



Ethiopian News

January 2018

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Replenishing Ethiopia's Renaissance.....	2
Leaders of Ethiopia, Sudan and Egypt renew commitment to cooperation over GERD.....	6
InfraCo Africa doubles its commitment to Ethiopia's first private geothermal project.....	8
Ethiopia's FDI on the rise.....	9
British company to build \$100 million textile, garment factory.....	11
Ethiopia gains first organic certification.....	11
Timket - Feast of Epiphany.....	12
Ethiopian Airlines to commence flights to 10 international destinations in six months.....	13
Kenenisa and Dibaba lead Team Ethiopia at London Marathon.....	15
Ethiopia could be sitting on one of world's great untapped gold deposits.....	18

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Ethiopia Rising

2018 forecasts from IMF, World Bank, Economist Intelligence Unit, all agree

Reform, Renewal, Renaissance





Editorial



Replenishing Ethiopia's Renaissance

Since 1991, Ethiopia has been reconstituted on the basis of equality and mutual respect for the common aims and interests of its many peoples. The 1994 constitution launched a genuine democratic process whereby decision-making power was, for the first time, devolved to regional states. Ethiopia's revamped unity-in-diversity is widely regarded as the guarantor of its peace and security, which in turn has long offered the opportunity of focussing on resolving its internal vulnerabilities and its very real problems, both political and economic.

Back in the 1990s, the major threats to Ethiopia were identified as economic backwardness, desperate poverty and a lack of democratic institutions, which all threatened Ethiopia's survival. Since then, Ethiopia has achieved peace and stability through socio-economic development and a democratisation process that laid the foundation for Ethiopia's renaissance, and its vision of becoming a middle-income state within the next decade or so. A carefully structured **democratic developmental model**, comprised a multi-party political system with regular elections, and executive power devolved to Regional States. This helped create real space in which the private sector could thrive.

Ethiopia has developed rapidly, particular in the last 15 years, when its economy has grown in double digits in spite of the impact of climate change - and the resulting severe droughts - and the collapse of the world finance system in 2008.

Poverty has been reduced by 33% and Ethiopia met nearly all the Millennium Development Goals by paying particular attention to the education, health, agricultural and food security sectors, to which it deploys 70% of its budget. These pro-poor policies are delivering great dividends. Net enrolment rates in primary education more than quadrupled, from less than 20% in the 1990s to over 97% in recent years, with close to parity in enrolment of girls and boys. These, then, are the reasons for Ethiopia currently being the "fastest growing economy in the world" (says the World Bank), and this is set to endure, with savings and investment continuing to rise.

These facts are at odds with some media reports which write of an "authoritarian government", that "gives little space to the private sector and stifles entrepreneurialism." In reality, the government has strongly supported local investors through bank loans and the creation of SMEs and is building

industrial zones and agro-industrial parks and also has a special revolving fund of 10 billion Birr (about £347 million) to help young entrepreneurs. As a result, millions of jobs have been created, especially in the last two years, most for women and young people.

Ethiopia continues its pursuit of structural economic transformation, to improve the productivity and competitiveness of smallholder agriculture, and is fully supporting industrialisation, with particular emphasis on manufacturing, where the production of value added products are offered preferential treatment. Massive investment in the development of infrastructure is creating an enabling environment for trade, people-to-people relations and **regional economic integration**.

Ethiopia firmly believes that its peace and security lies in the peace and security of its neighbours, and vice versa, and fully participates in regional, continental and world peacekeeping missions – it is the largest contributor of peace-keeping troops in the world.

...The transformative developmental trajectory

In terms of democracy, Ethiopia has built a strong constitutional system and institutions that recognise and accommodate diversity - ethnic, religious and others. The system nurtures a culture of tolerance, and ensures the full participation of all peoples in the country's political, economic and social process, benefitting those of all walks of life in both urban and rural areas where grassroots politics thrive.

Despite these achievements, the country has faced challenges along the way, especially this year and last. The recent unrest in parts of the country, which resulted in loss of life and internal displacement, posed a threat to the values of tolerance and peaceful mutual coexistence. Though the federal system has directly addressed issues of equity and equal opportunity, there have been disparities in development provisions in parts of the country due to lack of efficiency, and the violence was in part a reaction to the rent-seeking behaviour of certain administrators, individuals and groups.

The most pervasive failings were revealed in early January, during the government's rigorous 18-day

evaluation of the last 15 years of development. Although progress has generally been exceptional, it has not benefited all members of society, many women and young people in particular have felt excluded.

The evaluations have pinpointed the reason for the shortcomings, which include misuse of public office, corruption and lack of transparency and accountability in some areas. A failure to fully accommodate pluralism and diversity of views have been a hindrance to further widening of the political space. There has been a failure to provide inspired strategic leadership; the solution is to strengthen good governance – transparency and accountability and the rule of law – and establish and support a new unity of purpose and trust.

The leadership reached a consensus and took full responsibility for failing to fully discharge its duties, expressing its remorse to the people of Ethiopia. It has reaffirmed its unreserved commitment to learn from the challenges and build on the successes.

The evaluation also concluded that the lack of fair and balanced media reporting has also been an ongoing concern. Some public and private media outlets that disseminated hate propaganda, contrary to media ethics and laws, have damaged the longstanding culture of tolerance among people. There was a failure to promote national identity that encompasses diversity.

The government is committed to maintaining the rule of law in the country. Any activity, by individuals or groups, which results in disruption of the daily activities and freedom of movement of citizens will be immediately addressed, and the perpetrators brought to justice.

The internal displacement in the border areas of the Oromia and Somali regional states will be promptly resolved, and the displaced people will be resettled in their original homes. The economic activities of farmers and pastoralists will be restored and will be protected from the illegal trading activities and disruption, which had exacerbated this conflict.

...Urgent reforms on the way

A series of measures will be taken to speed up reforms and to enhance service delivery and to encourage the participation of the public,

particularly young people, in the democratisation and development process. The government will tackle the shortcomings in building a multi-party democratic system by harnessing the constructive role that can be played by opposition political parties, scholars and members of civil society. The government expressed its commitment that some political leaders currently facing prosecution for suspected crimes, and some of those sentenced by the courts, may have their charges dropped or receive a pardon, in accordance with the relevant law of the country, and about 528 of them are being released.

Most significantly, the “Maekelawi” detention centre, which was used by the previous Derg regime as a torture centre, has been closed and will be transformed into a museum. The government also stressed its commitment to further strengthen solidarity in nation-building and national consensus, widening the political space and forging national unity in line with the constitutional order of the country while maintaining diversity. The government has to redress this state of affairs and meet the promise of full development made to *all* Ethiopians by engaging in a deeper renewal process, responsibility for which lies with the leadership. The drive for further sustainable peace, all-inclusive development and deepening democracy and governance are the motivating forces. It is in this context that the recent evaluation by the governing party took place to ensure the country’s renaissance.

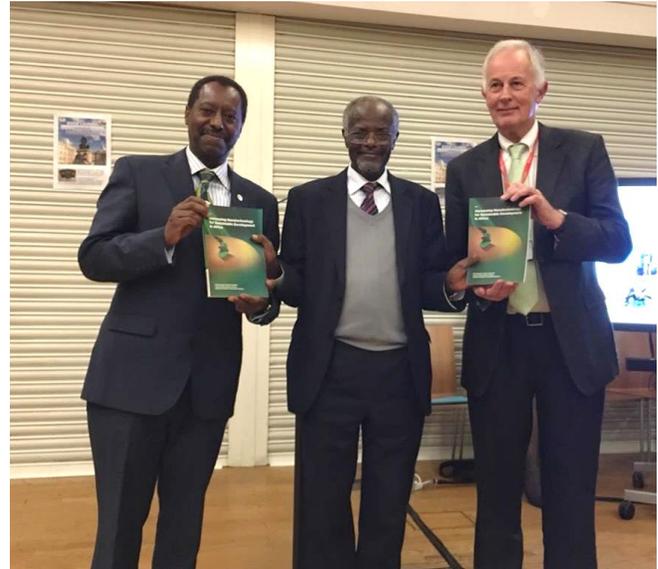
ETHIOPIA IN THE UK

Ambassador is guest speaker at book launch on Nanotechnology by Ethiopian professor

On 24th January, Ambassador Hailemichael Aberra Afework, was guest speaker at the launch of the book, *Harnessing Nanotechnology for Sustainable Development*, written by a selection of scholars, with Dr Hailemichael T. Demissie of Gondar University as the lead author.

The launch was held at Kings College London, where Dr Demissie was a student. Deputy Head of Mission, Mr Ababi Demissie and the Head of the Diaspora Department, Mr Fekadu Beyene, were also present.

The book, perhaps the first of its kind in Africa, focusses on nanotechnology and its promises and risks to sustainable development in Africa.



Ambassador Hailemichael (centre) with Dr Hailemichael T. Demissie (l) and Prof Roger Brownsword

Ambassador Hailemichael applauded Dr Demissie for his inspirational work, a great contribution to Africa’s development. He said universities in the developing and developed worlds should do more collaborative research, to alleviate Africa’s developmental challenges. And the Ethiopian Diaspora plays an important role in this endeavour.

He said the Ethiopian Government is committed to the development of science and technology in universities. More than 40 universities are now committed to improving the quality of education and research, and collaborations with universities such as Kings College, are vital.



Dr Demissie hopes the book will bring the African continent together to utilise the benefits of nanotechnology.

A pre-launch of the book took place in Gondar in the presence of His Excellency, Dr Getahun Mekuria, Minister of the Ministry of Science and Technology.

The African Union Summit



President Paul Kagame elected new Chairperson

H.E. Paul Kagame, President of the Republic of Rwanda has been elected Chairperson of the African Union, succeeding HE. Alpha Conde, President of the Republic of Guinea, who was AU Chair for 2017.



In his acceptance speech President Kagame expressed his gratitude to the Heads of State for their double trust. First as the leader of the reform

process and now as the leader of the African Union. "I promise to do this with you and do the best job I can. Obviously, I will need your full support" he said, before acknowledging the high experience of his predecessor.

Outgoing AU President Alpha Conde thanked the new Chair and promised to give him the necessary support.

30th AU Assembly

The 30th Ordinary Session of the African Union (AU) Summit, held under the theme: **'Winning the Fight Against Corruption: A Sustainable Path to Africa's Transformation'**, ended on 29th January with the adoption of key decisions by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government.

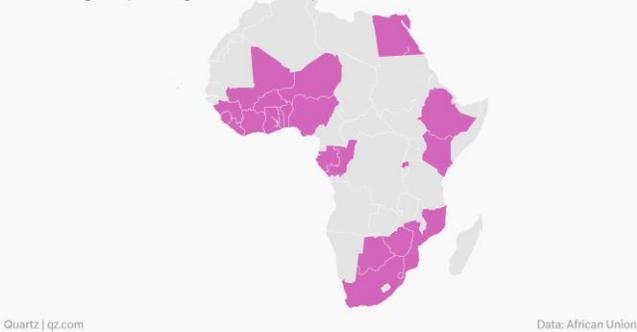
The following is a summary of key decisions made by the Assembly. Full details are available on the AU website www.au.int.

... Africa opens its skies

The Assembly adopted the Decision on the establishment of a **Single African Air Transport Market (SAATM)**.

So far, 23 Member States have declared their solemn commitment to the immediate implementation of the Yamoussoukro Decision towards establishment of a Single African Air Transport Market, which is vital to the achievement of the long-term vision of an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa under AU Agenda 2063. Enhanced connectivity across the continent will lead to sustainable development of the aviation and tourism industry, immensely contributing to economic growth, job creation, prosperity and the integration of Africa.

Countries signed up the Single African Air Transport Market



On the **African Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA)**, the Assembly decided to hold an Extraordinary Summit on 21st March, preceded by an Extraordinary Session of the Executive Council on 19th March in Kigali, Rwanda, to consider the CFTA Legal instruments and sign the Agreement Establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area.

The Assembly also adopted a protocol to the **Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community** relating to Free Movement of Persons, Rights of Residence and Right of Establishment and its Draft Implementation Roadmap.

The Assembly reiterated its commitment to the reform and renewal of the Union to ensure delivery of Agenda 2063 as an integrated, prosperous and

peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in the international arena. The Assembly will collaborate with President Kagame in his capacity as Lead on the AU Institutional Reform process.

On the **African Leaders for Nutrition (ALN)** Initiative, the Assembly reaffirmed commitment to **end hunger by 2025**, by strengthening development policies and recommitted to reducing stunting to 10% and underweight to 5% by 2025 and in particular, focusing on the key first 1,000 days, when permanent and irreversible physical and mental damage can be avoided.

The 31st Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the African Union will be held in June/July 2018 in Nouakchott, Mauritania.

LOCAL NEWS

Leaders of Ethiopia, Sudan and Egypt renew commitment to cooperation over GERD

On the margins of the recently concluded African Union summit in Addis Ababa, the leaders of Ethiopia, Sudan and Egypt held a constructive meeting on issues of mutual interest surrounding the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam project (GERD).

At a meeting on 29th January, the leaders agreed to advance their engagements over the dam in a spirit of cooperation, good faith and fraternity. Acknowledging their common destiny as Nile riparians, they affirmed that the countries must work together “as one [and] not three” at all levels in their engagements on the river.



To make further progress on outstanding GERD issues and nurture tripartite relations, Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn, President Omar al-Bashir and President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, agreed that: the heads of state would meet on an annual basis going forward; would explore a mechanism for the establishment of a tripartite fund aimed at enhancing cooperation through the realisation of common infrastructure projects connecting the three countries; and would establish a permanent technical committee to discuss all issues related to the GERD, specifically focusing on the filling and operation of the dam, with a view to reporting these results back to the leaders in one month.

The leaders also reiterated their adherence to the spirit and letter of the Declaration of Principles on the GERD, signed in Khartoum in March 2015. They concluded their talks by highlighting the fruitful nature of their discussions and underscored their collective belief that cooperation on the GERD, based on a win-win approach, can and will meet the aspirations of their people.

Ethiopia elected Vice-President of UNICEF Executive Board for 2018



H.E. Mr Tekeda Alemu, Permanent Representative of Ethiopia to the United Nations, has been elected to serve as Vice-President of the UNICEF Executive Board for the year 2018.

Other countries that join Ethiopia as Vice-Presidents are Nepal, Bosnia and Herzegovina and El Salvador.

H.E. Mr Tore Hattrem, Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Norway, will serve as President.

The Executive Board is the governing body of UNICEF and reviews UNICEF activities and approves its policies, country programmes and budgets. With 36 members, representing the five regional groups of Member States at the UN, its work is coordinated by the Bureau, comprising the President and four Vice-Presidents, each officer representing one of the five regional groups.

Addis Ababa launches cleaning campaign

Addis Ababa City Administration has launched a cleaning campaign to encourage both public and private sectors to create a clean and beautiful city.

It was launched on 9th December in the presence of PM Hailemariam Desalegn and other senior government officials, including the mayor of the city, Diriba Kuma and celebrities such as Haile Gebrselassie and Derartu Tulu.

Launching the campaign, the PM said the campaign will help to bring attitudinal change in the city, and foster a culture of cleaning and waste disposal. The City Mayor Diriba Kuma fully agreed.



“I myself came here today to play my role in cleaning my surrounding ‘Abuware’ and I want and will surely continue to do so every last Saturday of the Ethiopian month with the community around here”, said the PM.

The campaign will be conducted every last Saturday of the month til the end of the Ethiopian year.

Bethlehem Alemu - African Leader of the Year

Ethiopia’s Bethlehem Alemu was among winners of the African Leadership Magazine Persons of the Year Awards 2017.



The Magazine’s publisher, Dr Ken Giami, announced the winners at the group’s UK Head Office, after the collation of online and offline votes and submissions from

over 1 million subscribers/followers.

Bethlehem, who founded footwear company soleRebels, was named **African Female Leader of the Year 2017** together with Ms Suzan Mashibe, Executive Director, Tanjet Aviation, Tanzania.

The winners will be presented with their award on 24th February in Johannesburg, South Africa.

INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

Railway Academy to be constructed

A new railway academy worth 1.57 billion Birr will be constructed in Bishoftu, said the Ethiopian Railways Corporation.



Construction, in two phases, will begin next year, and take two years. On completion of the first phase, the academy will be ready to receive 1,000 trainees and will incorporate administrative buildings, meeting halls, dining rooms, dormitories, and instructors' residences.

The Corporation spent five million dollars training 254 operators in China.

...Sudan to link railway to Ethiopia

Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir has announced plans to build a railway system linking Sudan to Ethiopia and South Sudan.

"We will connect [Sudan's] railway lines to Ethiopia," al-Bashir said while inaugurating a new trainline linking Khartoum to the city of Wad Madani, the regional capital of Sudan's central El Gezira State.

"We also seek to link our railway to South Sudan so that it might serve as a transit hub with Kenya and Uganda, thus facilitating the movement of people and goods to those countries," al-Bashir added.

Landlocked Ethiopia and South Sudan depend on seaports in neighbouring states Sudan, Djibouti and Kenya to export goods abroad.

Ethiopia and Sudan cooperate in cross-border integration projects in the power sector and road and telecommunications networks.

Last February, multiple agreements signed to further boost cooperation on a wide range of developments.

Genale Dawa-III hydropower project 94% complete

The electrical and mechanical works of the 254MW Genale Dawa-III hydropower project are in place, says Ethiopian Electric Power, and construction is 94% complete.

It will raise Ethiopia's installed electricity generating capacity from 4,260MW to 4,514MW.

Also, the 50MW Repi landfill-to-energy project is 96% complete. In addition to power generation, the project, the first of its kind in Africa, will offset annual carbon emissions of 1.5 million tons.

InfraCo Africa doubles its commitment for Ethiopia's first private geothermal project

InfraCo Africa, part of the Private Infrastructure Development Group (PIDG), signed a Shareholders Agreement with Berkeley Energy, committing \$30 million of equity investment to the ground-breaking Corbetti Geothermal project, doubling its original commitment of \$15 million.

"[This] commitment to Corbetti is truly a landmark deal for us, our first in geothermal and in Ethiopia and the largest single commitment we have made to date. [It] enables us to optimise our development impact in projects, while ensuring best practice through construction into commercial operations," said InfraCo Africa's Executive Director, Alex Katon.

In 2015, InfraCo Africa formed a joint venture company with Berkeley Energy to jointly become

the majority shareholder in Corbetti Geothermal. At the time, InfraCo Africa committed up to \$15 million to the project.

To mitigate the higher risks of a greenfield site, of proving a new geothermal resource and being the first privately financed IPP in Ethiopia, Corbetti will be developed in multiple phases.

This new commitment will contribute about 20% of the funding required to start construction of exploration drilling wells this year and a 10-20MW pilot power plant the following year. Power should be provided to the national grid by early 2020.

InfraCo Africa's Business Development Manager, Tim Jackson, said, "**The project will not only be the first full greenfield development of a private geothermal power project in Africa, but also the first private power project in Ethiopia.** By tapping into Ethiopia's huge geothermal potential, Corbetti is expected to lead the way for a new wave of private geothermal power plants in sub-Saharan Africa's renewable energy mix."

As Ethiopia's first private geothermal project, Corbetti partnered with Ethiopia Electric Power (EEP) and the Government of Ethiopia (GoE) with all parties working to draft the regulatory frameworks and legislation required to unlock geothermal potential in the country. The project drew on donor support to engage the East Africa Geothermal Energy Facility (EAGER) in this process, benefitting not only Corbetti, but also other local geothermal projects, such as Tulu Moye. Both projects signed Power Purchase Agreements on 19th December last year. The impact is substantial: the Ministry of Water and Energy forecasts an increase in geothermal generation from 7MW in 2012, to over 1,000MW by 2030.

InfraCo Africa's initial commitment to Corbetti was made because of the potential for geothermal power to transform Ethiopia's energy mix and the enormous challenge faced by the project in being the first private-sector-led development of an unproven resource. The increased commitment to \$30 million is a recognition of the progress achieved by the project and its leading role to date in pioneering geothermal power. The project will transform the national power supply and improve economic opportunities and living standards in the local area.

TRADE AND INVESTMENT

Ethiopia's FDI on the rise

In the last Ethiopian Fiscal Year (EFY) that ended on 8th July 2017, Ethiopia recorded Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) worth \$4.17 billion. The manufacturing, agriculture, construction, hotel and real estate services, and horticulture sectors took the majority of FDI shares.



According to the Ethiopian Investment Commission, FDI has increased from \$814.6 million a decade ago – a five-fold increase - despite global and national challenges.

Ethiopia's investment policy favours investment through a range of incentives, access to global and regional duty and quota-free agreements, and above all well-developed infrastructure.

15 industrial parks have been commissioned for completion by 2018 across the country to attract investment and to help Ethiopia reach middle income status by 2025. Investors are active in the existing industrial parks and produce mainly for export, one of Ethiopia's priority areas.

2018 Forecasts

...IMF: Ethiopia's growth to remain high



According to the latest International Monetary Fund forecasts, Ethiopia's growth is expected to stay high in 2017/18, at 8.5%, supported by continued recovery from droughts and export expansion as new manufacturing facilities and infrastructure come online.

The IMF Executive Board concluded the Article IV consultation with Ethiopia on 12th January,

reporting that Ethiopia has recorded annual average GDP growth of about 10% in the last decade, driven by public investments in agriculture and infrastructure.

The poverty rate fell from 44% in 2000 to 23.5% in 2015/16 when GDP growth was estimated at 9%, as agriculture rebounded from severe drought conditions. Industrial activity expanded, with continued investments in infrastructure and manufacturing.

FDI growth was 27.6% due to investments in the new industrial parks and privatisation inflows.

Over the medium term, growth is expected to remain around 8%, supported by sustained expansion in exports and investment.

The authorities' policies under the second Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP II) are expected to underpin domestic private sector development and FDI. GTP II also envisages allocating significant resources to poverty alleviation and the social safety-net, while efforts to strengthen financial inclusion are underway.

...World Bank: Ethiopia remains East Africa's fastest growing economy



WORLD BANK GROUP

According to the latest World Bank Global Economic Prospects report, Ethiopia's economy is forecast to grow at 8.2% in 2018, maintaining its position as East Africa's fastest growing economy.

The report also notes that six of ten economies forecast to grow the most in 2018 are in Africa, with Ghana taking the lead, closely followed by Ethiopia.

The full report can be accessed at <http://bit.ly/WBGEPE>.

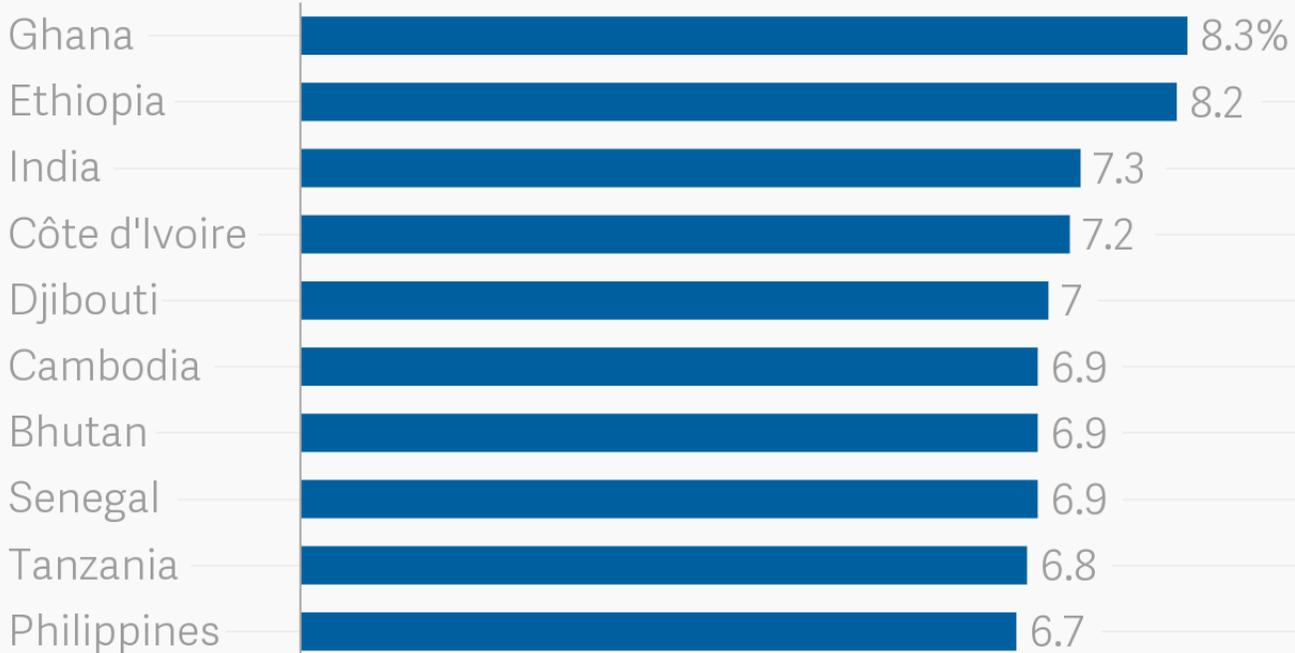
...Economist Intelligence Unit



The latest Economist Intelligence Unit forecasts that Ethiopia is among the world's fastest growing economies in 2018, and its GDP is expected to increase by 7.2% this year, against the rest of the world's 2.7%.

The top 10 fastest growing economies in 2018

Real GDP growth at market prices



△ T L △ S | Data: The World Bank

...Focus Economics: Africa's top performer



Focus Economics says Ethiopia is projected to be Africa's top performer in 2018, growing by 7.5%, against the rest of the region's 3.3%.

...Ethiopia among 17 economies to grow faster than China – PwC



Ethiopia is among 17 economies that will grow faster than China in terms of Purchasing Power Parity (PPP) in 2018, says PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) Global Economy Watch. The other countries include India, Ghana, and the Philippines.

Eight of the ten fastest growing countries in 2018 could be in Africa.

China, the world's largest economy in PPP terms, could grow by 6-7% in 2018, slower than previously, but in line with expectations. The global economy is set to grow by almost 4%.

British company to build \$100 million textile, garment factory

British company, Intrade UK Ltd., has signed an agreement to build a \$100 million textile and garment factory at Mekelle Industrial Park, creating more than 1,300 new jobs.

The agreement was signed as part of a \$200 million Memorandum of Understanding to invest in Ethiopia's textile and garments, pharmaceuticals and agricultural products processing sectors.

The agreement was signed by Chief Executive Officer Wagdi M. Mahgoub and Investment Commissioner Fitsum Arega.

Commissioner Fitsum said the number of investors engaging in the textile and garment industry is growing. The new factory will strengthen the inter-linkage of industries by supplying raw materials and will provide textiles for garment exporters thus replacing imported raw materials.

Chief Executive Officer Wagdi M. Mahgoub said favourable investment opportunities attracted his company to invest in Ethiopia, and investing in the textile sector is the right decision.

The factory is expected to start production after 16 months.

...New \$220 million textile plant to be built

The cornerstone for a \$220 million textile plant was laid in Dire Dawa, East Ethiopia on 16th January.

Wuxi No. 1 Cotton Mill Plc, one of the largest textile manufacturers in China, will build the textile plant within 30 months on 40 hectares of land in Dire Dawa Industrial Park. It will provide jobs for 3,000 Ethiopians.

The Industrial Park, currently being constructed at a cost of \$159 million dollars on 159 hectares of land, is expected to attract industries specialised in textile, apparel, and agro-processing.

Ethiopia gains first organic certification



200 cotton farmers in Ethiopia are the first EVER in the country to gain organic certification!

The project, funded by TRAIID and supported by Pesticide Action Network (PAN)-UK and delivered in-country by PAN Ethiopia, will enable farmers to grow pesticide-free cotton and will open doors to more farmers becoming accredited.

The project trains 'lead' farmers, who then provide support to 10 'follower' farmers in their area. Farmers are trained in soil and water health, ecological pest management principles and learning to grow other crops alongside cotton.

Farmers in the project also use natural pesticides – a homemade food spray – which are made from



local ingredients like ground neem seeds. It is used to attract 'good' insects to their fields which eat the pests which threaten their crops.

Ethiopian farmers now report that for the first time after years of pesticide use, buzzing bees are returning to their fields, which also means they can increase their incomes by keeping hives and selling honey.

\$143 million from oilseed exports

During the first five months of the current Ethiopian fiscal year, \$143 million was obtained from the export of 128,399 tons of oilseeds.

The Ministry of Trade said the revenue exceeded projections by 11.2%, thanks to the increase in price of sesame in the global market, and a strong monitoring and support mechanism from the ministry.

The revenue gained and the amount exceeded by 31.72% and 27.92% respectively those of the same period the previous year.

TRAVEL AND TOURISM

Timket – Feast of Epiphany

Timket, Ethiopia's Feast of the Epiphany, is one of the highest and holiest holidays in the Ethiopian Orthodox Christian calendar and is celebrated on 19th January every year. This year as usual, it was celebrated in enthusiastic style with three days of festival, beginning on the eve of Timket with awe-inspiring processions.

The word Timket, from the *Ge'ez* word *Asteryo* meaning "to reveal", refers to the revelation associated with the Church's theology which is the unity of God the father, the son and the Holy Ghost during the baptism of Christ.

Ketera – 18th January

The celebration of Timket starts on the afternoon of 18th January, known as 'Ketera', which refers to the making of a dam, as it is common to make a dam in places where there is no river water for the celebration of Timket. The "Tabot " (replica of the Ark of the Covenant) is taken out of each church and

borne aloft by high priests to the nearest river, lake or pond where the communal baptism is to take place the next day.

The procession is attended by chanting and dancing crowds in dazzling white traditional dress, which contrasts with the colours of the ceremonial robes and sequined velvet umbrellas of the priests. The Tabots stay overnight near the water and ceremonies continue overnight.

19th January

The main Timket celebration starts the next morning, when the ceremony begins with pre-sunrise rituals, which include the *Kidane* (Morning Prayer) - ኪዳነ and the *Kidasie* (the divine clergy) - ቅዳሴ. Then follows the blessing and sprinkling of blessed water on the assembled congregation in commemoration of Christ's baptism.

It takes the better part of the day before the procession breaks up to return the Tabots to the churches in the afternoon. By afternoon, all the Tabots (except the Tabot from St. Michael's Church), are returned to their churches in a procession with the priests and young people animated and leaping like King David in the Bible.



Archangel Michael Day – 20th January

The Tabot consecrated in the name of Archangel Michael remains and the next day is one of the three big annual celebrations to commemorate Archangel Michael. On this day the Tabot from St. Michael's Church is returned accompanied by a cheerful crowd who sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs.

Places

Timket is celebrated across the country, but many consider that Gondar offers the best experience.

Travel writers Daisy Carrington and Aja Harris express the relevance of Gondar in the celebration of Timket as follows:

“France has Lourdes, India has the Ganges and Ethiopia, meanwhile, has Gondar.”

In Gondar, Timket starts with smaller ceremonies at many churches, followed by colourful parades of choirs and priests, accompanied by the entire populace converging at the piazza (ፒያሳ). Their final destination is Fasilades’ Bath.



Timket is also celebrated in Addis Ababa at Jan Meda (the horse-racing track of imperial days) and in Axum, at the Bath of the Queen of Sheba.

What is unique about it?

The Ethiopian Orthodox church has celebrated Timket since the fourth century. This three-day observance is a study in contrasts: deep solemnity of faith intermixed with exuberance make it unique; it differs from other epiphany celebrations across the world.

Significance

For Ethiopians, Timket is the most important religious festival of the year, and traditionally, it is known as an important occasion for young adults to choose their would-be lovers.

Ethiopia was named the world's best destination for tourists in 2015 by the European Council on Tourism and Trade.

Ethiopia wears its ancient past with pride in the many festivals observed such as Genna (Christmas), Meskel (Finding the True Cross), Enkutatash (Ethiopian New Year), Fasika (Easter), and many Muslim religious festivities.

Generally the festivities passed off peacefully this year, but there were clashes in Woldiya town in the north which resulted in some fatalities for the first time ever.

Over \$1.8 billion from tourism

The Ministry of Culture and Tourism (MoCT) said Ethiopia earned more than \$1.8 billion from tourism in the first half of this Ethiopian fiscal year.



While presenting her ministry’s 6-month report to the House of People's Representatives, Hirut Woldemariam, Minister of Culture and Tourism, said a total of 485,806 foreign tourists visited the country during the past six months and the revenue secured, surpassed the same period the previous year by 10.8%.

The success is attributed to the collaborative efforts of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other stakeholders who all promoted Ethiopia’s tourist attractions.

Ethiopia plans to earn \$4.5 billion from tourism this fiscal year.

Ethiopian Airlines to commence flights to 10 international destinations in six months

Ethiopian Airlines will commence flights to 10 international destinations in Africa, Asia and Latin America, over the coming six months.

The new destinations include Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Madagascar, Istanbul, Jakarta and Buenos Aires.

The flight to Buenos Aires, capital of Argentina, will be launched on International Women's Day, 8th March, and will be operated by Ethiopian's famous all-female crew.



Ethiopian is the fastest growing Airline in Africa. It commands the lion's share of the pan-African passenger and cargo network, operating the youngest and most modern fleet to more than 100 international passenger and cargo destinations across five continents.

...Ethiopian Airlines partners with Zambian Government to re-launch Zambia Airways

Ethiopian Airlines, the largest Aviation Group in Africa and a SKYTRAX certified Four Star Global Airline, has signed an agreement with the Zambian Government to re-launch Zambia Airways, which was shut down more than two decades ago. The Government of Zambia will be the majority shareholder with 55% and Ethiopian 45%.

Mr Tewolde Gebremariam, Group CEO of Ethiopian Airlines said, "The launching of Zambia Airways will enable the travelling public in Zambia and the Southern Africa region to enjoy greater connectivity options, facilitating the flow of investment, trade and tourism, and contributing to the socio-economic growth of the country and the region. An indigenous and truly Pan-African airline, we firmly believe that it is only through partnerships among African carriers that the continent's aviation industry will acquire its fair share of the African market, currently heavily skewed in favour of non-

African airlines, and play its rightful role in availing efficient air connectivity within Africa as well as with the rest of the world."

Zambia Airways will serve national and regional destinations, then embark on international flights.

Bole International Airport to be Africa's largest

The passenger handling capacity at Addis Ababa's Bole International Airport will increase to 22 million a year, up from 5 million, when expansion works conclude.

Civil engineering work at the new airport terminal over the past three years has now been completed, at a cost of \$350 million. Covering an area of 74,000 square metres, the new terminal will be equipped with modern technology, enabling it to provide modern services and ensure smooth passenger traffic flows.



The present terminal, which was designed to serve five million passengers a year, handles nine million.

Bole International Airport will be the leading airport in Africa in terms of passenger capacity. Currently, Johannesburg's OR Tambo Airport leads with a capacity of 20 million.

Other airports in Ethiopia at DembiDollo, Bale Goba, Shire and Jinka, are under construction and will be completed within the coming six months.



Ethiopian Airlines
Honored as
SKYTRAX Four Star Airline

4 STAR AIRLINE
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ETHIOPIAN

Kenenisa and Dibaba lead Team Ethiopia at London Marathon

Ethiopian distance running queen, Tirunesh Dibaba, has confirmed her participation at the 2018 Virgin Money London Marathon to be held on 22nd April.

Tirunesh, who has three Olympic gold medals and five World Championship victories to her name, has twice appeared in London before, and has improved with every performance.



In 2014 she finished third in two hours 20 minutes and 35 seconds before returning last year and coming second behind Mary Keitany in 2:17:56 – the third fastest marathon time in history in a women-only race.

The mother-of-one returned to the track last summer to win a silver medal in the 10,000m at the World Championships in London before picking up her first marathon win at the Chicago Marathon in October (2:18:30).

That victory put her joint top of the Abbott World Marathon Majors (AWMM) Series XI leader board, which started with last year's Virgin Money London Marathon and concludes after this year's race, counting the results of the World Championship marathon plus the marathons in Berlin, Chicago, New York, Tokyo and Boston in between.

A win for Dibaba in London this year will ensure she would secure the AWMM Series XI title.

Ethiopian legend Kenenisa Bekele, the 5,000m (12:37:35) and 10,000m world record holder (26:17:53), second fastest marathon runner in history (2:03:03) and the owner of three Olympic and five World Championship gold medals, will join Sir Mo Farah and Eliud Kipchoge in London.



Hugh Brasher, London Marathon Event Director said: "This is a truly mouth-watering prospect. Sir Mo, Eliud and Kenenisa could all put forward a persuasive case for being the GOAT (the greatest of all time) and now they meet for the first time over the marathon distance at the London Marathon."

Bekele has run the past two Virgin Money London Marathons. He finished third in 2016 (2:06:36), when he admitted he was at just 90% fitness, and was then second last year (2:05:57) behind Daniel Wanjiru.

He said: "I'm thrilled to be returning to London for the third year in a row and would love to go one better than last year and win the race. Once again London has brought the best distance runners in the world together so I know it will not be easy.

"It will be an honour to race alongside Sir Mo Farah and Eliud Kipchoge as well as the other great athletes in the field. I have been training very hard with the aim of arriving in London in April in the best possible condition."

Joining Kenenisa will be Guye Adola, who made his marathon debut in Frankfurt last year, finishing second in 2:03:46 - the fastest debut marathon ever.

Will 2018 be the year Tirunesh and Kenenisa claim their gold medals?



Here's who to look out for on 22nd April...

Elite Men

Kenenisa Bekele

Age: 35 | Marathon PB: 2:03:03
2016 Berlin Marathon champion

Guye Adola

Age: 27 | Marathon PB: 2:03:46
2016 Berlin Marathon 2nd place

Tola Shura Kitata

Age: 21 | Marathon PB: 2:05:50
2017 Frankfurt Marathon champion

Elite Women

Tirunesh Dibaba

Age: 32 | Marathon PB: 2:17:56
Multiple Olympic and world champion, 10,000m
& 5,000m

Mare Dibaba

Age: 28 | Marathon PB: 2:19:52
2015 World Marathon champion

Tigist Tufa

Age: 30 | Marathon PB: 2:21:52
2015 Virgin Money London Marathon champion

Tadelech Bekele

Age: 26 | Marathon PB: 2:21:54

Meseret Defar to make marathon debut

Ethiopia's Olympic champion, Meseret Defar, is set to make her marathon debut at the Tokyo Marathon on 25th February.

Meseret is the leading name in the women's field. A winner of two Olympic 5000m titles, two world 5000m titles and four world indoor 3000m titles, the 34-year-old has spent the past few years making a gradual transition to the roads.

She has won three half marathons on US soil and finished second at the 2013 Great North Run in 1:06:09. With track PBs of 8:23.72 for 3000m, 14:12.88 for 5000m and 29:59:20 for 10,000m, athletics fans will be keen to see what Meseret manages on her marathon debut.



Joining her will be compatriots Ruti Aga, Shure Demise and Birhane Dibaba.

Ethiopians dominate Dubai Marathon, again

Congratulations to Mosinet Geremew and Roza Dereje for setting new course records - 2:04:00 and 2:19:17 respectively - in Dubai.



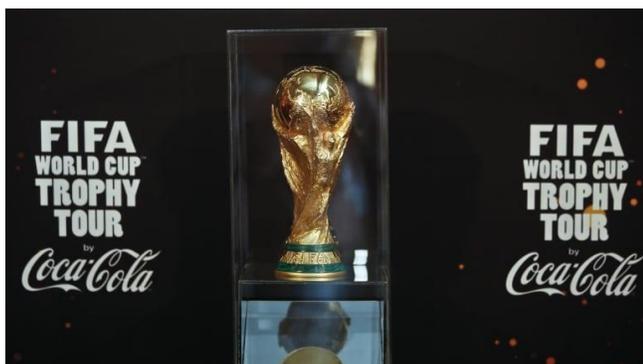
Mosinet won in one of the most thrilling finishes in marathon history with a personal best, two seconds ahead of Leul Gebresilase with last year's winner Tamirat Tola a further four seconds behind as Ethiopians filled the first 10 places.

Roza Dereje won the women's race with a personal best, ahead of compatriots Feyse Tadese, Yebgual Melese and last year's winner Worknesh Degefa.

FIFA World Cup Trophy Tour to stop in Addis

Ethiopian World Cup fans are in for a treat as it was announced that the FIFA Coca-Cola World Cup Trophy Tour is scheduled to stop in Addis Ababa from 24th–25th February, as part of its global tour of 91 cities across 51 countries and six continents.

The World Cup Trophy Tour is part of the build-up to the tournament, allowing fans around the world to see the original trophy up close and take a photograph with it.



The tour will also stop in Cote D'Ivoire, Egypt, Kenya, Mozambique, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Sudan and Uganda.

The 2018 Trophy Tour kicked off in Moscow in September 2017, where it stayed until December. The global leg of the Tour kicked off on 22nd January with an official launch ceremony at London Stansted Airport. It returns to Russia, the host country, in May, just ahead of the 2018 FIFA World Cup.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Ethiopia bans foreign adoption

Ethiopia's House of People's Representatives has approved a proclamation banning foreign adoption.

The House said articles 193 and 194 of the amended family proclamation No. 213/2000 had sometimes facilitated crimes against children.

Petros Woldeesenbet, Chairman of the Legal and Administrative Affairs Standing Committee, said the banning would help children to be cared for and

they will be supported by legal systems, to protect them from abuse and traffickers.

The newly amended Family Law Proclamation will enable children to grow up with the culture, customs, social values and practices of their birth place. It also encourages local adoption, family reunification and reintegration.

Remembering Africa's first commercial aircraft pilot



Ethiopian Airlines' Captain Alemayehu Abebe, 93, passed away on 4th January. He was the first African pilot to command a commercial aircraft across the Atlantic. In 1957, he made his solo flight as captain on a DC-3/C-47 aircraft.



Captain Alemayehu (centre) immediately after his first flight in command of a DC-3 on 27th January 1957. (Photo: Ethiopian Airlines)

Captain Alemayehu became interested in flying planes at the age of 10, when he saw them flying over his home town of Babile, Harar. Unlike many pilots, he was not from a privileged family. Yet through determination and self-discipline he was able to fulfil not only his dreams of becoming a captain, but went down in history as the first African commercial jet pilot.

The Captain has been an inspiration to many and remains an icon in Ethiopian Airlines' history. His legacy will live on for generations to come.

He is survived by six children and four grandchildren.

R.I.P. Captain Alemayehu.

DIASPORA CORNER

Ethiopian community in Scotland celebrates Genna



Ethiopia's Honorary Consul for Scotland, Professor John Struthers, attended celebrations of Genna, Ethiopian Christmas, in early January, hosted by the Ethiopian Scottish Community Association in Glasgow.

Speaking at the event, Professor Struthers said, "It was a very enjoyable evening with good company, nice food and music. I was even able to practice the unique Ethiopian style of dancing!"



The Ethio-Scottish Community, established two years ago, assists people of Ethiopian origin living in Scotland.

ETHIOPIA IN THE NEWS



"Ethiopia's government is helping its entrepreneurs" was the title of a letter written by the Ambassador to the *Financial Times* in response to an editorial that claimed the government is "authoritarian" and "stifles entrepreneurialism." The letter outlined the pro-poor policies of Ethiopia's homegrown developmental state model.

Read more at bit.ly/EthioEmbassyUK

Ethiopia could be sitting on one of world's great untapped gold deposits

THE CONVERSATION New geological research suggests Ethiopia's gold potential in the unexplored Asosa zone, could rival South Africa's, making it one of the top five gold producing nations in the world!



Liam Bullock of Aberdeen University says that Asosa may be the location of the oldest gold mine in the world. Dating back some 6,000 years, it provided a key source of gold to the ancient Egyptian empire, whose great wealth was famous throughout the known world.

Au-some potential?

"Our field observations and panning suggest that gold should be generally abundant across the Asosa zone...We also see signs of substantial graphite deposits, which are important for everything from touch-screen tablets to lithium-ion batteries.

There is undoubtedly much more world-class gold within this area than has already been discovered, pointing to a promising source of income for the government for years to come – much of the region remains unexplored, after all.

Read more at bit.ly/ETHGold

15 fascinating destinations for travel photography – as chosen by top photographers



Some of the world's finest travel photographers pick the most rewarding places to focus their

lenses on.

2: Ethiopia by Bryan Peterson



Two painted boys in Ethiopia's Omo Valley (Bryan Peterson)

"In all the world, which other country can you claim to be eight years younger immediately upon arrival? It's Ethiopia, the same country where coffee was 'born'...You'll find lots of energy at the Merkato market in Ethiopia's capital, Addis Ababa. Arguably the largest outdoor market in Africa, it is intensely colourful, immensely diverse and truly chaotic, making it a street photographer's dream.

"Often called 'the rooftop of Africa', Ethiopia has the most mountain ranges of any African country, and notably the Danakil Depression, an area of volcanoes and colourful salt lakes. Despite it being the hottest place on earth, it is a landscape photographer's paradise.

"No trip to Ethiopia would be complete without a trip to the Omo Valley where you will find wildlife, birds and an opportunity to go even further back in

time by entering the many tribal villages of the Mursi, Hamar and Karo tribes, to name a few, and witnessing their centuries-old traditions.

"In all of my world travels, 89 countries to date, I have yet to find any place where the human spirit is more possessed with an unflinching and fierce determination than Ethiopia."

Read more at bit.ly/PhotoET

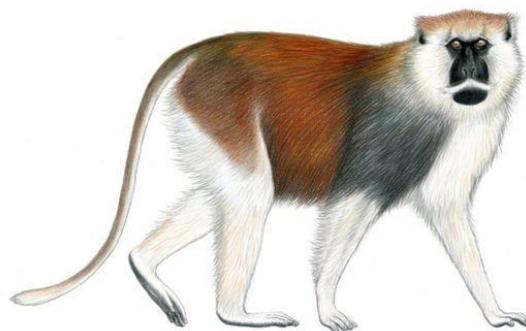
Moustached monkey is separate species



A monkey from Ethiopia and Sudan - the Blue Nile *patas* monkey - with a unique Handlebar Moustache, has been identified by scientists as a

distinct species.

Scientists took a fresh look at the distribution and physical appearance of patas monkeys in Ethiopia, confirming there were two species rather than one. It was originally described as a separate species in 1862, but was later folded in - incorrectly - with other patas monkeys to form a single species.



The newly recognised, be-whiskered primate lives in the Blue Nile basin in western Ethiopia and neighbouring Sudan, geographically separated from other patas monkeys by Sudan's Sudd swampy region and the Ethiopian highlands.

Patas monkeys are found from west to east across sub-Saharan Africa; they are among the fastest-moving of ground-dwelling monkeys - able to reach speeds of about 55 km/h (34 mph).

Read more at bit.ly/ETPatas



Magnificent Ancient Buildings Hewn From Living Rock



From towering temples to artistic tombs, humans have been carving structures from cliff faces and mountainsides for thousands of years.

Hewn from living rock, many of these man-made structures have survived the test of time and remain objects of beauty and wonder in our modern world.

2: LALIBELA, ETHIOPIA



The World Heritage Site of Lalibela is famed for its striking churches, hewn from the surrounding rock some 800 years ago.

Read more at bit.ly/NatGeoET

EVENTS

EXHIBITION: African Scribes: Manuscript Culture of Ethiopia



Explore the British Library's collection of Ethiopic manuscripts. This small display, from a larger collection, highlights the intellectual and artistic achievements of Ethiopian scribes, preservers and guardians of the Ethiopian Tewahedo Orthodox Church's literary output.

When: 6th February–29th April 2018

Where: Treasures Gallery
The British Library
96 Euston Road, London NW1 2DB

Free entry

For further information, contact the British Library on 01937 546546; boxoffice@bl.uk

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