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Ethiopia's ruling party, the Ethiopian People's Democratic Front (EPRDF) has delayed the appointment of a new party chief and prime minister. EPRDF executive council members in their closed-door meeting disagreed on the election procedures for the appointment of a new leader. The delay posed unexpected internal political tension and power squabbling among the ruling elite. On August 21, in its meeting the Ministers' Council (Cabinet) endorsed Mr. Hailemariam Desalegn as an acting prime minister but in Tuesday's meeting, the ruling party contradicted the earlier decision of the Cabinet. The Cabinet has already announced Mr. Hailemariam as an acting "prime minister" and he should be sworn by parliament. - Further delay of naming Mr. Hailemariam party chief exposed the growing internal power struggle among the four ethnic based members of the ruling party coalition: Amhara, Tigray, Oromo and Southern people. The oldest and most powerful member of the coalition and core party of the late Meles, the Tigrean People's Liberation Front (TPLF) is in a defensive position to maintain its 21 years security and economic dominance. Mr. Hailemariam, from the small Wolayta ethnic group, represents the southern part of the country and was promoted in 2010 by the late Meles. Oromo and Amhara parties of the ruling party demand the end of Tigreans' 21 years dominance in politics. After the EPRDF endorses its candidate for premiership, parliament will install the new leader (Daily Nation, Sep. 6).

Egyptian authorities fearful of a monopoly on Nile waters received agreement from Khartoum to build an airbase in Sudan, to launch attacks on Ethiopian damming facilities, claims the anonymous media outlet, Wikileaks. Wikileaks has leaked files allegedly from the Texas-based global intelligence company, Stratfor, which quote an anonymous "high-level Egyptian source," claiming the Egyptian ambassador to Lebanon said in 2010 his nation would do anything to prevent the secession of South Sudan because of the political implications it will have for Egypt's access to the Nile (Sudan Tribune, Sep. 3). - Ethiopia's massive dam project has seen much concern from Cairo and Khartoum, who fear the establishment of Africa's largest dam would affect previous colonial deals on Nile water-sharing. It is to be built some 40 km upstream from Sudan on the Blue Nile. But even before the official announcement of Ethiopia's prime minister's passing on August 20, Egyptian officials told that they believed a post-Meles region could bring forth new negotiations and compromise over Nile water. An Egyptian ministry of water and irrigation told last month that with the combination of Egypt's new President Mohamed Morsi and the potential of seeing a new leader in Ethiopia, they hoped the tension over Nile River water could be resolved (Bikyamasr, Sep. 4).

Ethiopia's government has held peace talks with the Ogaden National Liberation Front, an outlawed ethnic-Somali rebel group, Communications Minister Bereket Simon said. "It's a very positive step and we will pursue negotiations up to the last and try to bring all concerned in that area to the constitutional framework," Bereket said today. Proposals to end the conflict in the Ogaden area of Ethiopia's Somali regional state were agreed during initial talks on Sep. 6 and Sept. 7 in Nairobi, the rebel group said today. Ethiopian government officials and ethnic Somali rebels have met to set a framework for negotiations aimed at ending a 28-year insurgency in the Ogaden area of Ethiopia's Somali regional state (Bloomberg, Sep. 8), - Both the government and rebels from the Ogaden National Liberation Front, the ONLF, said the preliminary talks took place Thursday and Friday in the Kenyan capital, Nairobi. An ONLF statement said an unspecified date had been set for further talks. It also said both sides have agreed to specific goodwill and confidence-building measures ahead of formal negotiations (VOA, Sep. 8).

The Chinese government has announced a grant and soft loan amounting to 23m USD for development endeavors in Ethiopia. According to Acting Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn, China is keen to strengthen the long-standing multi-lateral ties between the two countries. He said China will enhance its support to Ethiopia in the economic and diplomatic spheres and the transfer of science and technology (ENA, Sep. 3).