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Reporters Without Borders said it strongly condemns a decision by the Ethiopian Broadcasting Authority (EBA), which regulates all the media, to withdraw the publication license of the Addis Times, an opposition bimonthly magazine created after the authorities closed the outspoken weekly Feteh last August. "The grounds given by the EBA are not of the kind that justify such a severe measure as closure under Ethiopian law. This sanction must be lifted at once. We call on the authorities to put a stop to this harassment of the Addis Times and its journalists." - In a letter, the EBA accused the Addis Times of failing to report a change of owner and change of address, failing to send the two obligatory copies of each issue to the National Archives, and a lack of transparency in its funding. No evidence was provided to support these claims or the punishment imposed. The magazine's director-general disputes the allegations and regards the punishment as illegal and unconstitutional. Ethiopian law provides for a fine of up to 15,000 birr for contravention of this kind but not for closure or withdrawal of a license. The constitution meanwhile guarantees freedom of expression and media freedom. The Addis Times was published for only four months before this sanction, while its predecessor, Feteh, was subjected to an avalanche of legal proceedings before being closed for good by the authorities last August (Reporters Without Borders, statement, Feb, 8). Students of Axum University have boycotted classes in protest against the dismissal of ten fellow students on the orders of the university. The students voiced their objection to the dismissals during a protest rally on Feb- 2. The protestors said the dismissed students had all the right to voice their objections peacefully and that there was no need to expel them in a hasty and irresponsible way. The ten expelled students only objected to the quality of food in the campus and did nothing wrong, they said. The protesting students proceeded to the town shouting their complaints and police stopped them. The students, however, made it clear that they would not resume classes unless and until the expelled students are re-admitted (Reporter, Feby 3).

A contingent of Ethiopian troops were ambushed by Al Shabaab fighters as they made their way from El Barde in Bakool region in south central Somalia. According to local media in Bakool, the Ethiopian troops were headed back from surveying the town of El Barde - which is located in Bay and Bakool region - when they were ambushed near Yed, a village that lies in the middle of El Barde and Hudur, where Ethiopian troops are stationed. According to local sources, there were several casualties on both sides and fighting is still ongoing in Bakool region (Garowe Online, Feb.7).

The Ministry of Finance and Economic Development has announced that Ethiopia's economic growth performance during the past two years of the Growth and Transformation Plan has averaged 10%. The State Minister, Dr. Abraham Tekeste added that growth in the remaining three years of the Plan will also reach double digit figures with the activities being implemented from now until the end of the Plan. According to Dr. Abraham in the last financial year 2011/12 (2004 E.C.) Ethiopia's economy showed 8.5% growth, with the agriculture sector seeing 4.9 % growth and the industry and service sectors registering 13.6% and 11.1% growth respectively. During the year, the country registered a national savings rate of 16%, surpassing the 15% target set by the Plan. Investment rose by 6.7% from 27.9% to 34.6%. Ethiopian gross domestic product is now estimated to have reached 737 bio birr, and the per capita income grew from US\$387 dollars in 2003 E.C. to US\$513 dollars in 2004 E.C. (state television, Feb. 5)

Malaysian palm oil manufacturer, Pacific Interlink, is set to erect the largest ever edible oil refinery in Ethiopia, which will produce 300,000t of oil at an estimated cost of 401.1m Br (Fortune, Feb. 3). PPESA did so as part of its role in designing projects for the establishment of new enterprises that are able fill gaps in the economy, but are as yet unsatisfied by the private sector. Local oil production, in Ethiopia, only meets 20% of the consumption, which reached 285,210t in 2011/12, according to a study conducted by the Ethiopian Pulses, Oilseeds & Spices Exporters Association. - This is despite the fact that oilseeds are a large part of the country's crop production and the third largest export commodity for the country, having earned it 323.8m \$ in 2010/11. Such a gap has led Ethiopia to rely on imports, of mostly palm-oil, for its edible oil consumption. These imports were supplied by the private sector until January

2011, when prices skyrocketed leading the government to successively introduce a price cap, and later, in May, take over the import of palm-oil altogether, distributing it at a subsidized price for consumers (Fortune, Feb. 3).

A modern pharmaceutical factory constructed in collaboration with Meditech Ethiopia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) based Julphar Company with 170m Birr was inaugurated. PM Hailemariam Desalegn said the construction of the factory indicates the growing relation between Ethiopia and the UAE. Hailemariam said the factory will significantly contribute in import substitution. Julphar Company Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Ayman Saleh said the factory is equipped with state-of-the-art technology enabling production of Julphar products not only for the local market but also for the African continent. The CEO said upon becoming fully operational, the plant will produce 25 million bottles of suspension and syrup, 500 million tablets and 200 million capsules per year. The factory has created 500 jobs. The CEO of Meditech Ethiopia, Dr. Mohammed Nuri, said the construction of the plant would be completed within a year (state media, Feb. 7).

A financial grant amounting to 432m USD is reported to have been allotted by the Fast Track Initiative (FIT), a consortium of multi-lateral donor group constituting of the World Bank, the United Kingdom, Finland, Italy and the Netherlands for Ethiopia's General Education Quality Improvement Program Phase Two which will be launched next July 2013. Demeke Mekonnen, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Education, expressed thanks for the timely and apt recognition for Ethiopia's success story in the implementation of the General Education Quality Improvement Phase One, which will wind up in July 2013 (WIC, Feb. 8).

The high incidence of bovine tuberculosis (BTB) in cattle on large dairy farms in central Ethiopia threatens farmers' incomes and public health, according to a study. As a result, the study calls for a concerted effort to control the disease and prevent the transmission of *Mycobacterium bovis*, the bacteria that causes it, to humans consuming dairy products from these farms. Around 30% of the nearly 3,000 dairy cattle from 88 herds around the capital that were investigated for the study tested positive for BTB, while more than half the herds contained cattle that gave positive tests. According to the authors, livestock is extremely important for people's livelihoods in Ethiopia and so the disease's impact on cattle increases their financial burden. The researchers suggest that "government and policymakers should work together with stakeholders to design methods for the control of BTB in intensive farms in Ethiopia". Mesfin Sahle, director of the National Animal Health Diagnostics and Investigation Center in Ethiopia and one of the paper's authors, says that separating sick animals from the herd for slaughter is a good way to tame the disease (SciDev.Net, Feb. 4).