



Ethiopian News

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Editorial

New Year, New Hopes and Renewed commitments

Just days ahead of the Ethiopian New Year, the annual meeting of ambassadors, heads of missions and senior officials was held in Addis Ababa from 2nd – 7th September under the theme: ***“Institutional Reform for Diplomatic Excellence”***.

The meeting offered the ambassadors an opportunity to take stock of the annual performance of the ministry. As Foreign Minister Gedu Andargachew rightly noted, the previous year focussed on promoting peace and security and advancing economic integration in the Horn of Africa region. The Minister added that the diplomatic success on such a score had enabled Ethiopia to build trust and establish solid cooperation with neighbouring countries.

Apart from the successful diplomatic efforts in the Horn of Africa region, our country also managed to further strengthen its strategic partnership with other countries. On multilateral platforms too, Ethiopia was able to deepen its continued commitment and partnership.

The country embarked on economic liberalisation measures which gave impetus to the ministry as it continues to facilitate the flow of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), looks for additional sources of development funds and boosts job creation. In connection with this, Ethiopia was one of the founding members of the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA). All these steps certainly play a significant role in enhancing the country's economy.

Following the sweeping reforms spearheaded by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, the Ministry is offered tremendous opportunities to work with the Diaspora so they can contribute their share to the country's development endeavours. To such end, a Diaspora Agency was set up, which is overseen by the ministry. Indeed, citizens diplomacy is at the heart of Ethiopia's diaspora policy. Our Prime

Minister has made it clear that the safety and wellbeing of our citizens comes front and centre. In fact, whenever the Prime Minister goes on a working visit to other countries, the first item on his agenda is to reach out to Ethiopian nationals who have previously suffered as a result of a lack of legal and travel documents. He thereby facilitates their safe repatriation to Ethiopia. This past year alone, over 30,000 Ethiopian nationals have been repatriated.

At the backdrop of all this year's diplomatic achievements, there has been a critical need to renew commitments and do much better in the new year. It is time for ambassadors to work with increased determination and longstanding wisdom so they will be up to the challenge of positioning Ethiopia at a higher level.

This year, Ethiopia is set to hold the 2020 national election. This election comes in the wake of a series of political reforms, including the widening of the political space, ensuring rule of law and media freedom, enhancing democratization and the protection of human rights. Accordingly, the 2020 national election will be free and fair - unique in the history of Ethiopia and perhaps exemplary to the continent.

At the conclusion of the annual meeting, the ambassadors met with Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed. The Premier briefed the ambassadors on regional and global issues and highlighted Ethiopia's strategic directions and its positions on the same. The Prime Minister stressed the need to ensure peace and security in the country, enhancing development and economic progress, and expediting the process of implementing privatisation schemes as well as advancing democratisation. While noting the diplomatic achievements over the previous year, Dr Abiy called on ambassadors to aim big and do more in the New Year.

ETHIOPIA IN UK

Ethiopian New Year Message from the Ambassador

On 12th September, Ethiopians from across the country and abroad ushered in the New Year – 2012 in the Ethiopian calendar.



On the occasion, Ambassador Fesseha said:

“2011 was a year in which Ethiopia moved forward, maximizing opportunities while addressing the dramatic challenges it faced.”

“Many changes were observed at our embassy, including a reshuffle of its management and diplomatic personnel. The Embassy is now, more than ever, open to all Ethiopians and diaspora members.”

“As a result, we have launched good structures so that we can offer effective services to diaspora members. All Ethiopians are now supporting and encouraging the embassy, which has made me so happy in the last six months.”

“2012 Ethiopian New Year will bring improved success - we are preparing for a general election, undergoing deep economic reforms, and it is expected that all of us should support the government, and our leader, in realizing the above mentioned goals.”

“On behalf of myself and my colleagues, I wish you all a peaceful, prosperous and successful new year!”

Melkam Addis Amet!

Blue plaques for Emperor Haile Selassie unveiled in Somerset

Two blue plaques in honour of Emperor Haile Selassie’s life in Bath and visits to Weston-Super-Mare were unveiled on 22nd September by the Emperor’s grandson, Prince Michael Mekonnen. Other dignitaries including the Lord Mayor of Bath, Councillor Gerry Curran, were also in attendance.



Prince Mekonnen with the Lord Mayor of Bath, Councillor Gerry Curran © Rob Mitchell

The plaques were unveiled on the Tropicana building in Weston-Super-Mare and at Fairfield House in Bath.

During the Italian invasion of Ethiopia, the Emperor and his family lived in exile in Fairfield House in Bath from 1936 to 1940.



Haile Selassie with the mayor of Bath in October 1954

During his time living in Bath Emperor Haile Selassie received a warm welcome from local residents, and this generosity was reciprocated when he gave Fairfield House to the city as a gift to be used for elders of the city.

The gift of the Emperor is still alive today, with Fairfield used as a day-care centre by Bath Ethnic Minority Senior Citizens Association (BEMSCA).



Fairfield House, Bath



Blue plaque at the Tropicana pools below ©Rob Mitchell



Malcolm Nicholson, Weston-Super-Mare Town Clerk, said: "We are honoured to have this association of our town with the royal family of Ethiopia, and grateful to Dr Sobers and the trustees of Fairfield House for linking up with Weston Town Council to recall this important time in history."

Dr Shawn Sobers, Trustee of Fairfield House CIC, said, "This is a significant day for both Bath and Weston-Super-Mare, and a long overdue acknowledgement that an important world leader made the West Country his home. We are looking to continue this partnership with Weston, and other sites in the UK that the Emperor had connections with."

The plaque at Fairfield House has been funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council in partnership with the University of the West of England.



Blue plaque placed at Fairfield House. © Rob Mitchell

The Emperor also regularly visited Weston-Super-Mare, where he enjoyed swimming in the open-air pool. Although invited to, he never jumped the queue and would happily chat with other visitors. It was rumoured that he was even contemplating buying a house in Weston.

Ambassador addresses Belt and Road meeting

On 20th September, Ambassador Fesseha Shawel Gebre joined a public panel discussion on **Financing the future of the Belt and Road (BRI) in Africa** at the Overseas Development Institute (ODI), which was well attended and streamed live online.



Other speakers included Yoon Jung Park, Associate Director of the China-Africa Research Initiative at Johns Hopkins University, ODI Research Fellow Linda Calabrese, and Jinny Yan, Chief China Economist, ICBC Standard Bank. The discussion was chaired by David Pilling, Africa Editor of the *Financial Times*.

The BRI is the Chinese government's massive infrastructure and connectivity initiative, based on two main routes: the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk route.

China's investment is "increasing at a steady rate, with the country announcing the provision of \$60 billion in financial support to Africa at the 2018 China-Africa Cooperation Forum," the ODI has said, so it is timely to investigate the future of Sino-African development relations. The ODI meeting covered China's BRI investment in the East African context, including the impact and implications of opportunities generated by Chinese investment, and lending practices by Chinese stakeholders, both state actors and private investors.

Ambassador Fesseha began by saying that from the early 1990s, the government realised that if Ethiopia didn't democratise and develop, there was no future so from then on, the first priority was to build infrastructure and manufacturing to create jobs. China understood our priorities.

Ethiopia now has 100 million plus population and our work on these priorities has intensified. In 2013-14, we modified our priorities to fit in with the China Belt and Road priorities, so that we could take full advantage of what the Chinese government was offering.

Our very successful state airline offers 35 flights a week to Chinese provinces, our maritime agency expanded with Chinese assistance and we have 10 ships, built by China, with access to 48 Chinese ports. So the benefits have multiplied. The basis of cooperation is "a willing buyer, a willing seller."

In Africa, the Chinese gestures have been overwhelmingly welcomed. Africa suffered most from lack of infrastructure – we couldn't trade with other countries. China builds infrastructure and the West is active in the mining sector, so they are complimentary.

We've built 13 industrial parks – all have been filled with Chinese support – there are companies from Korea, Turkey, India and the Gulf States – so what China is doing is attractive to others too.

The West contradicts what China is doing but China is helping to link up the continent. In Africa, it is relatively expensive to do business but this is improving with these new links.

The Ambassador was asked about power cuts on the new railway. He said the new hydro dam will improve the electricity supply and the Tekeze and Gilgel Gibe dams are already complete, "so Ethiopia will soon overcome the electricity shortages and export more electricity to our neighbours." The new railway line has cut commercial travel from Addis Ababa to Djibouti from three to four days to about 12 hours.

In answer to a question the Ambassador confirmed that Ethiopia is liberalising the economy and politics. "At this time, it is not plausible to continue with huge state-owned entities as we can't compete", he said. He concluded that the benefits of Chinese investment are overwhelmingly positive for Ethiopia.

BRI started as a plan to connect the Eurasian region, but the Chinese government now aims to make this a 'platform', open for all countries and in investors to join. It offers potential for a huge boost to global trade. The Chinese government is developing a BRI project database to facilitate information exchange.

Full coverage can be found on the ODI website at <http://bit.ly/ODIChinaAfrica>.

Alex Lewis and the Wild Wheelchairs team set off on their Ethiopian adventure

On 17th September, Alex Lewis and the Wild Wheelchairs team paid a courtesy call on Ambassador Fesseha ahead of their trip to Ethiopia, which will see Alex, a quadruple amputee, embark on a monumental challenge – ascending Ras Dashen, Ethiopia's highest mountain.



Joining Alex on the expedition will be Emebet Ale Dires, a double amputee from Bahir Dar in Ethiopia, as well as a team of supporters.

Alex and Emebet will scale up the mountain using a unique hand-cycle, designed and built by a team of students from the University of Southampton.

At 4,550 metres, Ras Dashen is the highest mountain in Ethiopia – and the tenth highest in Africa – and is part of the Simien Mountains National Park located in Gondar, Amhara Regional State.

The hand-cycle can only take him up to a certain point, so Alex and Emebet will be rock-climbing the last few hundred metres of the mountain.



Alex testing the handcycle earlier this year

Founded by Alex Lewis and David Collinson, the Wild Wheelchairs Project is raising money to finance the construction of a wheelchair manufacturing facility in Bahir Dar and to support ongoing programmes to help the disabled in that region.



Emebet Ale Dires with David Collinson (center), Founder and Leader of the Wild Wheelchairs Project

Thanking Alex and the team for choosing Ethiopia for their first expedition, Ambassador Fesseha reiterated the Embassy's support in all their endeavours and wished them the best of luck in their upcoming challenge.

To find out more information about the project, go to <http://bit.ly/WildWheelchairsProject>.

Embassy hosts first art exhibition

On 19th September, the Embassy opened its first art exhibition of paintings by London-based artist, Catherine Chambers, with a private view of around 70 guests.



The exhibition, entitled, “I Appreciate You” is Catherine’s homage to her relationship with Lalibela and the people she encountered during her many visits to Ethiopia.

Catherine’s links with Ethiopia, and Lalibela in particular, date back to 2015 when she first visited. She became known to the Embassy in 2018 after her painting of her Ethiopian friend, Girma, a tailor from Lalibela, was exhibited at the Royal Academy of Arts Summer Show. This then prompted ideas for a subsequent exhibition at the Embassy.

Welcoming guests, the new Head of Public Diplomacy, Mr Mekonnen Amare said the exhibition not only showcases the vibrancy of the day-to-day life in Ethiopia, but also formed part of the Embassy’s ongoing mission to promote the exemplary relations between Ethiopia and the United Kingdom.



Catherine Chambers with Mekonnen Amare, Head of Public Diplomacy

“Apart from the historic towns, the wildlife and breath-taking scenery, it is the people who make Ethiopia worth visiting. Ethiopians are some of the most welcoming and hospitable people on this planet,” Mr Mekonnen said. “So, I hope, if anything, these paintings inspire you to visit our beautiful country.”

Echoing Mr Amare’s sentiments, Ambassador Fesseha thanked Catherine for showcasing Ethiopia through her paintings and encouraged guests to visit Ethiopia.



Thanking the Embassy for supporting her work, Catherine presented the Ambassador with a drawing of a priest in Lalibela.

As part of events to celebrate the exhibition, the Embassy also hosted a Meet the Artist event on 28th September where visitors had the unique opportunity to talk to Catherine about her artwork, inspiration, links to Ethiopia and life as a professional artist.

The “I Appreciate You” exhibition will be open to the public until Thursday 3rd October. For further information, visit our website at <http://bit.ly/CChambers-IAppreciateYou>.

For those who are not able to view the exhibition, an exclusive interview with Catherine will be up on our YouTube page soon. Subscribe now at www.youtube.com/EthioEmbassyUK.

COVER STORY

Secretary-General António Guterres addresses the opening of the general debate of the 74th session of the General Assembly

Ethiopia at the UN General Assembly

September is that time of the year when the eyes of the world turn to New York, as global leaders and change-makers gather to take part in the General Debate that marks the opening of the latest session of the UN General Assembly.

A high-level delegation, led by President Sahle-Work Zewde, arrived in New York to participate at the 74th Session of the General Assembly, which opened on 17th September. The first day of the high-level General Debate started on 24th September under the theme ***"Galvanizing multilateral efforts for poverty eradication, quality education, climate action and inclusion"***.

Ms Zewde is the first female president of Ethiopia and is currently the only female serving Head of State in Africa.

...President Sahle-Work addresses General Debate

On 26th September, President Sahle-Work delivered her maiden speech, since being elected President of Ethiopia in October last year, at the 74th Session of the UN General Assembly.

Introduced to the Assembly by Ethiopia's Permanent Representative to the UN, Ambassador Taye Atske Selassie, President Sahle-Work delivered her speech in Amharic, Ethiopia's working language.

In her address, President Sahle-Work outlined the major political, legal and economic reforms that have been introduced to the country since April 2018, when Prime Minister Abiy assumed office.

“We have widened the political space releasing political prisoners and journalists, invited exiled political parties to return home and pursue peaceful struggle.”

Electoral, anti-terrorism and Civil Society laws have also been revised, she added.



“As we look ahead [to] the elections next year, these reforms, particularly the widening of the political space, have built a solid foundation for lasting democratic order,” she said.

The government has also initiated liberalisation of the economy, building on a decade of sustained growth and launched a homegrown economic reform agenda to address emerging macroeconomic imbalances and resolve structural bottlenecks, including the ease of doing business. and to stimulate private sector growth.

Inclusivity has been a core element of the reforms, she said. “We are taking firm steps to institutionalise this reform addressing the huge gap in gender parity including at the highest levels of government.”

She also noted the historic rapprochement between Ethiopia and Eritrea that ended a 20-year state of war, saying that this was a “clear demonstration of the capacity of Africans to solve their problems through constructive dialogue.”

Ethiopia is committed to implementing the sustainable development agendas and the Paris climate agreement, she said.

With regards to Ethiopia constructing the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam on the River Nile, President Sahle-Work reiterated that this was mainly to generate hydroelectric power for the nearly 65 million Ethiopians who do not have electricity.

“The utilisation of the Nile waters offers a unique opportunity for our trans-boundary cooperation between the sisterly countries of the region. It should never be an object of competition and mistrust.”

“Ethiopia strongly believes that the utilisation of the Nile River shall be based on the principles of equitable and reasonable utilisation of natural resources causing no significant harm”, she noted.

Watch President Sahle-Work’s address in full via the UN Web TV website:

English: <http://bit.ly/EthiopiaUNGA74>

Amharic: <http://bit.ly/EthiopiaUNGA74-A>

...meeting with UN Secretary General

On the sidelines of the UN Assembly, President Sahle-Work met with the UN Secretary-General, António Guterres. They discussed developments in Ethiopia and the Horn of Africa region. The Secretary-General commended Ethiopia for its significant contribution to promoting peace and security in the region, particularly Prime Minister Abiy’s mediation in the Sudan crisis, and emphasized the need to pursue the same with South Sudan.



President Sahle-Work highlighted the success of political, legal and economic reforms in Ethiopia

over the last year and a half, and reiterated Ethiopia's commitment to supporting the peace process in South Sudan and the peaceful settlement of the situation between Eritrea and Djibouti.

President Sahle-Work, a former member of senior UN leadership, expressed pleasure at re-engaging with the UN in her capacity as Head of State and promised to positively consider the Secretary-General's invitation to join his circle of leadership on Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse.

She said the financial gap between the commitments and the actual support provided so far underlines the challenges to be faced ahead.

“The need is very clear. Equally stark is the need for funding. I must re-emphasize the critical importance of funding for climate change adaptation and mitigation. To reach the 840 million people in need requires very considerable and sustainable commitment from all sources.”

The president also reinforced the need to make faster progress on energy access while supporting climate action, saying, “Winning the race against climate change is about building prosperity and well-being for everyone. The energy transition is critical not only to meet the Paris Agreement, but to ensure that we ‘leave no one behind’ in terms of delivering sustainable energy access for those millions who do not have it today – particularly those vulnerable populations across Africa.”

Citing Ethiopia’s effective implementation of various programmes to achieve sufficient, affordable, modern and renewable energy, the President announced a major coalition initiative that the country was leading on raising urban and rural electricity access from the current 44% to 100% by 2025.

“The total cost of the programme is around \$6.5 billion, about a billion dollars a year. So far, we have only been able to secure a very small portion of what is needed for one year. Nevertheless, the programme has started well and the World Bank has been replicating our least-cost energy transition approach in other developing countries.”

The President also shared Ethiopia’s success in planting a world record **350 million trees within 12 hours**. This, the President added, would contribute to the fight against climate change.

In the lead up to the Climate Action Summit, the UN Youth Climate Summit took place on 21st September. Ethiopia’s youth representative, Yared Abera, proudly told the world to follow Ethiopia’s bold action in the fight against climate change, which will see the country plant 4 billion trees by the end of the rainy season in October.

ON THE SIDELINES

Alongside the customary speeches from heads of state, important high-level summits and meetings also took place, covering many of the key issues facing today’s world including the **Climate Action Summit**; the first-ever **High-Level Meeting on Universal Health Coverage**; the **Sustainable Development Goals Summit** (the first of its kind since the Agenda was adopted in 2015) and the **High-Level Dialogue on Financing for Development**.

...Ethiopia takes leading role at Climate Action Summit

On a personal request by the UN Secretary General, Ethiopia, Denmark and Sustainable Energy for All (SE4ALL) co-led the **Energy Transition Track** at the Climate Action Summit. The three partners hosted the **Energy Action Forum** on 22nd September, bringing together 200 of the world’s top stakeholders to accelerate the energy transition agenda ahead of the summit.



President Sahle-Work emphasized the critical role of climate funding to transform national markets and accelerate investment for an effective energy transition.

...Political Commitment Key to Expanding Health Service Coverage

While addressing the High-Level Meeting on Universal Health Coverage (UHC), the President shared Ethiopia's commitment to the right of all people to access quality health care regardless of their ability to pay and economic circumstances.

Ethiopia has invested heavily in the health sector by engaging relevant sectors. Reforms to upgrade health systems and develop sustainable financing towards Universal Health Coverage have been undertaken.

This meeting, held under the theme "**Universal Health Coverage: Moving Together to Build a Healthier World,**" aimed at accelerating progress towards universal health coverage, including financial risk protection, access to quality essential health-care services and access to good quality safe, effective and affordable essential medicines and vaccines for all.

...UNESCO launches Futures of Education global initiative

UNESCO launched the *Futures of Education* initiative during a high-level event at the Assembly on 25th September. The initiative aims to reconsider how knowledge and learning can contribute to the common good of humanity, said UNESCO Director-General Audrey Azoulay.



Speaking at the launch event, President Sahle-Work said, "UNESCO has an important role to play in visioning and strategizing on what should be the role and purposes of education...This new initiative brings that global intellectual leadership into a new era. As we face the profound challenges and exciting opportunities before us, we have a deep obligation

to listen to children and youth and fully involve them in decisions about the future of our shared planet."

The establishment of an independent International Commission on the Futures of Education was announced during the launch. Under the chair of Ethiopian President Sahle-Work Zewde, the International Commission is mandated to develop a flagship global report on the futures of education for release in 2021.

...Sudan commends Ethiopia's mediation efforts

In the margins of the Assembly, President Sahle-Work also met with the new Sudanese Prime Minister, H.E. Adballa Hamdok.

Congratulating him on assuming the premiership, President Sahle-Work reiterated Ethiopia's commitment to supporting his administration and wished him success in leading his country through this time of transition.



PM Hamdok commended Ethiopia's role in mediating the peace process for Sudan saying it was a "good example for Africa-led conciliation."

The Ethiopian government, led by Prime Minister Abiy, in collaboration with the African Union, has been instrumental in Sudan's peace process since the former Sudanese President, Omar al-Bashir, and his government was ousted back in April this year.

A High-Level Event on Sudan, co-hosted by the United Nations, the African Union and the Government of Sudan, was convened on 27th September. In her remarks, President Sahle-Work said it was timely and appropriate to lift all sanctions imposed on Sudan, including its removal from the list of countries sponsoring terrorism.

LOCAL NEWS

Addis Ababa diplomats briefed on the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam

The Minister of Water, Irrigation and Energy, Dr Engineer Sileshi Bekele and State Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hirut Zemene, briefed diplomats based in Ethiopia on the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) project.



Diplomats were briefed on the trilateral meeting held between water ministers of the three countries (Ethiopia, Sudan and Egypt) on 15th-16th September in Cairo, Egypt.

During the meeting, Dr Seleshi and Hirut also touched upon Ethiopia's position on the filling process of the Dam's reservoir and other related issues.

The next trilateral meeting between the three countries will be held in Sudan on 3rd October.

Recently, the Ethiopian government rejected a proposal, tabled by Egypt, regarding the filling process of the Dam's reservoir, because it breached the agreement signed between the three countries on fair and reasonable utilisation of the waters of the Nile River, said Dr Seleshi.

According to Ethiopian Electric Power (EEP), works on the Renaissance Dam project are progressing well -Chief Executive Officer of EEP, Dr Abrham Belay, said the project is now 68% complete and will be finalised in 2023.

Located in Benishangul Gumuz Regional State, approximately 500km North West of the capital Addis Ababa, the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam will be the largest dam in Africa with a total installed power of 6,450MW on full capacity.

Skull of humankind's oldest-known ancestor discovered

Ethiopia truly is Land of Origins! A team of researchers, led by renowned Ethiopian paleoanthropologist Dr Yohannes Haile-Selassie of Cleveland Museum of Natural History, have discovered a remarkably complete 3.8-million-year-old skull in Ethiopia's Afar Region.



Dr. Yohannes Haile-Selassie with the fossil discovery

This new discovery is a game-changer in our understanding of human evolution - among the most significant findings was the team's conclusion that *Australopithecus anamensis* and its descendant species, the well-known *Australopithecus afarensis* "Lucy", coexisted for a period of at least 100,000 years. This finding contradicts the long-held notion of anagenesis in hominins, whereby one species disappears and gives rise to the next in a linear fashion.

Additionally, due to the skull's rare near-complete state, the researchers identified never-before-seen facial features in the species, which was previously only known through jaw and tooth fragments.

"Ethiopia has always been labelled the cradle of humankind, especially the Afar region, where we have 6 million years of our evolutionary history packed into this 1-kilometre thick sediment," Dr Yohannes said.

To find out more about the discovery, go to: <http://bit.ly/MRD-Ethiopia>.

Ethiopia selects 'Running Against the Wind' for 2020 Oscars

Ethiopia has selected *Running Against the Wind* (*Yenifasu Filmya*) as its submission for the 'Best International Feature Film' at the Oscars in 2020.



Described as "a love letter to Ethiopia," the movie is the first film ever submitted to the Academy Awards with the backing of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism. The film is the fourth that Ethiopia has entered for the Oscars. Previous entries were the sole responsibility of individual producers and directors.

Directed by Jan Philipp Weyl, the film tells the story of two brothers whose lives take very different paths - one dreams of becoming an Olympic runner and the other a photographer. One remains in the countryside and the other ends up in Addis Ababa, until, as adults, their paths cross again.

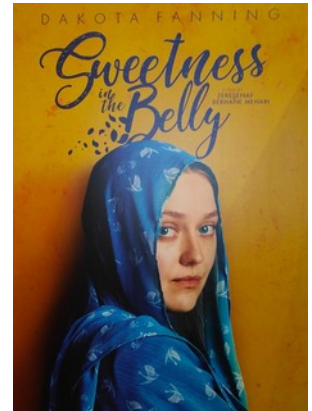
Shot on location in Ethiopia in the native language, Amharic with English subtitles, the film also features a cameo by Ethiopia's long-distance running legend, Haile Gebrselassie.

The film was also made using local crews and actors, and local musicians for the soundtrack.

The 92nd Academy Awards will take place on 9th February 2020.

...Dakota Fanning stars in *Sweetness in the Belly*

In related news, *Sweetness in the Belly*, an Irish-Canadian-UK film directed by Ethiopian filmmaker Zeresenay Berhane Mehari, based on the 2005 award-winning novel of the same name by Camilla Gibb, premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival.



Dakota Fanning plays Lilly Abdal, an Anglo-Irish woman, raised as a Muslim in Morocco, who then becomes a refugee in Ethiopia in the late 1970s.



In an interview, Zeresenay said, "The book is about a young girl who lost her parents when she was seven years old, and was taken in by a Sufi Imam in Morocco. She grew up in a shrine, where she learned 'the meaning of life'. And then she goes to Ethiopia to find out

where her Sufi master - who is also a father figure for her - came from. When she's there, she meets people in a big community that became her home. But in 1974, with the [revolution which deposed the monarchy], she's forced to go back to a country, her own country, a country that she never knew—to England."

This is Zeresenay's second feature film. His first, *Difret*, was executive-produced by Angelina Jolie and won the World Cinematic Dramatic Audience Award at the 2014 Sundance Film Festival and the 16th Panorama Audience Award at the Berlinale.

TRADE AND INVESTMENT

‘Blueprint’ to drive economic growth unveiled



Ethiopia’s **Home-grown Economic Reform** agenda, aimed at propelling the country into becoming an African icon of prosperity, was unveiled on 9th September by Prime Minister Abiy after “several months in the making, spearheaded by some of Ethiopia’s finest minds”.

The Prime Minister’s Office said this is a “well-coordinated response and blueprint to propel the country’s economic progress.”

“This agenda, crafted through a process of taking stock of our successes; an in-depth review of key bottlenecks and design of adequate remedies, outlines macro-economic, structural, and sectoral reforms that will pave the path for jobs and inclusive growth.”

During the launch ceremony, held at the UN Conference Centre in Addis Ababa, PM Abiy said “in just over one year,” his government has taken a series of measures to shift the economic landscape of Ethiopia, such as reforms in investment laws and business climate, which have helped remove regulatory obstacles that hamper investment.

The PM said the private sector is crucial for the next chapter of Ethiopia’s growth and development. “We have opened up key economic activities to private investment,” and these measures will “be reflected in Ethiopia’s ease of doing business ranking.

To ensure success, “we are tightening our fiscal belts, strengthening our public sector finances, shedding our debts, and increasing domestic resource mobilization,” the Prime Minister said.

The Agenda prioritizes sectors such as agriculture, manufacturing, mining, tourism and ICT.

The event was attended by representatives from the World Bank, IMF, UN Agencies and other development partners. Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed urged all stakeholders to “support us in crafting Ethiopia’s economic miracle.”

A power point of the Home-grown Economic Reform is available on request. Please send an email to press@ethioembassy.org.uk.

Energy firm awarded first solar project under PPP

ACWA Power, a Saudi firm, has become the first private company to win a mega project under the Public Private Partnership (PPP), after winning a solar Public Venture contract worth \$300 million.



ACWA Power was one of 12 companies that had initially submitted their respective Request for Proposal (RFP) last February, with five companies going through to the final stages.

The Gad and Dicheto solar projects are located in Somali and Afar regional states, respectively, and will generate a total of 250MW.

Opening up Ethiopia’s market is one of the key reform areas that Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed pledged to change since assuming office in April 2018. Since then, plans to open key state-owned firms for investment, including telecoms, railway, and sugar projects, as well as its flag carrier Ethiopian have been announced.

4G network to be installed ahead of telecoms liberalisation

Ethio Telecom plans to install a 4G network capacity in the Addis Ababa and other regions and to upgrade other network services, as the government prepares to open up the sector to private foreign investment.

In July, Ethiopia announced it would award two telecoms licences to multinational mobile companies. The telecoms industry is considered the big prize in a push to liberalise the economy launched last year by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed.

Ethiopia receives one of the largest FDIs in East Africa

According to the *Attractiveness Survey* report by Ernst & Young, Ethiopia has attracted investments worth \$7 billion, creating 16,000 new jobs.

The report adds: “Only in Ethiopia are there encouraging signs that reform (both political and economic) are being driven in the quest for sustainable inclusive growth. Ethiopia has committed to liberalizing foreign entrants into key sectors (including Financial Services and Telecoms) and is partnering with outside investors to build a low-cost manufacturing hub.”

TRAVEL AND TOURISM

Marriott to open its first Four Points by Sheraton in Ethiopia

During the Africa Hotel Investment Forum in Addis Ababa, Marriott International announced plans to expand its presence in Ethiopia by signing an agreement for its first “Four Points by Sheraton” in Ethiopia slated to open by 2022.

Four Points by Sheraton in Mekelle will offer 241 stylishly appointed rooms, an all-day dining restaurant, a bar and lounge, an executive lounge, meeting facilities, a fitness centre and a spa.

A growing industrial and manufacturing hub, Mekelle also lies along Ethiopia’s historic northern tourism circuit, which includes a number of UNESCO World Heritage Sites located in Lalibela, the Simien Mountains National Park, Aksum, Gondar and the Blue Nile Falls. The hotel is located along the airport road in a prime location overlooking the city.

Ethiopian Airlines rolls out onboard Wi-Fi

Surfing the internet with seamless reliable connectivity has now become the new normal onboard Ethiopian Airlines flights, thanks to the introduction of onboard Wi-Fi internet connectivity on the airline’s A350 fleet.

With state-of-the-art broadband satellite technology, passengers can rest assured that they will enjoy reliable connectivity for sending emails, shopping online or even chatting on social media while flying over the clouds.



Mr Tewolde Gebre Mariam, CEO of Ethiopian Airlines, said: “We are delighted to introduce inflight internet connectivity with the latest broadband satellite technology, *Ka-band*, offering our passengers seamless digital experience as they fly Ethiopian. The launch will further add to passengers’ comfort. As a customer-centric airline, we remain focused on continuous service excellence, taking advantage of emerging technologies and infrastructure.”

Passengers can access the inflight connectivity service by purchasing vouchers at Ethiopian Airlines sales outlets, as well as online sales through credit/debit card and ShebaMiles miles. The inflight Wi-Fi internet launched on the A350 fleet with further plans to expand the service on other airplanes deployed on long haul flights.

SPORTS



Great Ethiopian Run wins "Best International Road Race"

Following a public vote, the Great Ethiopian Run has won the "Best International Road Race" award of **The Challenge Awards**.

Dubbed 'the Oscars of the endurance industry', The Challenge Awards is organised by one of the world's biggest online entry platforms **Let's Do This** in partnership with *Runner's World*, the biggest specialist running magazine.

In the international race category, Great Ethiopian Run was shortlisted against other race events such as the famous New York City Marathon and the Boston Marathon, the Two Oceans Marathon in Cape Town and the City2Surf road race in Sydney. With 56% of the vote, the Great Ethiopian Run came out top.

The Challenge Awards ceremony will take place on 18th October at the prestigious Queens Club in West Kensington, where winners will be joined by special guests including athletes, industry leaders, and the press. Dagmawit Amare, Strategic and Innovations

Manager at Great Ethiopian Run will receive the award and will be accompanied by Ambassador Fesseha and Former British long distance runner, Richard Nerurkar, who is also the Race's International Consultant.

The Great Ethiopian Run is an annual 10-kilometre road running event held in Addis Ababa and is the biggest road race in Africa. 45,000 participants are expected to take part in the 2019 edition, which will be on 17th November 2019.

It is also one of the liveliest and most colourful races in the world and is often referred to as Ethiopia's biggest street party.

More than 600 international participants took part in the race last year with many staying for several days to tour Ethiopia.

You can find out more about participating in the race by visiting the Race's website at <http://bit.ly/GER-2019>.

Water Life by Aida Muluneh

Celebrated Ethiopian photographer and artist, Aida Muluneh, will showcase a new series of work commissioned by UK charity, Water Aid, engaging in issues of water scarcity and ecological emergency.



The project emerged from a dialogue about the role of art in advocacy, the issues of water and sanitation and how Africa is represented by aid organizations and in global media.

Aida travelled to Dallol, in the Afar region of Ethiopia (one of the hottest places on earth) to use the extreme landscape for the shoot.



The powerful series explores ideas of representation, gender and social justice through an Afrofuturist tableaux of twelve, large-scale images, inspired by the landscape, culture and traditional ornamentation and body paint.



Star Shine Moon Glow

"My main goal in building this collection is to address the issues caused by a lack of access to water, and the impact that has not only on a society as a whole, but on women, particularly in rural regions. Those living beyond the city grid often encounter challenges that not only impact their health, but also their ability to contribute to the development of their communities."

Aida Muluneh

Venue: Great Arch Hall, South Wing,
Somerset House, London WC2R 1LA

Date: 24th September–20th October 2019

Information: <http://bit.ly/WaterLifexAidaMuluneh>

Ethiopia at the 1-54 Contemporary African Art Fair London

1 — 54
Contemporary
African Art Fair



Addis Fine Art will represent Ethiopia at the London edition of the 1 - 54 Contemporary African Art Fair, taking place from 3rd – 6th October at Somerset House in London.

The gallery will represent new works by Ethiopian modernist Tadesse Mesfin, Ermias Kifleyesus and emerging female artist Merikokeb Berhanu. Tadesse Mesfin's recent works are contemporary interpretations of frontal figures in columnar arrangements, influenced by ancient Egyptian sculptures and mythological drawings, infused with local colours, hinting at eastern Ethiopian cities like Harar. This sculptural arrangement celebrates the women who work as small-holder vendors in markets around Ethiopian cities.

As a multidisciplinary artist, Ermias Kifleyesus uses a plethora of artistic techniques and media, from large-scale paper collages, mixed media canvas pieces, fresco style murals, to video installations and intricate metal sculptures. The symbiosis of these disparate styles is achieved by the collective factor present in all of his work; the incorporation of other people's influences.



Setting by Ermias Kifleyesus, oil on canvas

Engaging with a long and deeply rooted tradition of Ethiopian painting, Merikokeb Berhanu's works feature abstract forms and dense backgrounds, which interact with recurring organic symbols. Informed by the physical structures of Addis Ababa as well as the artist's psychological musings, the

rich imagery within these works renders a complex understanding of contemporary personal and collective life through all-encompassing, complex compositions.

Founded by Rakeb Sile and Mesai Haileleul, Addis Fine Art is a pioneering gallery based in Addis Ababa and London. The very first local space and international platform based in Ethiopia and listed as one of the most important galleries in the world (Artsy, 2019), the gallery focuses on highlighting modern and contemporary fine art from the Horn of Africa and its diasporas. In October 2016, the AFA Project Space was opened in London, to provide an additional international platform for the gallery's programme. Soon, the London programme will move to Cromwell Place, a first-of-its-kind exhibition space in Kensington, London.



Rakeb Sile and Mesai Haileleul

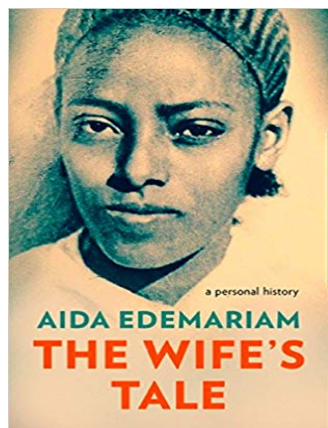
Addis Fine Art has quickly become one of the leading international galleries from Africa, facilitating critical engagement with the local and mainstream art markets, championing an underrepresented yet rich space in modern and contemporary fine art.

Venue: South, East & West Wings, Somerset House, London
(Addis Fine Art at Booth W4)

Date: 3rd October – 6th October

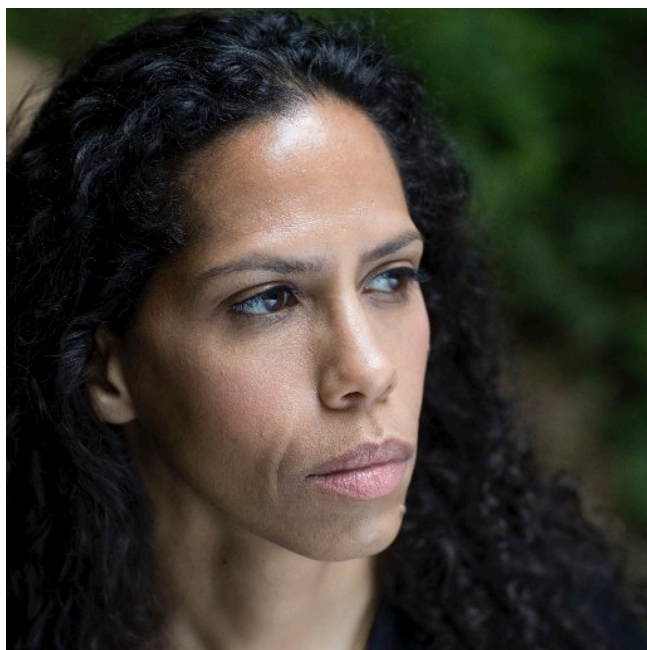
Information and tickets: <http://bit.ly/1-54London>.

An Extraordinary Life: Aida Edemariam at Clapham Book Festival



Guardian journalist and Ondaatje prize-winner Aida Edemariam discusses *The Wife's Tale*, her "outstanding and highly unusual memoir" of her indomitable Ethiopian grandmother, with prizewinning novelist Michèle Roberts, sharing how she came to write this lyrical biography.

Lovingly researched, the story moves from Yetemegnu's birth to her marriage (at the age of eight) to a cleric and poet two decades her senior, through fascist occupation, the rise and fall of ruler Haile Selassie, revolution and civil war.



Edemariam, who grew up in Addis Ababa, and is of Ethiopian and Canadian heritage, was first drawn to her grandmother's stories "because of the language and verve with which she told them." She reveals: "She was not able to write, or, until her 60s, to read, and everything was from memory – stories and jokes and dreams told and retold, in an oral culture that prized the ability to do this in the most skilful way possible; what I had were 50-60 hours of tape,

of looping, repeating, fragmentary stories, all in Amharic; quite often what I have written is a direct translation of what she said, or as close as I was able, in the cadences in which she said it. I also made the decision that, as we were coming from such different points of view, I would try to let her and her world speak for themselves as much as I could. Though I am still present, of course, having translated, written down and/or chosen every word."

Venue: Omnibus Theatre
1 Clapham Common Northside,
London SW4 0QW

Date: Saturday, 5th October from 6:00pm

Tickets: <http://bit.ly/AidaExClaphamBookFest>

A journey through Ethiopia



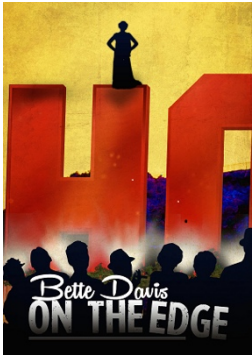
From the Simien and Bale mountains to the Danakil Depression, Ethiopia has a varied geography. Experts discuss Ethiopia's history, culture and landscapes in this event aimed at those planning a trip to Ethiopia or those who simply want to learn more about the country.

Venue: Royal Geographical Society
1 Kensington Gore, SW7 2AR

Date: 7th November 2019 from 7:00pm

Tickets: <http://bit.ly/RGSxEthiopia>

Bette Davis on the Edge to thrill Addis



An Off-Broadway performance of Christine St John's superb one-women show **Bette Davis on the Edge** will take place in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on Saturday 19th October at 7:00pm at Zoma Museum, to raise funds for the **Meseret Yirga Dance Centre** in Addis Ababa.

Ruth Elizabeth "Bette" Davis was an American actress of film, television and theatre. With a career spanning 60 years and 100 acting credits, she is regarded as one of the greatest actresses in Hollywood history.

Speaking about Bette Davis On The Edge, English actor Tim McInnerny (*Game of Thrones*, *Notting Hill*, *101 Dalmatians*, and TV series *Blackadder*) said:

"*Bette Davis On The Edge*, written and performed by Christine St John, is a mesmerising piece of theatre. It fully does justice to an extraordinary, complex woman and a great actress. Christine St John uncannily creates the screen icon before our disbelieving eyes and then drags her through hell taking us, kicking and screaming with her. It is urbanely witty, laugh out loud funny, extremely moving and harrowing. If you ever get the chance to see this tremendous performance, then drop everything and GO."



Christine St John, who lives in the UK, helped establish the Meseret Yirga Centre, a grassroots project that is building a dance and community centre in Addis Ababa to benefit the homeless, young and elderly locals and the disabled.

For further information about the Meseret Yirga Dance Centre, visit www.meseretdancestudio.com. Tickets for the Bette Davis show go on sale at Lime Tree Casanchis in Addis Ababa (11:00am – 3:00pm) from 1st October.

ETHIOPIA IN THE NEWS

Where to go on Holiday In November, From Antarctica To Ethiopia

Ethiopia's seemingly endless wonders are opening up to curious travellers at last, as a booming economy fuels better infrastructure, new airports and smarter hotels. Its epic landscapes run the gamut from the Simien mountains – where baboons, ibex and wolves roam – to the volcanic Danakil desert, the lowest place on the African continent, plus everything from savannah, canyons and hippo-filled lakes in-between.

Emerging from its rainy season resplendently lush, the autumn "green season" is the best for wildlife spotting. And as the only African country never colonised by Europeans, Ethiopia's cultural identity has stayed brilliantly intact. It's packed with ancient Christian sites Lalibela's rock-hewn churches and Unesco-listed Axum's giant obelisks (rumoured home of the Ark of the Covenant).

Read more at <http://bit.ly/VisitEthiopia-1>

From a 'spaceship' hotel to the source of the Blue Nile, exploring Ethiopia and finding out just why it is the eighth wonder of the world

Until recently, Ethiopia was seen as a destination for backpacking hippies and Bob Geldof. We were missing out on an eighth wonder of the world in the fantasy cathedrals of Lalibela, a history-changing Second World War battle fought in an Arthurian castle, landscapes out of Tolkien and wildlife you won't see anywhere else on the planet.



Ben Abeba restaurant serves Ethiopian scotch eggs

Ethiopia has transformed: free hospitals, 50 per cent of the cabinet are women and affordable internal flights let you hop from lush landscapes to tropical resorts in under an hour.

You can stay in five-star hotels or comfortable guesthouses, and the unusual experiences on offer are perfect for anyone bored with predictable holidays.



Lalibela rock-hewn church

“For a holiday to tell your grandchildren about, see Lalibela, though they might think you’re making it up. The first European visitor 500 years ago wrote: ‘I am wary of writing about these buildings because it seems to me that I shall not be believed.’...When Muslims took over Jerusalem’s holy city in 1187, King Lalibela, a brilliant engineer, came up with a fantasy – his own Jerusalem up a hill in Africa. His ornate cathedrals are mind-blowing.”

Read more at: <http://bit.ly/VisitEthiopiaDM>

Discovering the rock churches of Ethiopia's Gheralta Mountains

In Ethiopia’s northernmost region, the precipitous Gheralta Mountains are a formidable frontier. But hewn into them are ancient, inaccessible churches that make a challenging ascent all the more rewarding.



Sandstone mountains in Tigray region.

“There’s an internal battle raging inside me: on one side, my inner survivalist is trying to make me turn back while the adrenalin-fuelled fighter urges me on. Head and heart are in turmoil.

This is the part I call ‘too late to turn back’. Stretched flat like a starfish across a sheer rock face, I edge onwards, patting my hand along the wall to find the next hand grip, seeking a dash of comfort in the fact that it’s well worn — this route has been moulded by those who came before me.

I’m but one of thousands who’s tackled the climb to Abuna Yemata Guh, which is itself one of a hundred or so rock-hewn churches hidden in northern Ethiopia’s rugged Gheralta Mountains. I’m following in the handholds of pilgrims and climbers; locals and travellers. Only the devoted would tackle this. I’ve just got to have a little faith, I tell myself — that’s what spurs everyone else on, after all.”

“...of all Tigray’s rock-hewn-churches, Abuna Yemata Guh steals the show, its reputation as one of the most inaccessible well earned. I’ve climbed up to three churches so far in this region, but none has tested me quite like this.”

Read more at <http://bit.ly/VisitEthiopiaNG>

Stopover: Addis Ababa, gateway to the flavours of Ethiopia

There is no better place to understand what makes Ethiopia so alluring and get a taste of its multifaceted culture and history than in the country's fascinating and flourishing capital, Addis Ababa. Ethiopian-born and Paris- and New York-based model, maternal health advocate, and the designer behind clothing brand Lemlem, Liya Kebede, shares with her favourite spots.



Addis is much more than a starting point for exploring the Rift Valley. It is the sprawling commercial and cultural heart of an eclectic nation. Expect to be surprised by the stark contrast between skyscrapers and informal traders, or the pursuit of the latest fashions alongside the observance of ancient customs.

As you admire the prehistoric fossils in the city's National Museum, shop at one of the bountiful markets or sample its distinctively fragrant cuisine, you will become increasingly aware of just how much there is to be explored and savoured.

“The minute I land in Addis Ababa and I breathe the air, I know I am home – that is what I love about this city.”

Liya Kebede

Read more at <http://bit.ly/VisitAddisAbaba>

Want to eat much less meat? Take the top vegan tips from the world's tastiest cuisines

While veganism is growing rapidly in the west, other parts of the world have had meat-free cuisines for centuries.



Even within Orthodox Christianity, the Ethiopian Tewahedo church is hardcore on fasting...followers abstain from meat and dairy for up to 180 days of the year. “It's very common to be vegan every Wednesday and Friday,” says Tutu Melaku, the chef-owner at Tutu's Ethiopian Table in Reading, who estimates that, given that meat is still a luxury product for many: “The Ethiopian diet is 70% vegan.”

On fasting days, families often enjoy *beyaynetu*, individual vegetarian platters where dishes such as *fasolia* (green beans in tomato sauce), *gomen* (simmered greens), *shiro* (a highly seasoned chickpea flour paste similar in texture to pease pudding) and thick, spicy wat stews are all served on an injera flatbread.

From *misir* (red lentil) to *atakilt* (cabbage, potato and carrot), *wat* stews of just a few ingredients, perfumed with hot berbere spice mix, are central to Ethiopian cooking.

Read more at <http://bit.ly/EthiopianFood1>

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