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The diversion of the course of the Abay (Blue Nile) River was successfully undertaken to make way for the construction of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD). The river has been successfully done to utilize the resource for national interests. The benefit of the GERD which is the fruit of the May 28 Victory is not only for the nation but also for neighboring countries, he said. He also called on the public to continue the support it has extended to the construction of the dam since inception until the end (State media, May 29).- The move, which was called "historic" by Ethiopian government spokesperson Bereket Simon, will outrage Egypt and Sudan, which are downstream, because it will negatively affect their water quotas. The Renaissance Dam is one of four dams that could be built along the Blue Nile, one of the two branches of the Nile River, which provides Egypt with round 60% of its annual 55 billion cub.m of Nile water (Ahramonline, May 28).

Thousands of Ethiopians demonstrated Sunday in Addis Ababa, the first political protest against the country's ruling party since 2005. The demonstrators were shouting they wanted their human rights to be ensured, that political and religious prisoners should be released, and accusing state television of only broadcasting propaganda. "We have been raising lots of questions for the government and one is to release those political party leaders and journalists," said Getaneh Banch, a member of the Blue Party, the opposition party that organized the demonstration. One of the opposition leaders jailed after the 2005 elections, Yacob Hailemariam, says this demonstration is significant for Ethiopia. "This will definitely encourage people to demand their rights that they have been very quiet about, until today," he said. Many of the protesters were young men with a Muslim background who do not necessarily support the Blue Party, but do feel a change in government is needed ((VOA, June 2).

Journalist Muluken Tesfaw of Ethio-Mihidar newspaper has been taken in police custody by Benishangul-Gumuz police. The journalist has been gathering information in different parts of the region in connection with the recent eviction of Amhara nationals from the region. Muluken was arrested by local militia while discharging his press duties in Baruda and Dubi kebeles in Bulen Woreda of Metekel Zone (Ethio-Mihidar, May 28).

Ethiopia and Italy signed a three-year cooperation framework agreement (2013-2015) amounting to 98.9€. The agreement will focus on the two priority sectors of agriculture and rural development, as well as provision of basic services. Finance and Economic Development State Minister Ahmed Shide said some 65 m € of the funds is in the form of soft loan and the rest in grant (state media, May 30).

Ethiopia's government said it won't cooperate with a probe into whether the World Bank violated its own policies by funding a program in which thousands of people were allegedly relocated to make way for agriculture investors. Ethnic Anuak people in Ethiopia's southwestern Gambella region and rights groups including Human Rights Watch last year accused the Washington based lender of funding a program overseen by soldiers to forcibly resettle 45,000 households. The Inspection Panel of the World Bank, an independent complaints mechanism, began an investigation in October into the allegations, which donors and the government have denied. "We are not going to cooperate with the Inspection Panel," Getachew Reda, a spokesman for Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn, said. "To an extent that there's a need for cooperation, it's not going to be with the Inspection Panel, but with the World Bank" (Bloomberg, May 28).

Donors provided \$3.5 bio of aid to Ethiopia in 2011, which was 11.3% of gross national income, according to the OECD. The World Bank said that while officials on PBS-funded salaries may have "responsibilities related" to resettlement, this doesn't mean the two programs were directly linked according to the panel (Bloomberg, May 28).

Ethiopia will sign agreements with China's ZTE Corp and Huawei Technologies Co Ltd in a "few weeks" to expand its mobile phone infrastructure and double subscribers to 40 million, a senior Ethiopian official said. ZTE Corp, China's second-largest telecoms equipment maker, has already been involved in developing phone and internet services in the Horn of Africa nation for several years reported. Africa's rapidly expanding telecoms industry has come to symbolize the

continent's economic growth, with subscribers across the continent totaling almost 650 million last year, up from just 25 million in 2001, according to the World Bank (Reuters, May 30).