



Ethiopian News

July 2018

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in the Land of Origins

High-level delegation to come to London for UK-Ethiopia Trade and Investment Forum





Editorial

PM Abiy's first 100 days in Office



Spurred by the mandate he had received from the ruling coalition, Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), to embark on a rectification course of action and to usher in reforms, Prime Minister Dr Abiy Ahmed went straight into action. Since his election by the customary parliamentary vote on 2nd April, he has motivated Ethiopians with his catchphrase, "*Medemer*," which soon became the mantra of millions of Ethiopians who espouse the cause of the revitalisation of Ethiopian unity. "*Medemer*" – Amharic for togetherness - is not so much an ideology as an attitude, which holds that it is possible to change human nature; it offers the opportunity for Ethiopians to forgive past misdeeds, for the sake of the common good.

In a manner and style seldom seen and much liked by the public, the Prime Minister embarked on a whistle-stop tour to Regional States where he called on Ethiopians to close ranks so that "Ethiopia's unity in diversity can flourish in an environment of durable peace and stability." In tandem with his speaking engagements in regional capital cities, the Prime Minister was quick to implement one of EPRDF's recent pledges. The release of hundreds of prisoners was welcomed warmly by the people of Ethiopia as well as Ethiopia's international development partners.

No sooner had the Prime Minister completed his speaking tour of Ethiopia's Regional States than he set out to visit Ethiopia's neighbours: Sudan,

Kenya, Djibouti, Egypt and Somalia, where he apprised the leaders of the smooth transition of power which had taken place in Ethiopia as well as his administration's commitment to further enhance bilateral and regional relations. At Uganda's National Heroes Day on 9th June, President Yoweri Museveni made Prime Minister Abiy a Member of "The Most Excellent Order of the Pearl of Africa."



PM Abiy with Kenyan President, Uhuru Kenyatta

At meetings at the Office of the Prime Minister with businessmen, young people and a large contingent of Ethiopia's academics, Dr Abiy expressed EPRDF's regret for past errors, and echoed the ruling party's renewed commitment to usher in a rectifying course of action, so that the momentum of growth and transformation is maintained.

In a significant departure from EPRDF's previous stand, the Prime Minister also announced EPRDF's commitment to part-privatise state-owned enterprises such as Ethiopian Airlines, Ethio-Telecom and Ethiopian Electric Power. This economic policy has already attracted great interest nationally and internationally. An *ad hoc* committee of the wise has been set up to ensure that the process of part-privatising state-owned enterprises is carried out above-board and in a transparent manner.

The Government's declaration to unconditionally accept the Algiers Agreement on the border between Ethiopia and Eritrea, and Dr Abiy's historical visit to Eritrea in early July, which was reciprocated by President Isaias Afewerki's State visit to Ethiopia a week later, must surely be the apogee of the Prime Minister's first 100 days.

Road and air transport, and telecommunication links were restored between Ethiopia and Eritrea after 20 years, and Eritrea has expressed its readiness to allow Ethiopia access to the Port of Assab.



PM Abiy and President Isaias sign the historic Joint Declaration of Peace and Friendship between Ethiopia and Eritrea

Next in Prime Minister Abiy's speaking itinerary was the United States of America – home to the largest Ethiopian diaspora – where he borrowed one of former-President John F. Kennedy's phraseologies: "Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country!" to encourage thousands of Ethiopians in Washington DC, Los Angeles and Minneapolis to be part of Ethiopia's revival.



PM Abiy holds discussions with leaders of US-based Ethiopian political parties in Washington DC

The Prime Minister's first 100 days in office have been hectic and peripatetic, but they have surely ushered in a rapprochement with Eritrea after 20 years, and hope of a bright future for Ethiopians after nearly three years of unrest in parts of Ethiopia.

ETHIOPIA IN UK

Ethiopia and Eritrea resume diplomatic ties



Photo: Ethiopian Ambassador (l) H.E. Dr Hailemichael Abera Afework with his Eritrean counterpart, H.E. Mr Estifanos Habtemariam

Following the historic rapprochement between Ethiopia and Eritrea, Ambassadors, diplomats and staff from the respective embassies all over the world have been paying courtesy calls.

Here in London, on 3rd August, a delegation led by Ambassador Hailemichael, senior diplomats and staff paid a courtesy visit to the Eritrean Embassy in London, to further cement the peace agreement.



The Eritrean Ambassador, H.E. Estifanos Habtemariam, diplomats and staff, warmly welcomed the delegation.

Ambassador Hailemichael, echoing PM Abiy's message of love and forgiveness on the occasion, said: "We are here today in the spirit of love and togetherness...to make up for lost time and unite our two nations and peoples in the pursuit of peace."

Similarly, on 6th August, a delegation from the Eritrean Embassy, led by Ambassador Estifanos, paid a courtesy visit to the Embassy.

Welcoming Ambassador Estifanos and his delegation to the Embassy on the occasion marking the historic resumption of the brotherly and sisterly relations between Ethiopia and Eritrea, Ambassador Hailemichael said, "We are delighted to have come to this stage in our relations and thank our two leaders for the hard work they have put into getting us to this stage. What remains is for us to strengthen our cooperation and trade relations between the two countries."

“It is now up to all of us, wherever we may be, to strengthen these bilateral relations between our two governments as well as our people,” the Ambassador concluded.



Ambassador Hailmichael with Ambassador Estifanos and Eritrean diplomats

In related news, the governments of Ethiopia and Eritrea appointed Ambassadors to the respective countries for the first time in 20 years, after reopening Embassies.

H.E. Redwan Hussein has been appointed Ethiopia’s first ambassador to Eritrea. Mr Hussein was formerly Ethiopian ambassador to Ireland and has previously served as communications minister.

Similarly, Eritrea appointed H.E. Semere Russom as its Ambassador to Ethiopia. He is Eritrea's former ambassador to the United States and current education minister.

Former Sudanese PM congratulates PM Abiy

A delegation led by former Prime Minister of Sudan, Sadiq Al Mahdi, paid a courtesy call on Ambassador Hailmichael Aberra Afework to extend congratulations to Ethiopia's new Prime Minister, Dr Abiy Ahmed.



Mr. Al Mahdi also expressed his delight over the recent rapprochement between Ethiopia and Eritrea.

Professor Sebsebe becomes first African Foreign Member of the Royal Society



Leading Ethiopian botanical scientist, Professor Sebsebe Dемиссеу, has been elected as a Foreign Member of the Royal Society, becoming the first ever Sub-Saharan African scientist to be elected in the Society’s 357-year history.

On 13th July, the Professor was formally admitted to the Society at the Admissions Day ceremony, where he signed the Charter Book and the Obligation of the Fellows of the Royal Society.

This follows an announcement, in May 2018, that sixty eminent scientists from around the world have been elected as Fellows and Foreign Members of the Royal Society, in recognition of their exceptional contributions to science.

Professor Sebsebe has been made a Foreign Member for his lifelong work on promoting Ethiopian biodiversity and the direct benefit this has daily for people in his country, and right across Africa, and joins the likes of Elon Musk and Jim Al-Khalili.

“I see my election as an honour for all African Scientists and collaborators. This is a sign that the quality of our work is being recognised internationally.”

Speaking on the occasion, Professor Sebsebe said:

“I am honoured and delighted to become a Foreign Member. I hope that I will be able to use my membership of the Royal Society to further strengthen links between scientists in the UK and Africa in general, and those that aspire to be Future Leaders of African Independent Research, in particular. I am also inspired to contribute to the improvement of the quality of education and scientific research in Ethiopia”.

Venki Ramakrishnan, President of the Royal Society, said:

“Our Fellows are key to the Royal Society’s fundamental purpose of using science for the benefit of humanity. From Norwich to Melbourne to Ethiopia, this year’s newly elected Fellows and Foreign Members of the Royal Society are testament that science is a global endeavour and excellent ideas transcend borders...For their outstanding contributions to research and innovation, both now and in the future, it gives me great pleasure to welcome the world’s best scientists into the ranks of the Royal Society.”



Sebsebe is Professor of Plant Systematics and Biodiversity in Addis Ababa University and Executive Director of the Gullele Botanic Garden in Addis Ababa. His research has documented the plant resources and vegetation of Ethiopia and Eritrea and their use by indigenous communities. He led the Ethiopian Flora Project from 1996 to its successful completion in 2009, involving 91 scientists from 17 countries. He has published over 50 new plant taxa and a species is named in his honour *Aloe weloensis* Sebsebe.

Professor Sebsebe is a recipient of the prestigious Kew International Medal, an annual award given to individuals for distinguished, internationally-recognised work aligned with the mission of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew (RBGK), where he is an Honorary Research Fellow. He also received an honorary doctorate from Nottingham University in 2010 and is an Honorary Professor at the University’s School of Biosciences.

Professor Sir Martyn Poliakoff CBE FEng FRS, former Foreign Secretary of the Royal Society and

Research Professor of Chemistry at the University of Nottingham, added:

“I am absolutely delighted by Professor Sebsebe’s honour. I have known him nearly 15 years. He is an outstanding scientist and is an Honorary Professor at our University. I’m sure that his Foreign Membership will be a huge boost for science in Ethiopia and across the whole of Africa”.

Over the years, Professor Sebsebe has had successful collaborative research projects with a number of Universities in Europe and Africa. With this recognition, he hopes to advance the links between Ethiopian and UK universities and institutions, as well as between the Royal Society and the Ethiopian Academy of Sciences.

Ethiopian students on a mission to transform farmers’ lives in Ethiopia

The founders of Enpov, an emerging social enterprise, recently had an audience with Ambassador Hailemichael and the Head of Diaspora Affairs, Mr Fekadu Beyene, to talk about their project that has been entered into this year’s Hult Prize, and their journey in making it a reality.



Ambassador Hailemichael and Head of Diaspora Affairs, Mr Fekadu Beyene, with Enpov cofounders Ikram Zakir (l) and Hanny Semere.

Out of 100,000 applications, Team Enpov, has been selected as one of 40 finalists for this year’s \$1 million Hult Prize, the world’s largest student competition for social good.

Hult Prize is a start-up accelerator for impact entrepreneurship which brings together the brightest university students from around the

world to solve the world's most pressing issues, such as food security, water access, energy, and education, through pitching ideas and launching companies. It is the biggest and most prestigious start-up event in the world and awards millions of dollars in investment capital to young budding entrepreneurs. This year's Hult Prize Challenge is Harnessing the Power of Energy to Transform the lives of 10 million people by 2025.

Enpov was founded by three students, two of whom are Ethiopian, from Hult International Business School, who share a strong vision in transforming the lives of smallholder farmers in Sub-Saharan Africa, particularly Ethiopia, by developing rural mobility vehicles that run on renewable energy sources.

The team visited Ethiopia in November and December 2017 where they met more than 20 farmers and with regional bureaux as part of their field research for the project. Touched by the story of one farmer in the Oromia Region who had to walk for hours to get his crops to the market, the team decided to make a difference by bringing hybrid transportation to scale.



Prototype Transport for Enpov

The team is now in Ethiopia to conduct some further field research before submitting their final proposals and research findings. In August, the best teams are invited to take part in the accelerator program, following which the winners of the 2018 Hult Prize Challenge will be announced at the United Nations in New York in September 2018.

Ambassador Hailemichael and Mr Beyene wished the team the best of luck in the competition noting that such initiatives taken on by young people cannot go unnoticed.

UK IN ETHIOPIA

UK launches largest tax partnership programme to help Ethiopia transition from aid



International Development Secretary, Penny Mordaunt, during her visit to Ethiopia, launched the **UK's biggest ever tax partnership programme** to help Ethiopia generate more tax.

The **Ethiopia Tax Transformation Programme, worth £35 million**, will transform Ethiopia's tax system by helping it to harness the potential of its booming economic growth. This new partnership will also help Ethiopia generate revenue so that it can better finance its own services and development, becoming less reliant on aid.

In addition to the tax programme, Ms Mordaunt also signed the previously announced **£80 million Ethiopian Jobs Compact**, which is aimed at creating over 100,000 jobs for Ethiopians and refugees in Ethiopia over the next six years. Ethiopia is currently host to over 900,000 refugees from across the region.

Ms Penny Mordaunt said:

"Ethiopia's security, development and prosperity matter for the UK – which is why we're working with the country to help it generate more tax from its rapid growth. This will help Ethiopia fund its own development – and ultimately transition beyond aid."

“We’re also helping the most vulnerable Ethiopians, including refugees who have fled neighbouring countries, to find jobs and rebuild their lives, creating the stability which will allow Ethiopia and the region to prosper.”

“This is a win for Ethiopia and a win for the UK, including British businesses such as Hela which are thriving in East Africa.”

During her visit to the country, Ms Mordaunt visited UK garment factory, Hela, located in Ethiopia’s flagship Hawassa Industrial Park, to see how Ethiopia’s industrialisation is opening up opportunities for UK business, trade and investment. She announced new support to improve the welfare and security of employees at the Industrial Park.

She also had the chance to visit a camp for internally displaced people in Ethiopia, where over two million people across the country have been forced to leave their homes. She saw first-hand how the UK’s flexible response is currently providing an uplift in basic lifesaving support for almost a million people.

Amid historic change and optimism in the country, Ms Mordaunt also launched a **£9 million Civil Society Support programme** to empower some of the most vulnerable people in Ethiopia, including those with disabilities, to have their say in the changes happening in their country.

...meets with PM Abiy

While in Ethiopia, Ms Mordaunt met with Ethiopia’s new Prime Minister, Dr Abiy Ahmed, becoming the **first UK Government Minister to do so**.



They discussed bilateral issues including Ethiopia’s thriving economy and poverty reduction.

Ms Mordaunt commended the ongoing reforms in Ethiopia and pledged the UK’s strong cooperation with the Ethiopian government.

“Ethiopia enjoys strong and robust partnership with the UK. DFID’s development support to Ethiopia is dynamic, demand driven and multifaceted the government is grateful for the partnership,” Mr Fitsum Arega, Chief of Staff at the Prime Minister’s Office, said in a statement.

UK’s Defence Secretary visits Ethiopia

Defence Secretary, Gavin Williamson MP, during his East Africa tour, visited Ethiopia where he met Ethiopia’s new Minister of Defence, Motuma Mekassa, for the first time to discuss Ethio-UK areas of cooperation and partnership.



Mr Williamson saw first-hand some of the work British Defence is doing to improve lives in the region. By visiting the Peace Support Training Centre, he saw the work that the UK is currently supporting in the Africa Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM).

“From tackling terrorist threats to ensuring a greater role for women in peace and security, the UK is determined to help our partners in Ethiopia and the wider Horn of Africa when they need us,” he said.

“I have been delighted, not just to see some aspects of the support we are providing to African peacekeeping efforts but also to hear, first-hand of some of the excellent work our military is doing to

help make our vision of a secure and united continent a reality,” he added.

“We will not let up in our efforts to achieve this. Making better use of partnerships between the UK and other countries – in particular Ethiopia – will allow us to ensure the Horn of Africa and the world in general is a safer and more stable place,” Williamson further added.

The UK is working with Ethiopia to train African troops deploying to United Nations and African Union missions, including AMISOM, on a number of

key issues including international human rights, the protection of civilians and prevention of sexual violence.

Ethiopia’s a key partner for UK defence engagement in the Horn as the country which contributes the most troops to peace keeping missions in Africa, and in particular, Somalia, South Sudan and Sudan.

During his visit, Mr Williamson also met UK personnel and representatives of agencies working to combat violence against women.

LOCAL NEWS

Ethiopia bids farewell to Engineer Semegnew Bekele



The project manager of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam, Engineer Semegnew Bekele, was given a hero’s farewell on 29th July as thousands gathered to pay their respects at his funeral.



Simegnaw Bekele's funeral procession in Addis Ababa

Among officials who attended the funeral were President Mulatu Teshome and Deputy Prime Minister Demeke Mekonnen.

As a sign of respect and sorrow, President Mulatu, Prime Minister Dr Abiy Ahmed through his representative, Deputy PM Demeke Mekonnen, and other federal and regional officials laid flowers on the coffin and expressed their condolences to his family and other relatives.

Engineer Semegnew came to the public’s attention in 2011 when he was put in charge of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam, to which he dedicated his life.

The Dam is currently 65% complete and once fully operational, it will be the largest in Africa.

He has led two other dam projects - Gilgel Gibe I and Gilgel Gibe II dams.

Engineer Semegnew, 53, was found shot dead in his car in Meskel Square on 26th July. An investigation is currently under way to determine the circumstances around his tragic death.

He was born in north Gondar zone, Amhara Regional State, in 1958 Ethiopian calendar and is survived by his wife, daughter and two sons.

May He Rest in Eternal Peace.

PM Abiy and President Isaias given UAE's highest honour

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed and Eritrean President Isaias Afewerki were honoured with the Order of Zayed, UAE's highest honour, in recognition of their work in promoting peace following the historic signing of the peace agreement that ended a 20-year state of war between Ethiopia and Eritrea.



His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, the Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi presented honours during a tripartite meeting held in Abu Dhabi.

Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed said, "The UAE supports sound international relations that seek to promote peace and prosperity, with respect for international law. The UAE congratulates Ethiopia and Eritrea on this historic agreement and hopes that this move will open further opportunities and development across economic, cultural and social sectors between the two nations."

Swedish UN Ambassador commends PM Abiy; calls for prime spot at the General Assembly

The Swedish Ambassador to the United Nations, H.E. Olof Skoog, whose country held the Presidency of the UN Security Council in July, said that Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed deserves the most prominent speaker's place at this year's General Assembly VIP debate in September.

At a media briefing marking the conclusion of their Presidency, Ambassador Olof said: "When there is this very bold, historic leader coming in - in this case in Ethiopia - just changing the paradigm in favour of peace, shouldn't we just devote this

General Assembly to giving him the most prominent speaker's place?"



Ambassador Olof was referring to the historic peace agreement between Ethiopian and Eritrea.

Under the leadership of PM Abiy, the Ethiopian government announced that it fully accepts the terms of a 2000 peace agreement with Eritrea. Ethiopia also announced that it would accept the outcome of a UN-backed boundary commission ruling that awarded disputed territories to Eritrea.

PM Abiy then travelled to Eritrea and signed a Joint Declaration of Peace and Friendship with Eritrean President Isaias Afewerki on 9th July, formally ending the state of war and normalizing relations between the two countries.

The example that PM Abiy is setting is extraordinary given the fact that so many other countries are investing so much time in just defining why they need to be opposed to their neighbour, Ambassador Skoog told reporters.

"Abiy's success can be an inspiration for other leaders."

Ambassador Skoog added that the UN Security Council should consider lifting sanctions against Eritrea given the breakthrough.

"We believe that the council should seize this moment to firmly recognize peace and normalize the relations between the international community and Eritrea by deciding to review the sanctions regime as soon as possible," he said.

“What is happening in the Horn of Africa is truly historic...It is very important that we support those historically positive developments in any way we can.”

The Security Council imposed sanctions in 2009 on Eritrea, including an arms embargo, for its role in destabilising neighbouring countries, particularly its alleged support for al-Shabaab militants in Somalia and its territorial dispute with Djibouti.

Ethiopia to use drones to deliver medical supplies

The Ministry of Health announced plans to use drone technology (UAVs) to deliver medicines, vaccines, blood supplies and other medical equipment to various parts of the country.



Dr Amir Aman, Ethiopia’s Minister of Health, said discussions on ways to begin the drone delivery system have been held with stakeholders.

The drones, which Ethiopia is considering using next Ethiopian fiscal year, could operate in all weather conditions and can carry 5 kilograms of medical supplies.

Dr Amir said his ministry would invest all efforts to save lives by building infrastructure and preparing policy frameworks that allow the country to use new technologies.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Abune Merkorios returns to Ethiopia

The 4th Patriarch of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, Abune Merkorios, has returned to Ethiopia after 27 years in exile, following reconciliation spearheaded by PM Abiy while he was in the United States.



Upon arrival, Abune Merkorios was greeted by his followers, who sang and ululated in welcome.

The Church split in the early 1990s after Mengistu Haile Mariam's Communist regime was overthrown. Abune Merkorios has since been leading the Holy Synod in the Diaspora.

With two patriarchs heading the Church, Abune Merkorios will be responsible for the spiritual aspects of the church, while Bishop Abune will be in charge of the day-to-day affairs.

Five to be charged over attack at PM Abiy rally

Federal prosecutors are to file charges against five people suspected of being involved in a grenade attack on a political rally in June for Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed. Two people died and scores were wounded in the explosion in Meskel Square.

Ethio Telecom gets new female CEO

Ethiopia’s state-run telecommunications company, Ethio Telecom, has a new Chief Executive Officer - Frehiwot Tamiru who replaces Andualem Admassie who led the company for the last five years.

TRADE AND INVESTMENT



UK-Ethiopia Trade & Investment Forum

16th October 2018, London



A high-level delegation from the new Ethiopian government will come to London this autumn for its first significant overseas Trade and Investment Summit.

The UK-Ethiopia Trade and Investment Forum will showcase the huge opportunities that Ethiopia offers and encourage inward investment from investors and businesses.

The Forum's agenda will include: -

- Economic overview and business diplomacy session, to be chaired by Lord Sheikh
- Spotlight on trade and investment
- Energy and Infrastructure session
- Spotlight on tourism and agriculture
- Mining and Minerals session, to be chaired by Sir Henry Bellingham

The Forum will also offer delegates opportunities to network with the officials and strengthen the relationship between Ethiopia and the UK.

For further information and to register your interest, visit the DMA website: bit.ly/InvestEthiopia

Advisory council set up to oversee privatisation of state-owned enterprises

Following the announcement that Ethiopia will partially liberalise the economy by allowing mixed ownership or full privatisation of state-owned enterprises, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed announced the formation of a 21-member advisory council that will oversee the privatisation of large state-owned enterprises.

The council brings together senior financial sector experts from Ethiopia's private and public sectors.

The Prime Minister's Chief of Staff, Fitsum Arega, said that the council will ensure the process is managed with utmost transparency and accountability.

\$81.6 million earned from electricity to neighbours

Ethiopia made \$81.6 million from the sale of electricity to Djibouti and Sudan in the just concluded financial year which runs from 8th July 2017-7th July 2018.

According to the Ministry of Water, Irrigation and Electricity, \$47.5 million was earned from electric power sales to Sudan, while export to Djibouti generated \$34.1 million.

According to the World Bank, Ethiopia has the second highest available energy generation capacity in Sub-Saharan Africa, with nearly 100 percent coming from renewable energy generation (mostly hydro power), and vast and mainly untapped solar, wind, and geothermal clean energy resources.

Ethiopia plans to reach 17,300MW of energy by the end of 2020, a major leap from the current 4,280MW.

Major projects such as the 6,450MW Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam are currently under construction to achieve the target. Other projects include the 254MW Genale Dawa I hydropower project and the 120MW Aysha Wind farm project.

Ethiopia also expects to generate energy from the under-construction 50MW Reppie waste-to-energy project, the first of its kind in Africa, and the 70MW Aluto Langano geothermal energy project.

53rd Session of the International Sugar Council held in Addis

The 53rd Session of International Sugar Council was successfully held in Addis Ababa from 26th to 28th June, at the kind invitation of the Ethiopian government and the Ethiopian Sugar Corporation.



The meetings were well attended by Members of the International Sugar Organization (ISO) and representatives from the national sugar industry.

The week started with a field trip to Wonji Shoa Sugar Factory outside Addis Ababa for a guided tour of the factory and the cane fields.

On 26th June, the international workshop on “Developments and Opportunities in Sugar and By-products” was held. Delegates listened to both national and international speakers addressing issues pertinent to Ethiopia and the wider sugar world.

At the official ISO meetings, Members were able to discuss bilateral and multilateral issues of common interest and concern.

In a statement, the International Sugar Organization said its Members would like to thank the Ethiopian Sugar Corporation and the Ethiopian Embassy in London for the practical and supportive collaboration which led to an extremely successful and dynamic few days of debate. The ISO Members and Secretariat very much enjoyed their time in the Land of Origins.

Ethiopia to host Africa Sourcing and Fashion Week

The global cotton, textile, apparel, leather, technology, and home decor industry will converge in Ethiopia for the fourth edition of Africa Sourcing and Fashion Week (ASFW) which will be held from 1st to 4th October.



Over 250 global manufacturers from 25 countries will showcase their products and innovations to over 4,000 trade professionals.

The theme of the Conference will be ‘Sustainability in Production’ and ‘Transformation in Technology’. There will be a special conference on ‘Continental Free Trade in Africa’. In addition, an investment panel will highlight investment opportunities in Mauritius, Madagascar, Kenya, and Ethiopia whose governments will give information on the current situation and their support.

ASFW is organised in partnership with Messe Frankfurt Exhibition GmbH, Ethiopia Textile Development Institute (ETIDI), and Ethiopia Textile and Garment Manufacturers Association (ETGAMA) and is endorsed by the Ethiopian Government.

TRAVEL & TOURISM

UK group discover the Land of Origins



Part of the group at Gheralta Mountains

Ethiopia hosted a group of journalists, bloggers, travel writers and tour operators who visited Ethiopia as part of a FAM (familiarisation) trip organised by Ethiopian Airlines, the Ethiopian Tourism Organisation and the Embassy.

The trip saw the group visit Ethiopia's famous Northern Historical Circuit with world wonders such as the rock-hewn churches of Lalibela and Tigray, UNESCO World Heritage Sites in Aksum and Gondar and the breath-taking landscapes of the Simien Mountains. All while experiencing Ethiopia's unique traditions and hospitality. Here is a snapshot of their trip:

Upon landing in Addis Ababa, the first stop was visiting Ethiopian Airlines' headquarters, including their world-class Aviation Academy, the largest in Africa, which provides comprehensive training for pilots, aircraft maintenance technicians, cabin crew, marketing and leadership personnel.

In a meeting with the Management Team, the group learned of Ethiopian's momentous growth, from the humble beginnings in the 1940s, to becoming the fastest growing multi award-winning airline in Africa.

Next stop was the Gheralta Mountains in the Tigray region, famous for the rock-hewn churches carved into the mountains, some of which date back to the

4th century. The undisputed jewel of Gheralta is Abuna Yemata Guh, a small but very beautifully painted church, carved into a tall vertical sandstone and accessed by a cliff face suited only to those with a head for heights. Once up there, the views are definitely worth it!

In Aksum, the oldest continuously-inhabited city in sub-Saharan Africa, a guided tour of the Aksum Stelae Park, St. Mary Tsion Cathedral (Ethiopia's oldest church) and Chapel of the Tablet (home to Biblical Ark of the Covenant), was followed by a visit to the ruins of the Queen of Sheba Palace.



Aksum Stelae Park

Aksum was founded more than 3,000 years ago and served as the capital of the Aksumite Kingdom, which was the dominant trade entity in the Horn of Africa for over a millennium, prior to the rise of Islam. The group also took part in a special early morning procession, known as *mihila* – Prayer of the World.

Dubbed the Camelot of Africa, the city of Gondar is famous for its architectural centrepiece, the Fasil Ghebbi - a stone-walled royal compound containing half a dozen fairy-tale castles including the three-storey original, built by Emperor Fasil in the 1630s. The Church of Debre Berhan Selassie, with its beautifully painted interior, is popular for the annual colourful celebration of Timkat (Ethiopian Epiphany) that takes place on 19th January.

The Simien Mountains, Ethiopia's premier trekking and walking destination, has one of the world's most spectacular landscapes. In addition to the scenery, an encounter with the friendly Gelada

baboons would not go amiss. Geladas are endemic to Ethiopia. The Simien Mountains are also home to an alluring wealth of endemic plants and animals, including the Walia ibex and the Ethiopian wolf. However, on this trip the Walias and the wolves were hiding! Lunch at the Simien Lodge, the highest lodge in Africa at 10,700ft, was a welcome break from the cold rain.

Saving the best for last, the final leg of the trip saw the group in Lalibela, home to eleven rock-hewn churches dubbed the 'New Jerusalem'. Excavated by King Lalibela in the 12th century and still in active use today, Lalibela has been dubbed the "Eighth Wonder of the World" and represents an Ethiopian church-excavating tradition that dates to the arrival of Christianity circa 350 AD.



Ethiopia's historic city of Lalibela

Back in Addis Ababa, the world's third-highest capital city and the diplomatic capital of Africa, the group rounded off the trip with a visit to the National Museum of Ethiopia, which houses the 3.2-million-year-old skeleton of 'Lucy', the grandmother of humanity, and a quick stop at Churchill Road for souvenirs.



A farewell dinner at a traditional Ethiopian restaurant was held in the presence of the Ethiopian Tourism Organisation's Deputy CEO, before the group departed for their return flight to London.

Ethiopian Airlines' 'Bird of Peace' lands in Asmara

The 18th July saw the first commercial flight from Addis Ababa to Asmara, dubbed the "Bird of Peace", following the historic peace agreement between Ethiopia and Eritrea. On board the fully-booked flight were 456 passengers, including former PM Hailemariam, government officials, diplomats and Eritreans who had been separated from their families.

According to the AFP news agency, demand was so high that a second flight departed Addis Ababa within 15 minutes.

Passengers on board the historic flight were in high spirits singing and dancing in the aisles. Flight attendants also handed out roses to all passengers and served champagne.



Passengers pose for a selfie onboard a flight from Addis Ababa to Asmara

Upon arrival at Asmara International Airport, the delegation was received by Eritrean Foreign Minister Osman Saleh, as well as relatives who had been anxiously waiting to meet their families.

Photos of families and loved ones reuniting after years of being apart are being shared widely on social media.



Ethiopian journalist Addisalem Hadigu reunited with his daughters Asmara and Danait in Eritrea for the first time in 16 years.



Ethiopian Airlines currently operates daily flights to Asmara with the most technologically advanced commercial aircraft, the Boeing 787.

...Eritrean Airlines makes first flight to Ethiopia

Similarly, the national airline of Eritrea made its first commercial flight in two decades to Addis Ababa on 4th August. Among those onboard were Eritrea's transport and tourism ministers.



They were welcomed by senior Ethiopian officials at Bole International Airport, including the State Minister for Foreign Affairs, Hirut Zemene, State Minister for Transport, Eshete Asfaw, Ethiopian Airlines CEO, Tewolde Gebremariam and Director General of Ethiopian Civil Aviation Authority, Colonel Wosenyeleh Hunegnaw.



Ethiopian Airlines rolls out stop-over packages to promote tourism

From 1st August, transit passengers travelling through Addis Ababa with an onward journey to one of the destinations on Ethiopian Airlines' network, can now take advantage of the new stopover packages without incurring any additional airfare.



The new packages from Ethiopian Holidays were launched with the aim of promoting tourism into Ethiopia. Passengers will be able to discover and experience the many historical, cultural, religious and natural treasures of Ethiopia, the Land of Origins.

The packages range from sightseeing in Addis Ababa, the diplomatic capital of Africa, to visits to the pre-Christian era obelisks of Axum, the stunning medieval rock-hewn churches of Lalibela, the amazing 9th century mosques of Harar, the majestic castles of Gondar, the stunning source of the Blue Nile, the jaw-dropping Simien Mountains, the splendour of the lakeside resorts of Hawassa and Arba Minch, or the unique coffee farms of Kaffa, birth place of coffee, and much more.

CEO of Ethiopian Airlines, Tewolde Gebremariam, said: "Ethiopian is working with all stakeholders in the tourism chain to make Ethiopia a tourism destination of choice. With its many riches, the world has yet to truly discover Ethiopia and tourism has the potential to become the main foreign currency generator for the country and a mass job creator for the young. With the stopover packages, we aim to attract a significant portion of our transit customers in Addis as tourists and to considerably enhance the flow of tourism into the country."

Stopover packages are accessible on the airline's website, www.ethiopianairlines.com, or on the Ethiopian Holidays website: www.ethiopianholidays.com. e-visas for all nationalities can be applied for at www.evisa.gov.et

'Best Airline in Africa' and more accolades!

Ethiopian Airlines was named the '**Best Airline in Africa**' for the second year in a row, at the 2018 SKYTRAX World Airline Awards.



CEO, Mr Tewolde GebreMariam and UK Country Manager, Michael Yohannes (centre), together with Ethiopian Employees

In a gala ceremony at the iconic Langham Hotel in London, airline leaders and top airline management from across the globe gathered to receive their 2018 World Airline Awards. Referred to by the media as the "Oscars of the aviation industry", the World Airline Awards are held in high esteem for the clarity of process and independence, with no outside sponsorship or external influence.

In addition to the 'Best Airline in Africa' award, Ethiopian also won '**Best Economy Class in Africa**' and '**Best Business Class in Africa**'.

Also announced in the evening were the World's Top 100 Airlines for 2018, as voted for by airline customers around the world. Ethiopian Airlines is the Best Airline in Africa, ranking at 40th, up from the 48th position last year. Singapore Airlines was named the World's Best Airline, with Qatar Airways ranked 2nd and ANA in 3rd place.

Regarding the airline's improved rank and the awards it won, Mr Tewolde Gebremariam, said, "We are glad to be named the 'Best Airline in Africa', 'Best Business class in Africa' and 'Best Economy Class in Africa'...These recognitions are all a strong vote of confidence by our customers. As a customer-focused and market-driven airline, we will always strive to meet and exceed customers' expectations through differentiated service delivery. I wish to take this opportunity to congratulate my colleagues at Ethiopian for their exceptional commitment and hard work to keep our airline flying high in the skies."

Commenting on the Awards, Edward Plaisted, CEO of Skytrax said, "Passengers have voted Ethiopian Airlines, Africa's premier carrier, for a second successive year and this is a simply fabulous achievement for the airline management and frontline staff."

Ethiopian Airlines is a multi-award winning airline and has previously received SKYTRAX World Airline Award for Best Airline Staff in Africa, twice.

International Coffee Day to be celebrated in Ethiopia for the first time

International Coffee Day will be celebrated in Ethiopia, the birthplace of coffee, for the first time in November 2018 under the theme "Celebrate International Coffee Day in the Land of Origins."



Ethiopia has some of the most diverse and highly sought-after premium coffees in the world. The celebration will bring together coffee producers, roasters, exporters, researchers, writers and coffee lovers from all over the world and will include an exhibition, a conference and a coffee tour to Kaffa, the region where coffee first originated and spread around the world.

Ethiopian Holidays has prepared special coffee tour packages for participants in the International Coffee Day Celebration.

Initiated by Ethiopian Airlines and organized by major stakeholders in the coffee and tourism sectors, including Ethiopian Coffee & Tea Authority, Ethiopian Coffee Exporters Association, Ethiopian Tourism Organization, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Ministry of Trade, the International Coffee Day will bring together multiple stakeholders from all over the world and serve as an ideal platform for experience-sharing and networking.

DIASPORA CORNER

PM Abiy calls on Ethiopian Diaspora to take part in activities at home

Prime Minister Abiy travelled to the United States on a three-state Diaspora outreach tour where he met with Ethiopians living in Los Angeles, Washington and Minnesota. The meetings were held under the theme: "Break the Wall and Build a Bridge".

The Premier called on the Ethiopian Diaspora community to directly take part in all activities in their country of origin, saying efforts of the Diaspora are vital to take Ethiopia to a greater height.

The Ethiopian Diaspora should support their fellow compatriots at home through building and expanding infrastructures, schools and other social service delivery institutions, he said.

We should unite to fight against malpractice and corruption, and support efforts to alleviate poverty, the Premier said.

Ethiopian Diaspora Trust Fund account operational

Following Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed's recent call for the Diaspora to contribute \$1-a-day to the transformation and development of a better Ethiopia, a bank account to support the operation of the "Ethiopian Diaspora Trust Fund" is now active.



The Account, operated by the Commercial Bank of Ethiopia, has been launched with the express aim of connecting the Diaspora with their homeland by facilitating the secure collection of their financial contributions.

The account details are as follows:

Account Name: **Ethiopian Diaspora Trust Fund**

Account Number: **1000255726725**

Bank Name & Address: **Commercial Bank of Ethiopia, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. P.O. Box 255.**

Tel: **+251 (0)11 5515004, +251 (0)11 5515000**

Money can be sent to the newly opened “Ethiopian Diaspora Trust Fund” account via the following methods:

- By accessing the soon-to-be-launched official website of the Ethiopian Diaspora Trust Fund or;
- By sending contributions to the account using the Commercial Bank of Ethiopia’s SWIFT Code: CBETETAA or;
- By using the officially authorised international money transfer services currently working with the Commercial Bank of Ethiopia

For the full list of money transfer services available and for further information, please visit our website at <http://bit.ly/1-dollar-a-day> or contact our Diaspora Affairs Team on 0207 838 3873 or 0207 838 3886.

...Advisory Council formed to oversee fund

PM Abiy’s call has been enthusiastically accepted by Ethiopians worldwide. A diverse group of well-known Ethiopian scholars, business executives, and other professionals have volunteered to coordinate the diaspora efforts for the Fund.

In a statement on 9th August, the Prime Minister’s Office announced the formation of a 15-strong Ethiopian Diaspora Trust Fund Advisory Council that will facilitate the fund.

The Council is expected to undertake comprehensive plans for the Fund including

mechanisms for high-level accountability and transparency, project selection criteria for funding and identification of practical means to generate public support for the Fund.

The Council plans to seek input from the Diaspora communities worldwide in order to ensure that their voices are heard in the establishment and administration of the Fund.

Awash Bank partners with WorldRemit for digital money transfers to Ethiopia



Leading digital money transfer service WorldRemit has joined forces with Awash Bank for online money transfers to Ethiopia.

The new partnership further increases WorldRemit’s footprint in the country and allows the Ethiopian diaspora to send money home quickly and securely.

Andrew Stewart, Regional Director of Africa and the Middle East at WorldRemit, said: “Ethiopia is one of our fastest growing markets in East Africa, and this key partnership will further support the country’s transition from costly offline remittances to safer, faster and lower cost online transfer methods.”

Tadesse Gemedo, Chief Wholesale Banking Officer at Awash Bank, said: “Awash Bank has been working with numerous international money transfer agents. The current partnership with WorldRemit will undoubtedly boost our remittance service quality. We have a strong conviction that partnering with WorldRemit will not only give beneficiaries more options, but also make digital money transfers more efficient by offering flexible and affordable options.”

Remittances play an important role in Ethiopia’s economy, with estimates suggesting that Ethiopia may have received over \$3 billion in remittances in 2015, accounting for over 7% of its GDP.

In the past year, transactions to Ethiopia via WorldRemit grew by 160%. Top remittance sending countries to Ethiopia via WorldRemit include Australia, the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom.



EVENTS

Circus Abyssinia returns to Edinburgh Fringe

Fresh from a global highly acclaimed tour including a special appearance on Blue Peter and ITV's Royal Variety Performance, as well as the Underbelly Festival in London's Southbank, the Circus Abyssinia Troupe brings Ethiopian Dreams to enchant Edinburgh Festival Fringe audiences again this summer.



The show that captivated audiences of all ages in 2017 returns with new acts and an expanded cast to the Edinburgh Festival Fringe from the 4th to 25th August 2018.

Surrealist and joy-driven, accompanied by a soundscape that draws on Ethiopia's rich musical past and present, **Circus Abyssinia: Ethiopian Dreams** is a transformative celebration of circus itself and tells the inspiring life story of Ethiopian brothers, Bibi and Bichu, who dreamed as little boys of joining the circus, through breath-taking skills and jubilant ensemble performance.

The multi-talented and incredibly versatile 17-strong Circus Abyssinia Troupe celebrates the birth of a new Ethiopian tradition through a breath-taking range of circus skills including; human juggling, fire juggling, hand-vaulting, contortion, cloth spinning, hula-hooping and their signature astonishing double Chinese Pole act.

Fusing theatrical storytelling with astonishing stunts, the show combines the arts and innovations of contemporary circus with Ethiopia's artistic heritage to create one of the world's first full-blown Ethiopian circuses.



Circus Abyssinia: Ethiopian Dreams runs from 4th to 25th August at the Underbelly Circus Hub.

For tickets and information, visit www.underbellyedinburgh.co.uk.

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