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4 Ethiopians were killed in a bomb blast on a bus near the Sudanese border, the information minister said, as security forces remain on high alert following attack warnings. The blast occurred in Ethiopia's remote Benishangul region, about 400 km northwest of Addis Ababa, bordering Sudan. Ethiopia has put its police and security forces on heightened alert after receiving strong evidence that Somalia's Islamist al Shabaab group is planning attacks in the country, officials said (AFP, Nov. 7)-. Al-Shabaab has vowed to exact revenge on Ethiopia for sending troops to Somalia to fight the al Qaeda linked militants, alongside African Union forces from Uganda, Burundi and Kenya. "There is strong evidence that indicates Al Shabaab and terrorist groups backed by Eritrea are preparing to carry out attacks in Addis Ababa and other areas of the country soon," the National Intelligence and Security Service (NISS) and the federal police said in a joint statement (Reuters, Nov. 5).

Sudan, Egypt and Ethiopia on Monday reiterated their commitment to joint coordination and constructive dialogue to reach consensus on the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam in accordance with the recommendations of the International Panel of Experts presented in May. However, the water ministers of Sudan, Egypt, and Ethiopia failed to agree on the formation of the Renaissance Dam's supervisory committee which was recommended by the Panel. But they did agree to hold intensive consultations to resolve their differences prior to their next meeting scheduled for December 8, 2013 (WIC, Nov. 8).

The Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) will start generating electricity next year, according to the National Coordination Office for the dam. The project is finalizing preparations to start generating 700MW electricity by next year, the Deputy Director-General of the office, Zadiq Abraha, told. He said to date, 25.4% of work on the dam has been done. The project has so far created 6,000 jobs and this number is expected to double in the end. 5.2bio Birr of pledges thus far has been collected while over 10bio Birr is yet to be collected. A total of 80 bio Birr is needed to complete the grand project, generating 6,000MW electricity (ERTA, N ov. 12).

Ethiopian police have arrested without charge two editors of the leading independent Amharic weekly Ethio-Mihdar, according to local journalists. Police in the town of Legetafo, northeast of the capital Addis Ababa, on Nov. 4 arrested Getachew Worku in connection with a story published in October alleging corruption in the town administration, according to Muluken Tesfaw, a reporter with the paper. On Nov. 2, police arrested Million Dagneu, the general manager of the newspaper said Muluken and local journalists. Million remains in custody without charge, Muluken said (CPJ, Nov.4).

Saudi Arabia has arrested over 16.000 foreigners residing in the country illegally, following the "all out" crack down on illegal workers. According to the reports there are citizens of Ethiopia among the detainees. The Foreign Minister of Ethiopia, Dr. Tedros Adhanom, said the government of Ethiopia stands beside Ethiopians in Saudi Arabia and follows the situation (WIC, Nov. 8). Ethiopia's economy is projected to grow 7.5%, the IMF said at a press briefing on Regional Economic Outlook of sub-Saharan Africa 2013 and macroeconomic developments and policies in Ethiopia. IMF Resident Representative Jan Mikkelsen said that in recent years, economic growth in Ethiopia has been robust (The Ethiopian Herald, Nov. 7).

Global Trade and Development Consulting together with its Project Development Partner, Energy Ventures, both Maryland-based companies, announced on Nov. 7 that they have been awarded the contract by the Ethiopian Ministry of Water and Energy and the Board of Directors of the Ethiopian Electric Power Corporation to build, operate, and transfer three 100 MW solar sites, in the eastern region of Ethiopia. The site selection, due diligence and Feasibility Study were completed earlier this year, receiving both technical and financial approval from both the Minister of Water and Energy and EEPCo. In addition to the needed power generation capacity, a key element of this 300 MW Solar Project, is the economic development resulting in the creation of more than 2,000 construction jobs that would inject millions of \$ into the Ethiopian economy. Ongoing plant operations would yield several hundred new jobs as well (News.Gnom.Es, Nov. 7). Disclosure of a violent attack on a tea plantation leased by Indian-owned Verdanta Harvest Plc, a subsidiary of the Noida-based Lucky Group, has renewed

concerns over Ethiopia's policy of leasing out large tracts of land to international investors. On Octo. 20, unidentified individuals destroyed buildings and machinery worth approximately \$140,000, according to Verdanta officials. Media reported that locals set the plantation on fire "on account of destroying the rich forest resources", a claim denied by the company. Community leaders in Gambella did not comment on the attack, but rights groups have warned that a policy of leasing out 42% of Gambella's land and resettling over 30,000 agro-pastoral communities is the likely cause of the unrest (The Hindu, Nov. 5). Ethiopia launched a program to protect the 2.8 million children born in the country each year with a vaccine against rotavirus, which leads to severe and often fatal, diarrhoea. The country has one of the greatest burdens of rotavirus anywhere in the world, accounting for 6% of all deaths from the disease globally. Ethiopia is the 17th country to introduce the rotavirus vaccine with GAVI Alliance support, according to UNICEF. "Diarrhoea takes the lives of more than 38,500 Ethiopian children under-five each year, rotavirus being responsible for close to two-thirds of the deaths," said Ethiopia's Minister of Health Dr Admasu Keseteberhan. "Providing rotavirus vaccines to our children and integrating them with appropriate diarrhoeal disease control interventions will further support our efforts to reduce child mortality." (WIC, Nov. 8)