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A British man who claims he was tortured in an Ethiopian prison is facing the death penalty after being found guilty of terrorism offences. Ali Adorus, a security guard from east London, was subjected to electrocution, hooding and beatings during his 18-month imprisonment in the East African country, according to allegations made against Ethiopia and Britain to the United Nations High Commission. Before leaving Britain to visit family in Ethiopia in 2012, Mr. Adorus had complained that he had been targeted by MI5 and the Metropolitan Police over alleged links to Islamic extremism. His lawyers also allege that some information contained in a false confession – which he claims was beaten out of him in an Ethiopian prison – could have been provided only by “British intelligence” (*The Independent, Dec. 30*).

Nicole Schilit, CPE's Journalist Assistance Associate, wrote on Dec 30 that a sharp increase in the number of Ethiopian journalists fleeing into exile has been recorded by the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPE) in the past 12 months. More than 30--twice the number of exiles CPJ documented in 2012 and 2013 combined—were forced to leave after the government began a campaign of arrests. In October, Nicole Schilit of CPJ's Journalist Assistance program and Martial Tourneur of partner group Reporters Without Borders traveled to Nairobi in Kenya to meet some of those forced to flee.

Ethiopia's Water and Energy Ministry official revealed on Dec. 29 that his country had resolved its differences with Egypt over a study commissioned to assess the likely impact of a multibillion-dollar "Grand Renaissance Dam". Accordingly, a three party committee on the dam will soon resume discussions, Bizuneh Tolcha, head of public relations at the ministry said. The project has strained relations between Ethiopia and Egypt for several months. Tolcha said that, now that the dispute between Ethiopia and Egypt over the project study had been resolved, Egypt, Ethiopia and Sudan would select a consultancy firm to conduct the survey (*Anadolu Agency, Dec. 30*).

Land-locked Ethiopia will start using Sudan's main seaport on the Red Sea for importing goods, the Ethiopian ministry of transport disclosed. Ethiopia has been using Port Sudan only to export its products to the international market, and this will be its first to use the Port of Sudan to ship its goods. State Minister Getachew Mengestie told the *ENA* that the move was taken to cope up with expanding demand from the country's growing economy. Mengestie said the Ethiopian government has signed a deal with its Sudanese counterpart to import 50,000 t of fertilizers via Port Sudan. The Horn of Africa's nation currently uses the port of Djibouti to execute over 90 % its total import export trade, making Djibouti Ethiopia's prime economic partner. In the past, Ethiopia had been using Eritrea's port of Assab; the closest port to the country. Ethiopia is currently looking for alternative sea ports in neighboring countries of Sudan, Kenya and Somalia to ease increasing dependence on Djibouti. The Ethiopian government is currently working with counterparts in the autonomous Somaliland region in Somalia to use Berbera port (*Sudan Tribune, Dec. 31*).

Julphar Ethiopia Pharmaceutical Industry will start Africa's first insulin factory as an expansion of its factory. Julphar, which was inaugurated in Feb. 2013, is owned by the UAE based Julphar Gulf Pharmaceutical Industries and a local firm Med-tech Ethiopia. It was established with a capital of 170m Birr. Medtech owns 45% of the total shares while Julphar takes the rest. Country Director of the UAE based company, Mukemil Abdella, did not reveal the capacity of the plant and just said his company intends to make Ethiopia the insulin hub of Africa. The factory will be built on an 11,051 m² plot of land. The factory will be worth 1bio Birr and is expected to begin production in two years. Julphar Ethiopia has a capacity to produce 25 million bottles of suspensions and syrups, 500 million tablets and 170 million capsules annually (*Fortune, Jan. 1*).

Addis Ababa University (AAU), in collaboration with the Tianjin University of Technology and Education (TUTE) of China, inaugurated the Confucius Institute. “By extending our partnership to the areas of science and technology education and research partnerships with Chinese universities, we will have mutual benefit that will contribute to the development of the two countries,” said Dr. Admasu Tsegaye, President of the AAU at the inauguration ceremony. Dr. Admasu said AAU opened a BA Degree Programme in Chinese Language in 2012. The interest of Ethiopian students to learn Chinese has increased, and this year, 52 students have selected it as their major in their studies, he added. The president praised the decision by Beijing Foreign Studies University to offer Amharic Language courses, the third language to be embraced in the African Indigenous Language Programme. Dr. Samuel Kifle, Director General of Higher Education Administrative Affairs with the Ministry of Education, said that the opening of the Confucius Institute is an indicator of the growing economic and social ties which the two nations enjoy. Prof. Yan Bing, Vice President of Tianjin University, said the Confucius Institute aims to enhance the understanding of Chinese language and culture by peoples around the world, to develop friendly relations between China and other countries, and to promote harmony and multiculturalism all over the world (*Ethiopian Herald, Dec 30*).

Ethiopia's Muslims on Saturday marked the birthday of Islam's prophet Muhammad [PBUH] with a major and colorful celebration at the Grand Anwar Mosque, the largest and oldest Islamic house of prayer in the Ethiopian capital. Similar events were also held in different parts across this country to commemorate the birthday of Islam's prophet. The prophet's birthday is, however, a special day for Ethiopia's Muslims who always take pride in being the descendants of people who hundreds of years ago gave refuge to some of the companions of Muhammad when they escaped persecution in the Arabian Peninsula (*Anadolu Agency, Jan. 3*).