



Ethiopian News

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Editorial



PM Abiy with his Italian counterpart Giuseppe Conte

Prime Minister Abiy receives further support for reforms in latest whistle-stop tour of Europe

Prime Minister Abiy led an Ethiopian delegation on a three-nation European Tour, in Italy where they met the President and the Pope, Davos where the Prime Minister addressed global leaders at the World Economic Forum and Brussels for meetings with the European Union Commission.

Abiy's last European tour saw him visit France and Germany in November 2018.

PM Abiy first met his Italian counterpart, Giuseppe Conte in Rome, reciprocating the former's visit to Ethiopia in late 2018.

While in Rome, the delegation also held bilateral meetings with development partners and investors.

Abiy had earlier met with the Italian President Sergio Mattarella at the Quirinal Palace and discussed historical relations and bilateral cooperation in key areas.

...Italy to fund Ethiopia-Eritrea railway

In Rome, an agreement was made for Italy to fund the first phase of a feasibility study for a 736km railway line between Addis Ababa and the Red Sea port of Massawa in Eritrea.

PM Abiy said: "We are excited and accept with great honour Italy's support for our plan to link Addis Ababa with Massawa via railway."

The route, which would pass through Awash then Mekelle before connecting to the Red Sea, would be one of the dividends from the historic peace deal signed between Ethiopia and Eritrea in July 2018.

The peace agreement has also led to plans to reconstruct two roads between the countries, and the development of two ports in Eritrea.

...Pope Francis receives Ethiopian PM



On 21st January, Pope Francis met with Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, at a private audience in the Vatican.

According to a communique from the Holy See Press Office, the “cordial talks” emphasized “important initiatives underway for the promotion of national reconciliation, and for the integral development of Ethiopia”. The talks also focused on the “role of Christianity in the history of the Ethiopian people” - Ethiopia was one of the first lands to adopt Christianity, and the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church remains the largest religious body in the country by population.

During the discussions, the situation in Eastern Africa was addressed, including the importance of the “peaceful resolution of conflicts and the socio-economic development of Africa” in particular, Ethiopia’s “commitment to the stabilization of the Horn of Africa,” and the recent resumption of diplomatic relations with Eritrea.

Earlier this month, in his address to diplomats accredited to the Holy See, Pope Francis took special note of the “historic agreement” between the two countries, which he described as one of the significant signs of peace in the past year.

At the conclusion of their encounter, the two leaders made a traditional exchange of gifts, with the Prime

Minister offering a present of traditional Ethiopian fabrics, along with a painting of the Risen Christ.



The Holy Father, for his part, presented Prime Minister Abiy with a medallion with an image of an ear of corn and a bunch of grapes in the desert – a reference, the Pope explained, to the prophecy of Isaiah, that the desert would one day become a garden. Pope Francis also gave the prime minister a copy of the text of the Message for the World Day of Peace, and bound copies of four other Pontifical Documents: *Evangelii gaudium*, *Laudato sí*, *Gaudete et exultate*, and *Amoris laetitia*.

Following the Audience with the Holy Father, Prime Minister Abiy met with Vatican Secretary of State Cardinal Pietro Parolin, and Msgr Antoine Camilleri, Under-Secretary for Relations with States.

...Prime Minister highlights virtues of ‘Medemer’ philosophy in Davos

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed addressed world leaders at the World Economic Forum in Davos on 23rd January, where he highlighted Ethiopia's rapid economic transformation and reform process.



In “A Conversation with Abiy Ahmed” hosted by Børge Brende, President of the World Economic Forum, PM Abiy said: “Ethiopia today is among the fastest growing economies in the world, consistently averaging growth of over 9%. Poverty has been halved and education enrolment has markedly increased.”



“Ethiopia’s GDP has multiplied 10-fold in 25 years.”

Investment in infrastructure has contributed a lot to growth and attracted Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), making Ethiopia one of the leading FDI destinations in Africa.

“Our challenges, however, remain formidable.”

The challenge, he explained, is to sustain that level of growth, especially to find jobs for a rapidly expanding young population.

“In order to reinforce our upward trajectory and achieve even more rapid and sustainable growth, Ethiopia has embarked on a comprehensive reform process since last April,” he said.

The reform is deeply rooted in the philosophy of “*medemer*” an Amharic word for coming together or synergy. It is people-centred and has three interdependent pillars:

- A vibrant democracy
- Economic Vitality
- Regional Integration and openness to the world

Greater freedom of the press, the release of political prisoners, the empowerment of women and the facilitation of the next generation of private-public partnerships are all ways of meeting those goals.

PM Abiy also pledged to make it easier for investors to do business in Ethiopia and called on investors to take advantage of the huge investment and business potential available in the country.

The PM said his government is opening up the economy to international investors in telecoms, logistics, energy, aviation, railways and industrial parks, adding that his government would continue to foster Public Private Partnerships.

“Ethiopians are born runners, marathon runners. Take that as a signal of our intentions and our level of stamina,” he said, in reference to the task ahead.

The theme of this year’s Forum was “Globalization 4.0: Shaping a New Architecture in the Age of the Fourth Industrial Revolution.”

You can watch the full video of PM Abiy’s address at <http://bit.ly/WEF19xPMAbiy>.

...Ethiopia to host World Economic Forum on Africa in 2020

While in Davos, Prime Minister Abiy held a bilateral meeting with Professor Klaus Schwab, Founder and Executive Chairman of the World Economic Forum, where they discussed the importance of a collaborative approach among business, government, the private sector and civil societies in addressing key global challenges.



Both parties agreed that Ethiopia would host World Economic Forum on Africa in 2020.

On the side-lines of the World Economic Forum, the Prime Minister also held discussions with several business leaders including Jack Ma, Chair of the Alibaba Group, who agreed to consider potential

investments in a tech city in Ethiopia that will improve the daily lives of the people in the region.



The PM also met Bill Gates, co-Chairman of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and thanked him for the work the Foundation is doing in Ethiopia in health, agriculture and capacity-building.

They further agreed to enhance cooperation in the agriculture, irrigation and technology sectors.

...EU and Ethiopia step up their partnership and cooperation

In his debut visit to Brussels, the seat of the European Union, Prime Minister Abiy met with European Commission President, Jean-Claude Juncker, High Representative/Vice-President, Federica Mogherini, Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development, Neven Mimica, as well as Council President, Donald Tusk, to discuss EU support for Ethiopia's reform process.

The visit culminated with the agreement of an additional €130 million in funds to support job creation.

Speaking on the occasion, President Juncker said: "The partnership between Ethiopia and the EU is particularly strong and the meeting with Prime Minister Abiy, today, allowed us to exchange [views] on how to further deepen it. The EU supports the ambitious reform agenda in Ethiopia and is committed to step up its support to the country".

Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development, Neven Mimica and Ethiopian Minister of Foreign Affairs Dr Workneh Gebeyehu signed three new programmes to promote sustainable economic growth and job creation in the country for a total amount of €130 million.

Commissioner Mimica said: "Today's cooperation package worth €130 million is proof of our support

to Ethiopia's economic development and job creation, which will help build new opportunities for its people. With these additional funds we are supporting better access to sustainable energy and the development of the agro-industrial sector in the country".



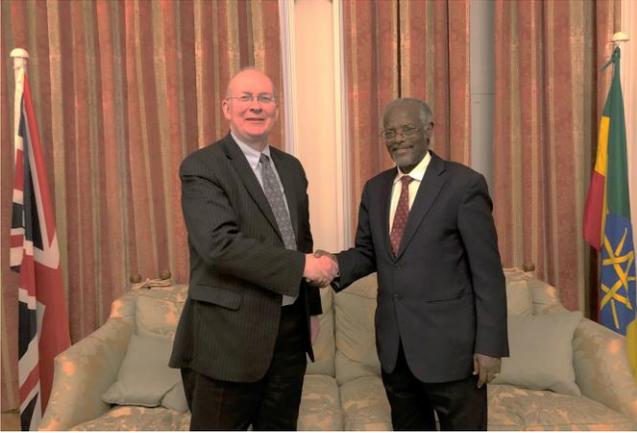
PM Abiy with President of the European Council, Donald Tusk

The three new programmes are part of the 'Africa-Europe Alliance for Sustainable Investment and Jobs', which aims to deepen the economic and trade relations between the two continents to sustain growth. They will support job creation (€50 million), sustainable energy (€35 million) and the establishment of agro-industrial parks in Ethiopia (€45 million).

Ethiopia is a key partner to the EU. In 2016 the EU and Ethiopia signed a "strategic engagement", which implies close cooperation in areas ranging from regional peace and security, to trade and investment, including migration and forced displacement.

ETHIOPIA IN UK

Ambassador Hailemichael completes tour of duty



On 16th January, H.E. Mr Alistair Harrison, Marshal of the Diplomatic Corps, paid a courtesy visit to H.E. Dr Hailemichael Aberra Afework, in order to bid him farewell as he relinquished his appointment as Ethiopian Ambassador to the United Kingdom.

On the occasion, Dr Hailemichael stated “the prompt and friendly support I received from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, from the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Ethiopia & Djibouti, from British friends of Ethiopia and from members of the Ethiopian community in the United Kingdom, have all been my pillars of support during my tenure. The United Kingdom remains Ethiopia’s dependable development partner, so the memory I take back with me will be one of pride at being able to contribute my share towards the consolidation of Ethiopia-United Kingdom relations.”

Ethiopia and UK emphasise partnership at Education World Forum



of education practitioners.

The annual Education World Forum took place from 20th–23rd January in London, attracting high-level attendance from around the world in the form of government ministers, high-profile figures, and hundreds

An Ethiopian delegation, headed by Dr Tilaye Gete, Minister of Education, attended the 4-day event supported by the British government, including the Department for International Development (DFID) and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.



During the forum, Dr Tilaye shared his views on global contemporary strategic problems and issues in education, and highlighted Ethiopia’s education and training road map study.

The UK is one of the biggest donors to Ethiopia’s education sector. Between 2015 and 2018, through DFID, the UK helped 11.4 million children globally to obtain a decent education, and the UK’s priority remains that no one should be left behind.

In Ethiopia, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed has been clear on the importance he personally attaches to improving education, launching the country’s Education Roadmap 2030 in September 2018.

Ethiopia’s budget allocation for education, at 24%, compares favourably with many of its fellow African countries. Its new 4-year General Education Quality Improvement Programme for Equity (GEQIP-E) has a total budget of £1.7 billion.

While visiting Addis Ababa in October 2018, the UK Minister for Africa, Harriett Baldwin MP, announced the country's continued support for education in Africa, through a contribution to the GEQIP-E worth over £110 million.



The delegation meets with Harriett Baldwin MP, Minister of State for Africa, on the side-lines of the Forum

According to a statement from the British Embassy in Addis Ababa, the UK will work closely with Ethiopia's Ministry of Education to improve access to education and learning for more than 1 million children, and to improve training for more than 125,000 teachers and head teachers nationwide.

The UK's focus will be on equity - helping girls in rural areas and people with disabilities and other marginalised groups to access education.

Ethiopia has made important strides in education since the 1990s, with over 26 million children now enrolled in schools, compared to only 10 million a decade ago.

Teacher training and the availability of learning materials have been steadily improving. UK support to Ethiopia's previous education programme resulted in 1.2 million more children receiving a decent education.

Dr Kesete Admasu joins Big Win Philanthropy

Big Win Philanthropy has announced that Dr Kesete Admasu, former Minister of Health of Ethiopia, has joined the organization as Chief Executive Officer, succeeding Dr Muhammad Ali Pate, who served in

the role for three years from the organization's founding in 2015.



The leadership transition from Dr Pate to Dr Kesete follows a prior partnership and close working relationship between the two leaders. During Dr Pate's tenure as CEO, Big Win partnered with Dr Kesete in his capacity as Minister of Health, to deliver on the Seqota Declaration, a bold commitment by the Government of Ethiopia to end child undernutrition in the country by 2030. "Big Win's support in setting up delivery units at the federal and regional state level, financing the baseline assessment, and supporting the establishment of community labs was invaluable," Dr Kesete said. "It illustrates how Big Win's approach to making catalytic investments can have an outsized impact."

Taking the reins, Dr Kesete will focus on expanding Big Win's investment portfolio and pursuing strategic partnerships with likeminded funders to help change how government programmes are funded and delivered.

Big Win Philanthropy partners with visionary African leaders by investing in three key areas essential to national development and long-term economic growth: brain development, education for productivity, and youth employment.

Dr Kesete served as CEO of the RBM Partnership to End Malaria, as Minister of Health from 2012–2016, and before that was State Minister for Health Programmes and Director General of the Health Promotion and Disease Prevention General Directorate at the Ministry.

LOCAL NEWS



Ethiopia reaffirms its commitment to improving Refugee lives by passing historic law granting more rights

Ethiopia has a very long-standing history of hosting refugees with its open-door policy. On 17th January, the Ethiopian Parliament passed a historic new refugee law which allows refugees to travel and live outside of camps, obtain work permits, access primary education, legally register life events such as births, deaths and marriages, and open up access to national financial services, such as banking.

In a statement on social media, Ethiopia's Administration for Refugee and Returnee Affairs (ARRA) said, "We are happy to inform that the new refugee proclamation has been enacted by the House of Peoples' Representatives. It is strongly believed that the new law will enhance the lives of refugees and host communities."

The new law is part of Ethiopia's "Jobs Compact" - a \$500 million programme which aims to create 100,000 jobs, 30% of which will be allocated to refugees.

UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, welcomed the new law saying it was one of the most progressive refugee policies in Africa.

"The law will help refugees feel included and that they can contribute to society...But we must remember that access to education and employment doesn't just benefit refugees, it also contributes to the economy and benefits local communities. Such legislation isn't just the right thing to do, it's the smart thing to do."

- Dana Hughes, spokeswoman for the United Nations refugee agency in East Africa

"The passage of this historic law represents a significant milestone in Ethiopia's long history of

welcoming and hosting refugees from across the region,” said Filippo Grandi, UN High Commissioner for Refugees. “By allowing refugees to be better integrated into society, Ethiopia is not only upholding its international refugee law obligations but is serving as a model for other refugee hosting nations around the world.”



South Sudanese refugee Ariat's son, Angakuny, was amongst the first refugee children to receive a birth certificate in Ethiopia. ©UNHCR/Diana Diaz

Ethiopia's revision of its refugee law comes just weeks after the UN General Assembly agreed to the Global Compact on Refugees on 17th December 2018. At the heart of this innovative new framework is a more comprehensive response to displacement in which refugees are included in national services like health and education, rather than in parallel systems. It also ensures refugees can be self-reliant and contribute to local economies in a way that also benefits their hosts.

“As some countries have adopted xenophobic policies while turning away refugees, we are pleased that Ethiopia has passed this revised refugee law.”

- Stine Paus, Country Director for the Norwegian Refugee Council in Ethiopia.

The new refugee law replaces the 2004 Refugee Proclamation which also upheld the key principles of the 1951 Refugee Convention, and the 1969 OAU Convention.

Ethiopia is home to Africa's second largest refugee population after Uganda, and currently hosts over 900,000 refugees, primarily from neighbouring South Sudan, Somalia, Sudan and Eritrea, as well as smaller numbers of refugees from Yemen and Syria.

PM Abiy among Foreign Policy magazine's Global Thinkers



In its 10th annual special edition of *Global Thinkers*, *Foreign Policy* included Prime Minister Abiy among people who “shape our understanding of the world” and have “had a profound impact on the planet in the last 12 months.”

“In less than a year in office, Abiy Ahmed has already made history in Ethiopia by forging peace with its neighbour Eritrea. The move reunited families and reopened long-dormant trade networks.”

Ethiopia concludes 2-year membership of UN Security Council

Ethiopia's two-year term as a non-permanent member of the United Nation Security Council (UNSC) came to an end on 31st December.

Ethiopia became a non-permanent member of the Security Council on 1st January 2017 after 185 of the 190 UN member states voted in favour of its membership.

During its two-year term, Ethiopia called for unity and consensus in responding to some of the most difficult and complex peace and security challenges of our time.

It contributed constructively to the search for peaceful resolution of conflicts and crisis situations through political dialogue and negotiations in the Horn of Africa and elsewhere.

Ethiopia was consistently proactive in the Horn of Africa, including in the UN Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA), United Nations-African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID), the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), in South Sudan and in the lifting of sanctions on Eritrea. It also made significant diplomatic efforts in the Ethio-Eritrea rapprochement, and was a major pillar in the continent's peace and security architecture.



Ambassador Taye Atske, Ethiopia's Permanent Representative to the UN, voting in one of the Council sessions.

Ethiopia has so far represented Africa at the United Nations Security Council three times and was one of the founding members of both the League of Nations and the United Nations.

Ambassador Konjit recognised for contribution to diplomacy

Ambassador Konjit Sinigiorgis, Ethiopia's, and Africa's, longest-serving female diplomat, was recognised for her distinguished contribution to diplomacy by Prime Minister Abiy, who gave her a certificate of appreciation.



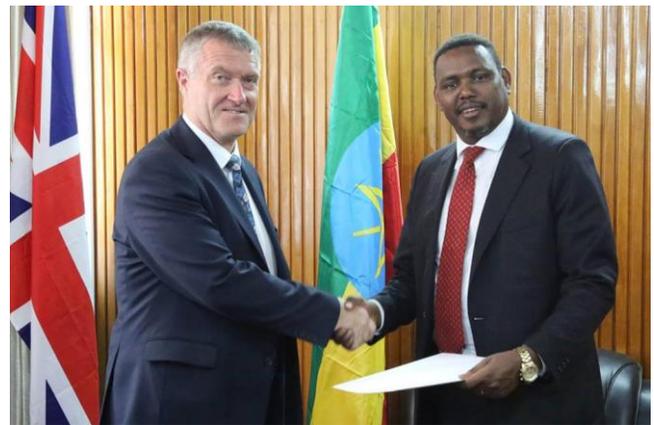
Ambassador Konjit started her career in 1962, a year before the establishment of the Organization of the African Unity (OAU).

After joining the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, she held numerous positions both in Addis Ababa and overseas for 52 years.

UK Ambassador to Ethiopia, Ambassador McPhail presents his credentials

State Minister Dr Markos Tekle received letter of credentials from Dr Alastair McPhail CMG OBE, the newly appointed UK Ambassador to Ethiopia and Djibouti (Non-Resident) and Permanent Representative to the AU and UN Economic Commission for Africa.

In discussions after the presentation ceremony, Dr Markos welcomed the UK's endeavour in maintaining excellent relations with Ethiopia in all domains of cooperation, helping to boost political, cultural, economic and social relations by offering a wide range of services and funding of various projects in Ethiopia for more than 100 years.



State Minister Dr Markos commended the UK's business, trade, and inbound investment partnership with Ethiopia that have helped Ethiopia attain double digit economic growth over the last two decades.

Ambassador McPhail said he appreciated the complementary relations between Ethiopia and the UK, highlighting the true friendship and common vision both countries enjoyed, including collaboration on a plethora of issues of mutual concern at regional and global levels.

Great Britain was among the first countries to open an embassy in Addis Ababa, while Ethiopia was the first African country to establish an embassy in London. Both countries collaborate on many issues of mutual concern at the regional and global levels.

Ethiopia's relations with the UK are among the most dependable, mature and mutually beneficial of any that it has with other countries.

Ground-breaking Ethiopian research project aims to eliminate parasitic worms

A major new research programme has been launched to eradicate parasitic worms from communities in Ethiopia.

Initially focusing on two million people who live in the Wolaita zone in south-east Ethiopia, the Geshiaro project identifies the optimal design of programmes that will break the transmission of both soil transmitted helminths (STH) and schistosomiasis infections.

Globally, over 1.5 billion people contract these parasitic worms, through infected water sources and poor sanitation, with a marked reduction in the educational outcomes of children and income earning adults.

The five-year project will seek the most effective way to treat people and prevent future infections by evaluating deworming approaches, allying large-scale drug treatment programmes with initiatives that improve water, hygiene and sanitation facilities and practices. Geshiaro means “cleans inside and out” in the local Wolayta dialect.

The Geshiaro project is an international collaboration between the London Centre for Neglected Tropical Disease Research (LCNTDR), World Vision Ethiopia, the Ethiopian Public Health Institute (EPHI) and Ethiopia's Federal Ministry of Health, with funding from the Children's Investment Fund Foundation.

Director of the LCNTDR, Professor Sir Roy Anderson, said “Our hope is that the findings from this research will be used to inform the design and effectiveness of future government led national deworming projects.”

Dr Ebba Abate, Director General of the Ethiopian Public Health Institute, said, 'This project is a chance to bring together internationally renowned research expertise. It's exciting that an Ethiopian research project has the potential to shape and strengthen public health programmes across the globe.'

EPHI's lead researcher on the project, Kalkidan Mekete, said, 'The data collected will be

interrogated with the aid of mathematical models to inform current and future parasite control policies.'

The implementation of deworming during the project will be conducted by the Federal Ministry of Health, with World Vision Ethiopia leading on the WaSH infrastructure and behaviours change communication activities and finger-print technology provided by Simprints.

Ethiopia and Eritrea reopen another border crossing

On 7th January, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed and President Isaias Afewerki reopened a border crossing between Ethiopia and Eritrea as part of the ongoing reconciliation between the two countries following the historic peace agreement last year.



The two leaders re-opened the border crossing between Humera in Ethiopia and Oum Hajer in Eritrea.



In September last year, during Ethiopian New Year celebrations, two crossings between the countries were reopened for the first time in 20 years.

TRADE AND INVESTMENT

Abebe Abebayehu appointed Commissioner of Ethiopian Investment Commission



Abebe Abebayehu has been appointed as Commissioner of the Ethiopian Investment Commission (EIC), replacing Fitsum Arega, who was recently appointed as Ethiopia's Ambassador to the United States.

Prior to his appointment, Abebe was serving as senior legal advisor at the Office of the Prime Minister.

He has experience in economic policy and regulatory reform, negotiations of international trade and investment agreements.

Investment Law Regime to be revised

The Ethiopian Investment Commission (EIC) has launched an initiative to revise Ethiopia's investment law.

Abebe Abebayehu, Commissioner of the EIC, said on his Twitter page that the revision aims to achieve the following key objectives:

- modernize the investment regulatory and administrative framework,
- align the investment legal regime with recent changes in economic policy priorities,
- consolidate protracted rules and regulations on investment
- consolidate and rationalize the investment incentives regime
- revisit investment areas open to the private sector
- adopt best practices for efficient investment administration/service provision, including One-Stop-Services and
- devise a faster and more transparent investor grievance handling mechanism

Ethiopia joins Africa free trade area

Ethiopia has become the latest country to ratify the African Union's Africa Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) agreement following approval by the Council of Ministers on 2nd February.

The decision is consistent with Prime Minister Abiy's vision of creating closer and full regional integration, where minds are open to ideas and markets are open to trade, his Office said.

Ethiopia's decision and track record of advocating Pan-African causes will bring forth an integrated Africa, the office added.



The African Heads of States and Governments pose during AU Summit for the agreement to establish the African Continental Free Trade Area in Rwanda, in March 2018.

AfCFTA, which aims to make Africa the largest trading bloc in the world since the creation of the World Trade Organization (WTO), will come into force when approved by at least 22 AU member states.

Ethiopia launches online investment guide to stimulate FDI

Investors hoping to explore one of Africa's fastest-growing economies can now acquire easy access to reliable and up-to-date information with a new online investment guide (iGuide) to Ethiopia.

Launched on 19th December at the headquarters of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UN-ECA), the new iGuide will highlight areas for reform in the country's investment environment helping the government understand investor needs.

"The investment guide is about making relevant, up-to-date content available to existing and potential investors," said Fitsum Arega, Ethiopia's then

Investment Commissioner, adding, “It should help us bridge the gap between foreign investors and small and medium enterprises.”



The website covers topics such as the rules and procedures for starting a business, taxes, acquisition of land, local skills and wage expectations, quality of infrastructure, investor rights and business sectors with exceptionally high investment potential.

Those who wish to obtain more detailed information can consult newly uploaded documents, such as relevant laws and extensive feedback collected among investors on the ground.

Officials at the Ethiopia Investment Commission developed the guide’s content, designed to make the information easily updateable.

“The guides help countries attract better quality and greener foreign investment and provide investors with information that is otherwise scattered across many different websites or outright not available,” UNCTAD Deputy Secretary-General Isabelle Durant said at the launch.

At the launch, ECA Executive Secretary Vera Songwe said the online guide was a “demonstration of taking Africa to the digital age”.

To date, UNCTAD has produced 16 investment guides in Africa, Asia and the Caribbean, of which seven, including Ethiopia, have been created in partnership with the Economic Commission for Africa. UNCTAD’s data shows that countries benefiting from investment guides have a stronger foreign direct investment performance when compared to the benchmark trends for all developing countries.

The iGuide for Ethiopia can be accessed on <http://www.theguides.org/ethiopia>

Volkswagen to develop automotive industry in Ethiopia

In a bid to expand its business in emerging countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, Volkswagen signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Ethiopia to develop an automotive industry.



The MoU focuses on four key pillars including: the establishment of a vehicle assembly facility, localisation of automotive components, mobility concepts such as app-based car sharing and ride hailing, and the opening of a training centre. Volkswagen will work closely with the Ethiopian higher education and training institutions for skills development and capacity building of local talent.

The MoU was signed by Thomas Schaefer, Head of the Volkswagen Sub-Saharan Africa Region, and the Commissioner of the Ethiopian Investment Commission (EIC), Abebe Ababayehu, during the state visit of the President of the Federal Republic of Germany, H.E Frank-Walter Steinmeier.



Thomas Schaefer, Head of Volkswagen Sub-Saharan Africa signing the MoU with Abebe Ababayehu, Commissioner of the Ethiopian Investment Commission in Addis Ababa. With them are the President of the Federal Republic of Germany, Frank-Walter Steinmeier and the Ethiopian Minister of Finance, Ahmed Shide

Mr Schaefer commented: “as one of the fastest growing economies and with the second highest population on the continent, Ethiopia is an ideal country to advance our Sub-Saharan Africa development strategy. Volkswagen intends to tap into existing expertise and strategic resources in Ethiopia to help to establish a thriving automotive components industry.”

Over the last ten years, the GDP growth rate in Ethiopia has been above 8% – one of the highest worldwide. Moreover, Ethiopia is a priority and focus country for Germany under the G20-“Compact with Africa” initiative.

Label specialist ITL sets up operations in Ethiopia

Apparel label specialist, ITL Intelligent Label Solutions, has become the latest firm to set up shop in Ethiopia’s Hawassa Industrial Park and the first global apparel label manufacturer to establish a factory in the country.



Ethiopia is seen as one of the most exciting prospects for the set-up of garment manufacturing and sourcing as it has duty-free access into the nearby European and US apparel retail markets, abundant affordable labour and electricity and a proactive government which has demonstrated real commitment in setting up a number of world class industrial parks for the garment industry.

ITL Ethiopia is located in the prime Hawassa Industrial Park, a green field park with 300,000sqm of factory space with its own waste management and recycling plant to ensure close to zero impact on the environment. The park is the major employer in the area with a potential workforce of over 5 million people, its own customs clearing facility and other facilities such as accommodation and banking.

The factory will manufacture both screen and rotary printed fabric labels, heat transfers, stickers, RFID labels and digitally prints paper tickets and will finish woven labels from stock in order to provide a full product range with maximised local production.

Apparel retailers such as PVH, H&M, Decathlon and VF Corp have taken the lead in sourcing a growing volume of garments from Ethiopia.

At the launch, Chris Currie - ITL’s Executive Director for Emerging Markets - commented “ITL is the first global apparel label manufacturer to set up a factory in Ethiopia and we see it as a strategic opportunity to support a number of key apparel retailers in their quest for shorter lead times and lower costs in response to consumer demands for more dynamic exciting fashion at competitive prices.”

...Adama Industrial Park begins exporting

Chinese textile company, Antex Group, has become the first to export its swimwear to Europe from the recently-inaugurated Adama Industrial Park.

Two companies including Antex have already started operations, while three others are in the pipeline.

The company, established with an initial investment of \$10 million, has created jobs for around 1,500 people.

Antex is expected to generate about \$110,000 from the export of its first batch of products, Group Chairman Qian Anhua said, adding "We expect to generate close to \$50 million from the export of our products to the international market next year."

...Ethiopia aims to become Africa's manufacturing hub

Ethiopia is investing billions of dollars into the development of industrial parks with the ambition of becoming Africa's manufacturing hub.

With \$1.3 billion invested in the construction of around a dozen industrial parks, Ethiopia plans to increase the number of parks from the current five to around 30 by 2025, as part of its efforts to make the country a light manufacturing hub and a lower-middle-income economy in the same period.

In the meantime, the flagship Hawassa industrial park has helped Ethiopia earn \$38 million in export revenues in the last two years and has created job opportunities for 23,000 Ethiopians, who also receive practical skills training to build on their capacity.

Bids sought for major solar expansion

The Ministry of Finance has announced the issue of an international bid for the construction of six mega solar projects worth \$800 million, with an estimated capacity of around 750 megawatts (MW).

The projects will be deployed across four regions including Afar, Somali, Oromia and Tigray, under the public-private partnership (PPP) framework and will be part funded by the Ethiopian government.



This is the third time Ethiopia has put forward international tenders for large-scale solar projects. In October 2017, Italian energy company Enel was selected to construct a 100MW power plant in Metehara, central Ethiopia. In the same month, a tender was issued for the construction of two 125MW plants. Both tenders were part of the World Bank's Scaling Solar initiative, which aims to unlock investment across the continent to deploy large-scale solar energy projects.

Ethiopia is looking to reach 300MW of solar energy by 2020 and is in the lead when it comes to using renewable energy. The country has around 4.3 GW of installed power generation capacity, of which 3,810 MW is in the form of hydro installations, 324 MW wind, 7 MW geothermal and 143 MW of diesel.

The World Bank says Ethiopia "is one of the few countries in the world where the electric grid is nearly 100% supplied by renewable sources." The Bank also announced a \$375 million fund to support

the country's electrification programme, which aims to drastically increase national access to power, which currently sits at only 34%.

\$843 million obtained from Foreign Direct Investment

The Ethiopian Investment Commission said it registered \$843 million in foreign direct investment (FDI) from 94 licenced foreign investment projects in the country in the last five months.

Ethiopia attracted an FDI total of \$3.75 billion in the last Ethiopian fiscal calendar that ended on 7th July 2018.

In related news, the Commission said it had registered a total capital of \$261 million, from 69 investment projects that have begun operation.

DIASPORA CORNER

Ethiopian Diaspora Trust Fund in full swing; more than \$2.3 million raised

The Ethiopian Diaspora Trust Fund (EDTF) has so far collected more than \$2.3 million following Prime Minister Abiy's call to the Diaspora to contribute their share to the process of building a better Ethiopia. The response so far has demonstrated the tremendous power in Ethiopian unity.



The Fund is a not-for-profit organization working in coordination with the government to directly

involve diaspora Ethiopians in improving the lives of the Ethiopian people, by raising funds for vital socio-economic projects in Ethiopia. The Fund was created by the official EDTF Advisory Council appointed by His Excellency, Prime Minister Dr Abiy Ahmed on 9th August 2018.

In October, the Fund was officially launched through its official website www.ethiopiustrustfund.org, with the aim of raising money starting from \$1 a day. Donations can be made online via the website, as well as via bank transfer and their GoFundMe page.

For further information, contact EDTF directly on info@ethiopiustrustfund.org and follow them on social media (@ethiotrustfund).

Ethiopians Raise Over 12.3 billion Birr for the Renaissance Dam

Ethiopians at home and abroad have raised more than 12.3 billion birr for the ongoing construction of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) through the purchase of bonds and donations.



Briefing members of the Ethiopian Parliament, Minister of Water, Irrigation and Energy, Engineer Dr Seleshi Bekele said the Ethiopian Diaspora alone have raised \$46 million through donation and other funding mechanisms.

He urged the people to continue their support.

The dam will start generating 750MW of power in December 2020 and works were also underway to fully complete the project by 2022. "The completion of the dam is a national pride," he said.

The \$4 billion 6,450MW will be Africa's biggest upon completion.

Commercial Bank of Ethiopia launches its first international mobile money transfer service to Ethiopia with WorldRemit

The leading bank in Ethiopia, Commercial Bank of Ethiopia (CBE), has partnered with leading digital money transfer service, WorldRemit, to launch its first ever international mobile money transfer service to Ethiopia.



Commercial Bank of Ethiopia is the oldest and largest bank in Ethiopia, serving over 20 million account holders. The bank shares WorldRemit's commitment to increasing convenience for customers through digital solutions, offering comprehensive online and mobile banking services.

Transactions to Ethiopia via WorldRemit grew by over 130% in 2018, driven by the rapid expansion of its partner network.

Head of East and Central Africa at WorldRemit, Sharon Kinyanjui, commented: "Our new strategic partnership will extend financial services to the unbanked population in Ethiopia, allowing currently underserved groups, including rural communities and low-income households, to receive money directly to their mobile phones."

Remittances play an important role in Ethiopia's economy. The National Bank of Ethiopia estimates that the country received over \$5 billion in remittances for the fiscal year 2017/ 2018. However, only 35% of the Ethiopian population have an account with a financial institution. The new international mobile money transfer service offers the diaspora a low-cost and secure way to send money home directly to any mobile phone in Ethiopia.



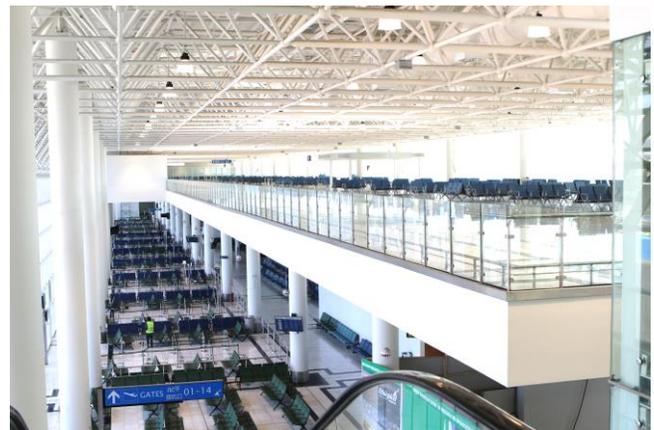
Ethiopian Airlines opens new terminal and new Addis Ababa hotel

Ethiopian Airlines hosted a double celebration on 27th January as they launched their new state-of-the-art passenger terminal at Addis Ababa Bole International Airport and officially opened their own brand new ultra-modern 5-star Skylight Hotel.



The launch ceremony was attended by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, African Union Chairperson Mr Moussa Faki, ministers, high-level government officials, Ethiopian Airlines Board Members, Ethiopian Airlines Group CEO Mr Tewolde GebreMariam, Executive Management Members and other invited guests.

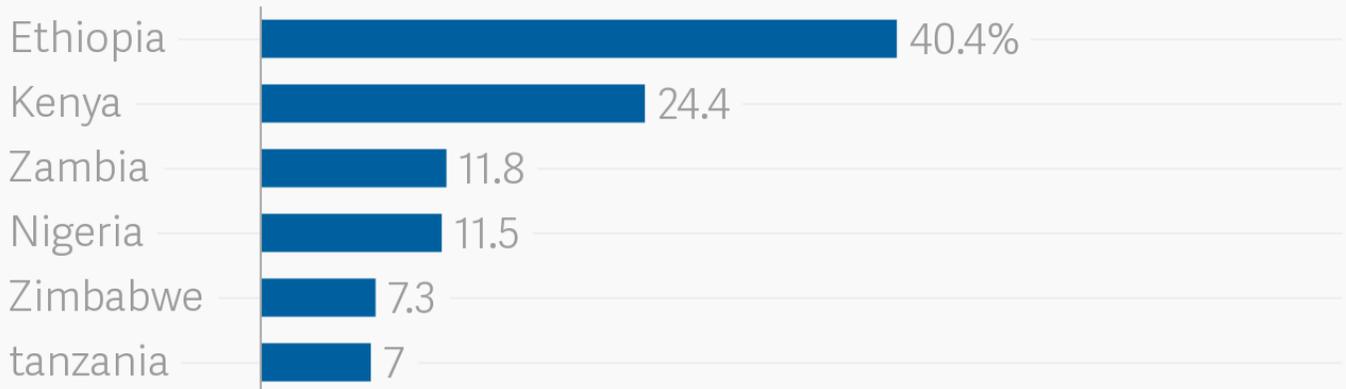
Addressing the gathering, the Group CEO said, “While Addis Ababa Airport overtook Dubai as the largest air transport hub between Africa and the rest of the world, this grand terminal building is further evidence of the development of Bole Airport as one of the largest and most convenient global aviation hubs.”



The new \$363 million passenger terminal will help serve the huge increase in volume through and into the airport, driven by its strategic location and convenient connectivity options.

Ethiopia is growing visitor bookings to Africa faster

Year-on-year growth (Nov. 2018 - Jan. 2019)



△ T L △ S | Data: ForwardKeys

The airport has tripled its passenger capacity and will now be able to accommodate up to 22 million passengers annually from its current 7 million – making it the biggest in Africa.

Last year, data from the travel intelligence agency ForwardKeys showed that Addis Ababa’s Bole International Airport has overtaken Dubai as the leading gateway to Africa, thanks to the success of the Airlines’ expansion drive within the continent and relaxed visa schemes.

...luxury hotel

The \$65 million Ethiopian Skylight Hotel offers much needed 5-star accommodation in this fast-growing capital city, Addis Ababa.



Conveniently located adjacent to the airport, its unique aircraft shape design provides 373 guest rooms and spacious executive suites, 4 restaurants including the largest Chinese restaurant in Africa, 2 bars, a swimming pool, gym, health centre, café and gift shops. The hotel also has 5 meeting rooms and a huge conference hall offering Addis a convenient location for global and regional conferences and events.

Ethiopia has abundant tourist sites across the country and Ethiopian Airlines want to take every opportunity for travellers to extend their stay in the country.

Tewolde GebreMariam commented “Ethiopian Skylight Hotel will enable the airline to offer packaged tour and travel programmes and enable Ethiopian Airlines to attract about a third of tourists out of the 6 million passengers transiting through Bole Airport to visit Ethiopia.”

At the inauguration event, Prime Minister Abiy remarked, “Ethiopian Airlines is our national pride and a special icon among our companies. We would like all employees of the airline here and elsewhere to know that we speak of you with pride. The airline’s offer for employees to own shares in the hotel is important as it boosts a sense of ownership among staff and will serve as a model for other companies to emulate.

Today’s inauguration of the new passenger terminal shows that we have a lot of work ahead of us. We expect the Board and the Management not to be complacent with the new terminal, but rather to aim for a bigger facility with a capacity to accommodate at least 100 million passengers.”

The PM also set a new challenge for Ethiopian Airlines: to build a 100-million passenger mega airport in Bishoftu, a resort town with many tourist attractions located just over an hour southeast of Addis Ababa.

Ethiopian Airlines is implementing Vision 2025, a 15-year strategic plan, aimed at making it Africa's leading aviation group. Founded 74 years ago, the Airline commands the lion's share of the Pan-African passenger and cargo network operating the youngest and most modern fleet to more than 119 international passenger and cargo destinations across five continents, with over 61 of those in Africa alone.

...Ethiopian Airlines begins free transit tours

Transit passengers using Ethiopian Airlines can now enjoy a taste of Ethiopia for free, courtesy of Ethiopian Holidays.

The new complimentary city tour package takes transiting passengers, who have 6-8 hours in transit time in Addis Ababa, on a journey through the political capital of Africa and will include visits to landmarks of the city, the National Museum, Ethiopian coffee-tasting and souvenir shopping.



Addis Ababa cityscape

CEO Tewelde GebreMariam said of the initiative, "As travel has gone digital with our innovative technology solutions including Ethiopian Mobile App and online platforms, the huge influx of transit passengers in Addis Ababa, the world's gateway to Africa, can enjoy personalized travel experiences. Ethiopian Mobile App enables passengers to secure their visa electronically, within 4 hours, from any part of the world, as well as book their flights, pay online using credit or debit cards, mobile money, e-Wallet and bank transfer, check-in and issue boarding pass seamlessly.

As we continue to deliver the best for our customers, we are pleased to offer complimentary offerings to our global transiting passengers so they can savour every moment and experience the real taste of Addis Ababa during their brief stay."

Ethiopia among The Sunday Times Travel best holiday destinations for 2019

The Sunday Times Travel team have selected 19 must-see destinations for the year ahead.



For Ethiopia, local expert Zablou Beyene, explains why now is very much the time to visit his homeland.

The peace agreement between Ethiopia and Eritrea last July has been a fantastic development for tourism in the region. The border between the two countries is now open to tourists, and from Aksum — the Ethiopian home of the Ark of the Covenant — the Eritrean capital, Asmara, is just three hours' drive.



This offers exciting possibilities for 2019, allowing adventurous travellers to combine big-ticket items such as the rock-hewn churches of Lalibela with train journeys to Massawa, on the Red Sea coast, the mysterious desert islands of the Dahlak Archipelago and the Bale and Simien mountains.

The fauna alone is magnificent: lion-like Gelada monkeys, huge Walia Ibex and one of Africa's great secrets, a population of black-maned lions in the Haremma rainforest.

Read the full guide at <http://bit.ly/VisitEthiopia2>.

Danakil Depression named top adventure travel destination

The British Backpacker Society, established to promote adventure tourism in largely off-the-beaten-track areas, has named Ethiopia's Danakil Depression as the top choice for adventure experiences for 2019.



The Danakil Depression is one of the hottest and driest places on earth and, at 123 metres below sea level, is also one of the lowest, making it one of the most difficult places on earth for life to flourish. These factors, however, have created a fascinating, otherworldly landscape. Speaking to Lonely Planet about the choices, the society's co-founder Samuel Joynson called it "one of the most exciting places in world travel."

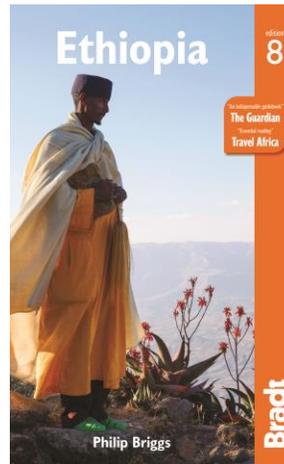
"In the space of just a few days in the region, you can stare into the bubbling heart of an active volcano at Erta Ale, reassess your understanding of the world's geology in the otherworldly colours of Dallol, and drive across seemingly endless salt-flats in the Danakil's impossibly desolate interior. It's not always comfortable, it's not always glamorous, but it is a real adventure from start to finish," he said.

Adam Sloper, another co-founder, also said the destination was particularly timely for 2019. "The Ethiopian e-visa has made travel to the country easier than ever before, the British Foreign Office has recently removed its travel warnings on the Danakil region, and the area still receives so few foreign tourists that it feels like a real adventure."

Danakil Depression is among a comprehensive list of 30 incredible experiences that will appeal to only the most adventurous travellers. The list was

chosen by the Society's members, all of whom have not only an interest in travel, but in tourism trends and international development with an emphasis on sustainable travel.

Bradt travel guides launches 8th Ethiopia edition



The 8th edition of Bradt's Ethiopia guide was launched in December 2018. Updated by the original author, Philip Briggs, the world's foremost writer of Africa travel guides, it is one of the most comprehensive, detailed and thorough guides available, particularly known for its strength of background information, coverage of off-the-beaten track areas,

and in-depth details of hotels and other tourist facilities. It also contains far more maps than other guides.

Recent years have seen a notable rise in domestic and foreign private investment in the development of new hotels and national parks; this new edition includes all the most up-to-date details reflecting all the most recent changes, from development of tourist facilities to improved road infrastructure.

"Wrapping up the eighth edition of this guidebook, it's strange to think that almost a quarter of a century has passed since I first explored Ethiopia to put together what would become the first modern guidebook to a then practically unknown destination," says Philip Briggs in a statement. "Over four recent trips to Ethiopia to research the seventh and eighth editions, I was struck repeatedly – just as I'd been two decades earlier – by what a wonderfully exciting and varied country it is. I'm already looking forward to my next visit!"

The publication of Bradt's new Ethiopia guide will be complemented by a digital marketing campaign highlighting Ethiopia, and the many reasons to visit. This includes making Ethiopia their Destination of the Month for February.

Derartu Tulu Elected Vice President of East African Athletics Region

Ethiopian long-distance legend, Derartu Tulu, interim President of the Ethiopian Athletics Federation (EAF), has been elected as Vice President of the East African Athletics Region (EAAR).

The announcement was made during the EAAR Congress held in Addis Ababa. Representatives of athletics federations from Ethiopia, Kenya, Eritrea, Uganda, Sudan, Rwanda, South Sudan and Tanzania attended the meeting.

The Congress elected Athletics Kenya President Jackson Tuwei as President, Uganda's Athletics Federation President Dominic Otuchet as Senior Vice President and Sudan's Engineer Saddig A. Ibrahim as General Secretary of EAAR, respectively.

Derartu also became a member of the board of directors of the African Athletics Confederation (AAC).

Athletics Roundup

...Genzebe Dibaba clocks second fastest indoor 1500m in Karlsruhe

Living up to her poster girl billing, Genzebe Dibaba powered to the second fastest indoor 1500m of all time in the opening leg of the 2018 IAAF World Indoor Tour in Karlsruhe.



Genzebe's sensational 3:57.45 run was one of five world-leading performances.

Clearly, Genzebe likes to race in Karlsruhe. She previously set the 3:55.17 world indoor record at this meeting four years ago. She clocked 4:00.13 two years prior to that, the 10th fastest run of all time.

Hagos Gebrhiwet and Yomif Kejelcha bided their time before pouncing in the men's 3000m to leave Karlsruhe with an Ethiopian 1-2.



Hagos Gebrhiwet, the 3000m winner in Karlsruhe

Hagos won the race in a world-leading time of 7:37.91 with compatriot Yomif in second place in 7:38.67, a personal best.

...Biruktayit Degefa enjoys women's hat trick in Houston Marathon



Biruktayit Degefa became the third woman in Houston history to win the Houston marathon three times. Biruktayit set a personal best of 2:23:28, the second-fastest winning time in race history, only 14 seconds shy of Alemitu Abera's 2012 record of 2:23:14.

It was her sixth-consecutive appearance in Houston.

Fellow Ethiopians Belaynesh Fikadu finished as runner-up in 2:26:41, while 19-year old Meseret Belete, the world junior record-holder in the half marathon, making her debut at the distance, finished third in 2:26:51, for an Ethiopian sweep of the podium.

...Getaneh Molla smashes Dubai Marathon course record

It was an all-Ethiopian podium in the men's race at the Dubai Marathon with Getaneh Molla producing the **fastest marathon debut in history**.



Molla's winning time of 2:03:34 took 26 seconds off the course record that was set last year and puts him sixth on the world all-time list.

"I was hoping for maybe 2:05 or 2:06," said Getaneh of his debut marathon. Later this year he hopes to contest the 10,000m at the IAAF World Athletics Championships Doha 2019.

Fellow Ethiopian Herpasa Negasa, whose previous best was 2:09:14, finished in second place with a huge PB of 2:03:40, moving to eighth on the world all-time list. Asefa Mengstu came in third place in 2:04:24.

In the women's race, Kenya's Ruth Chepngetich won the race, becoming the first Kenyan woman since 2006 to win in Dubai, followed by Ethiopia's Worknesh Degefa in second place in 2:17:41, moving to fourth on the world all-time list. Her performance is the **fastest runner-up time of any marathon in history** and a 15-second

improvement on Tirunesh Dibaba's Ethiopian record. The only other race where two women have broken 2:18 previously was in London in 2017.

Workenesh Edesa of Ethiopia took third place with 2:21:05.

...Yomif Kejelcha impresses at IAAF World Indoor in Boston

At the New Balance Indoor Grand Prix on 26th January, Yomif Kejelcha kicked off the IAAF World Indoor Tour in style by winning the men's mile in a world-leading time and Ethiopian indoor record of 3:51.70.



Yomif is now the 12th-fastest indoor miler in history and has set his eyes on the outdoor 5000m world record this summer.

In the women's mile, Ethiopia's Dawit Seyaum finished in third place in 4:26.84.

Hagos Gebrhiwet also finished the men's 3000m with world-leading time of 7:37.41.

In Northern Ireland for the IAAF Northern Ireland Cross Country event, Ethiopia's Meskerem Mamo held off compatriot Hawi Feysa to win the women's race.

Meskerem, the world's top junior over 3,000m and 5,000m in 2018, had a metre to spare over her compatriot at the finish although they were both credited with the same time of 29:10 - Kenya's Pauline Kamulu finished in third place.

ETHIOPIA IN THE NEWS

Ethiopia is right to liberate refugees from camps



disaster.

“More than 25 million people are refugees, forced to flee their homelands by conflict, drought or

Many of these unfortunate people end up in refugee camps, struggling to build new lives in some of the most miserable places on earth”, writes Ian Birrell. “I have visited camps on four continents. Some are like menacing prisons, filled with frustrated families guarded like criminals, their freedoms and mobility curtailed. Others are sprawling tent cities rife with gangs, guns and sexual abuse.

“So celebrate a progressive new law passed in Ethiopia that gives more than 900,000 refugees the right to live outside camps, work more freely, attend regular schools and open bank accounts. As this rapidly transforming country recognises, offering refugees the right to education and employment boosts the local economy as well as enhancing lives and reducing reliance on aid.

Refugees, like other people, simply want to live and work in dignity rather than be stuck in limbo. Let us hope other nations follow suit and that we see an end to refugee camps.”

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

The 10 coolest places to go in 2019

Forbes “[Ethiopia] is stepping on to the world’s stage as a crucible of ancient culture, where travellers have the opportunity to experience the intersection of Christianity, Judaism and Islam through unparalleled cultural immersion... The country is home to rock-hewn churches built into incredible landscapes, rare 4th and 5th-century antiquities and tribal villages that have lived the same way for centuries. In the past two years, new lodges (such as Limalimo Lodge and Lale’s Camp) have opened and flight connections are being added to previously out-of-reach locations like the Omo Valley.”

Read more at <http://bit.ly/Forbes-Travel>

Addis Ababa City Guide: Where to Eat, Drink, Shop and Stay in Ethiopia’s Lively Capital



INDEPENDENT

Addis Ababa is a city of contrasts – new skyscrapers stand next to traditional markets where rural customs are preserved.

The city is growing rapidly and tourism in Ethiopia is on the rise, but many travellers still see the capital as a mere stopover on the way to more remote areas of the country.

The hectic city can be daunting, but “Addis”, as it is known to locals, is an exciting cultural hub with plenty to see and do – and excellent food.

From roadside *buna* (coffee) stands with the traditional coffee ceremony setup to cultural shows to shopping at the sprawling Merkato, billed as the largest market in Africa, head over to *The Independent* to read how to make the most of a trip to this buzzy African city.

Read more at <http://bit.ly/VisitETH7>

Ethiopia's 'church forests' are incredible oases of green



NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

Priests, scientists, and local communities are joining forces to save Ethiopia's church forests, which have served as crucial centres of local communities since the fourth century A.D.

The churches of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church - the dominant religious group in Ethiopia, with nearly 50 million members - were almost always nestled in patches of vibrant, shady forest.

Over the past century, nearly all of the native forests in the South Gonder province have disappeared, cleared to make way for wheat fields and grazing land - agricultural endeavours that support the region’s rapidly growing population. Many of the church forests, though, remain, protected by their religious stewards and the communities around them. They are tiny fragments of a lost past, and the

centre of hope for conservation and future restoration.



The Entos Eyesus church and its forest fill an entire tiny island in the middle of Lake Tana, near Bahir Dar.

“They were so passionate from the start because they saw themselves as stewards of all God’s creatures. I, as a conservation scientist, believe we have a responsibility to save biodiversity. That’s the same goal,” Meg Lowman, biologist, said.

The forests provide a kind of “respectful covering” for the churches at their centres and the riches they hold. Some of them are estimated to be 1,500 years old - tiny, ancient islands of historic habitat in a changed landscape.

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

NEWS IN BRIEF

Ethiopia’s Lt. Gen. Tigabu appointment new AMISOM Commander

Lt. Gen. Tigabu Yilma Wondimhunegn from Ethiopia has been appointed the new Force Commander of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), taking over from Lt. Gen. Jim Beesigye Owoyesigire, who served in that capacity since January 2018.

Gen. Tigabu has 34-years’ experience in the military and has served the Ethiopia National Defence Forces (ENDF) in several capacities, including as Division, Brigade, Battalion, and Company Commander.

Prior to his appointment, he served as a member of the Defence Council and Head of Defence Logistics Main Department, where he was instrumental in planning, delivery, generation and integration of the Defence Capability.

Ethiopia to hold fourth population census in April

Ethiopia’s National Planning Commission said the fourth population and housing census will begin on 7th April.

“Preparations have been completed to carry out a transparent and credible census in two months,” Dr Fitsum Assefa, Commissioner of the National Planning Commission, told reporters.

Global Positioning Systems (GPS) and other technologies will be used in the census.

Ethiopia’s current population is estimated to be over 100 million, the second largest in Africa after Nigeria.

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