourists is 10% higher than at the same period last year.

The number of tourists increased as a result of the peace which exists in the region, of tourism promotion and the expansion of facilities including new hotels.

Comprising one of the principal mountain massifs of Africa, the Simien Mountains are made up of several plateaux, separated by broad river valleys. Some peaks rise above 4000m, including Ras Dashen.



*Simien Mountains*

The dramatic landscape of the Simien Mountains is the result of massive seismic activity in the area about 40 million years ago. Molten lava poured out of the Earth's core reaching a thickness of 3,000m. Subsequent erosion over the millennia has left behind the gorges, chasms and precipices of the Simien Mountains. The famous pinnacles - the sharp spires that rise abruptly from the surrounding land - are volcanic necks and the solidified lava a last remnant of ancient volcanoes.

The mountains are home to three of Ethiopia's larger endemic mammals: the walia ibex, the gelada baboons, and the rarely seen Ethiopian wolves.

### **20 million Birr hotel opens in Debretabor**

A modern hotel, costing 20 million Birr has opened in Ethiopia's Debretabor town, owned by 30 Ethiopian investors who have a share company.

Facilities include a bar, restaurant and a conference room. During the inauguration, share company Board Chairman, Alemayehu Simegn, said that the hotel had been constructed to serve local and foreign tourists visiting historical sites and natural attractions in the area.

### **Events**

#### **Ethiopia to host the 16<sup>th</sup> International AIDS and Venereal Disease Conference**

Ethiopia will host the 16<sup>th</sup> International AIDS and Venereal Disease Conference this year.

Ethiopia was selected by the African Association for HIV/AIDS for its government's commitment to fighting HIV/AIDS and for its capability and experience in hosting big international conferences.

The prevalence of peace and stability and the availability and convenience of media outlets were also taken into consideration.

The readiness of government executives to work together and the fact that Ethiopia holds the seat of the African Union and many other international organisations were other key factors.

#### **Leather Fair draws international community**

The three-day long third **All African Leather Fair** (AALF), organised by the Ethiopian Leather Industries Association (ELIA), ended on a note of satisfaction on 22<sup>nd</sup> January. 196 exhibitors from 42 countries brought six more participants from five more countries to the exhibition, exceeding the attendance at last year's fair.

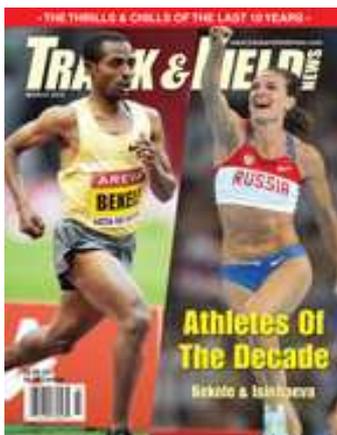
15 African countries were represented at the fair with other delegates from Germany, Italy, Finland, Switzerland, India, China and Japan. Agreements were signed between Ethiopian and a range of international companies during the fair.

Many participants expressed satisfaction with the fair. Reg Hankey, CEO of Ethiopian Tannery Plc and Pittards Plc, said that the quality of the show was substantially better than in past years. Hankey first came to Ethiopia through Pittards Plc, a UK based company, on a management contract for Ethiopia Tannery. The management contract ended in December 2009, after four and a half years, and Pittards went on to acquire the company from the Privatisation and Public Enterprises Supervisory Agency (PPESA).

The event was funded by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MoTI). The fourth AALF is expected to be held the same time next year.

## Sport

### Kenenisa Bekele named Athlete of the Decade



Track & Field News (T&F), a leading athletics magazine, has named Ethiopia's Kenenisa Bekele its Athlete of the Decade, the first African ever to win the accolade.

Kenenisa has already amassed two Olympic gold medals, four world

10,000m titles and one Olympic and one world title each over 5,000m.

Kenenisa holds four world records currently - indoor and outdoor 5,000m, outdoor 10,000m and indoor

2-mile. He is also the most successful athlete in the history of cross country, having won 14 individual titles, including five back-to-back short and long-course doubles.

Russia's Yelena Istiaeva won the women's title, followed by Ethiopia's Tirunesh Dibaba.

The March issue of T&F News is on sale at newsstands, and has an interview with Kenenisa.

### Gebreselassie wins the Dubai Marathon

Gebreselassie defied an injured back to complete a third successive Standard Chartered Dubai Marathon triumph on 22<sup>nd</sup> January.



Gebreselassie missed out on the \$1 million bonus on offer from Dubai Holding for breaking his own record, as he came home in a time of 2:06:09 – just over two minutes outside his best.

Gebreselassie took the \$250,000 first prize ahead of Kenya's Chala Dechase Beyene, and his Ethiopian compatriot Eshetu Wendimu Tsige finished third.

Mamitu Daska Molisa made it an Ethiopian clean sweep of titles as she won the women's race in 2:24:18, eight seconds ahead of her compatriot Aberu Kebede Shewaye.

Haile Gebreselassie will run in the first NYC Half-Marathon held on 21<sup>st</sup> March. In his NYC Half-

Marathon debut in 2007, Gebreselassie set a course record of 59 minutes, 24 seconds.

Gebreselassie has won 9 of 10 career 13.1-mile races, including a then-world record of 58 minutes, 55 seconds in 2006 in Tempe, Arizona.

### **Ethiopians thrive at the Aviva Grand Prix in Birmingham**

Due to injury, Kenenisa Bekele did not participate at the Aviva Grand Prix on 20<sup>th</sup> February in Birmingham, but viewers still witnessed distance running of the highest order from world class Ethiopians.

Bekele pulled out of the men's 3,000m with a tight calf on Friday, 19<sup>th</sup> with his dream of breaking a 12-year old Daniel Komen's 7:24.90 record going up in smoke. Sammy Mutahi won the race in 7:44.58 ahead of Ethiopia's Dejene Gebremeskel in 7:45.42.

Tirunesh Dibaba's target in the two mile distance was Meseret Defar's world best of 9:06.26, and the Olympic champion produced a stunning second mile to get within six seconds of Meseret's historic mark.

Dibaba clocked 9:12.35, the second quickest of all time, followed closely by Vivien Cheruiyot of Kenya and Ethiopian, Sentayehu Ejigu. Dibaba's time was the fastest ever seen in the UK.



Gelete Burka also moved into the all-time top ten as she won the women's mile in 4:23.53, the 9<sup>th</sup> quickest ever, followed by her young compatriot Kakedan Gezahegn to a second World junior record in the space of a month.

Gezahegn, the World junior 1500m silver medallist, finished second behind Burka in 4:24.10, smashing a mark which has been on the record books for 30 years.

It was a similar story in the men's 1,500m where Deresse Mekonnen moved to number 5 all-time as he improved his own world leading mark and broke the UK all-comers' record with 3:33.10.



*Deresse Mekonnen making the final sprint to win the men's 1500m*

### **News in Brief**

#### **Ethiopia observes 114<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Battle of Adwa**

On 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2010, Ethiopia observed the 114<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the victory of the Battle of Adwa, where the Ethiopian army led by Emperor Menelik II defeated the Italian army who attempted to colonise Ethiopia. The occasion, also known as an "African Freedom Day" has been celebrated annually since the victory in 1896.

The day was colourfully observed in Addis Ababa at the Menelik Square in the presence of the public and government officials.

Addressing the occasion, the speaker of the Ethiopian House of Representatives, Ambassador

Teshome Toga urged the youth to be committed towards development of the country while celebrating the victory of Adwa. He added that the present generation should strive to extricate the country from poverty and backwardness as the ancient Ethiopians safeguarded its sovereignty.



*Tapestry of the Battle of Adwa*

The city of Adwa is located in the northern part of Ethiopia in the Tigray regional state. The decisive battle was fought on 1<sup>st</sup> March 1896 between Ethiopia and Italy.

### **Windows releases Vista in Amharic**

Microsoft Corporation, maker of the Windows Operating System, which dominates the market, officially released its Amharic version for Windows Vista on 3<sup>rd</sup> February.

The Amharic interface pack was released as part of Microsoft's local language programme, which is a global initiative to proliferate local languages, regional groups and cultures.

The software was prepared in collaboration with the Ethiopian Information Communications Technology Department Agency and experts from Addis Ababa University.

The new software will be available for download free of charge from [www.microsoft.com/llp](http://www.microsoft.com/llp).

Apart from the newly launched operating system, Office Vista in Amharic will also be launched by late March.

Amharic is the first step as other languages like Oromiffa, Tigrigna, Afarigna and Somali are also to be included.

### **Foundation stone laid in Addis for African Institute for Capacity Building**

Ethiopian Education Minister, Demeke Mekonnen and UNESCO's Director-General, Irina Bokova on 24<sup>th</sup> February 2010 laid the foundation stone for the construction of the International Institute for Capacity Building in Africa.

The institute would be used to implement various programmes, including capacity building for teachers in African countries.

The minister said that the institute is being constructed in Ethiopia as it had registered commendable results in efforts to achieve UNESCO's six goals. Ethiopia's endeavours in education, capacity building, development and good governance also contributed to the institute being built there.

### **New Institute library being built**

We are happy to report that excavation work has been completed for the new Library at the **Institute of Ethiopian Studies**, on the site of the former Palace stables near Arat Kilo, Addis Ababa and that building work has begun. Construction is by MIDROC.

Published by the Press Office  
Embassy of the FDR of Ethiopia  
London  
SW7 1PZ