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The Ethiopian Ministry of Foreign Affairs is working in collaboration with American law enforcement agencies to identify and hold accountable individuals involved in the mayhem at the Ethiopian Embassy in Washington D.C. on Sep 29, Ambassador Dina Mufti, the Ministry's Spokesperson disclosed. Mufti said the few individuals who committed these illegal acts do not represent Ethiopians and the Ethiopian Diaspora, adding the Diaspora has intensified its involvement in Ethiopia's development (*state media*, Oct. 11).

Ethiopia has sentenced three magazine owners in absentia to more than three years in prison, a government spokesman said, as a leading media rights group condemned the "shocking" ruling. Reporters Without Borders (RSF) named the three as Endalkachew Tesfaye of the Addis Guday magazine, Gizaw Taye of Lomi, and Fatuma Nuriya of Fact. RSF said the magazine owners, who are all outside the country, were found guilty of "inciting violent revolts, printing and distributing unfounded rumors and conspiring to unlawfully abolish the constitutional system of the country" (*AFP*, Oct. 8).

Members of a hunter-gatherer tribe are reportedly being hunted down and killed by settlers who are invading their lands in southwest Ethiopia. The Chabu, who number just 1,500, are some of Africa's last huntergatherers. They live in a remote part of Ethiopia's forest highlands, to the northwest of the Lower Omo Valley. Settlers from other regions in Ethiopia have been penetrating into the Chabu's ancestral home. This has led to heightened tensions and conflicts over land. Violence has escalated to such an extent that independent experts are calling the situation one of "emerging genocide." At least 24 Chabu have reportedly been killed by settlers in the past month, and many more have been forced to flee their homes. The Chabu have been fighting to be recognized as a distinct people or nation within Ethiopia, a status that affords them greater protection under the country's constitution. Settlers and local government officials, who wish to steal the Chabu's land, have thwarted these efforts (*Survival*, Oct. 7).

Ethiopia's year-on-year inflation rate fell to 5.6% in Sep. from 7.2% in August, due to a slower rise in food and other prices, official data showed. The Central Statistics Agency said inflation for non-food items, such as khat - a leafy plant chewed as a stimulant - and clothing, slowed to 7.8% from 9.4% the previous month. Food inflation also dropped to 3.6% from 5.2% (*Reuters*, Oct. 9).

President Mulatu Teshome said Ethiopia's economy showed 10.1% growth on average during the past four-year implementation period of the Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP). The President made the remark at the opening the fifth term joint session of the House of People's Representatives (HPR) and the House of Federation (HoF). He said the country also registered a 10.3% growth last Ethiopian fiscal year. He predicted the economy would show an 11.4% growth this budget year. According to President Mulatu, agricultural productivity grew by 21.7 q/ha while tax revenue surged by 17.6% (*EBC*, Oct. 6).

The Ministry of Trade (MoT) disclosed it is planning to earn U.S. \$2.51bio from the export of non-manufactured or agricultural products. This forecast is 16.6% higher than what the nation targeted for the past fiscal year. As expected, the Ministry's biggest target product is coffee for which it plans to earn U.S. \$862.5m. The plan is to bring in a whopping 20% higher than what it has collected the last fiscal year. According to a forecast document by the MoT, a total of 235,950 t of coffee is expected to be exported, which is higher than last fiscal year's performance, 190,876 t. During the past budget year, coffee export has generated U.S. \$718.8m for the nation. Even if the government has set a higher target than last year, it is still less than what is targeted by the Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP). The second highest export item targeted for the 2014/2015 budget year is khat. The government plans to generate U.S. \$332m by exporting 60,435 t of khat. Pulses are set to generate U.S.\$307m from a total of 409,287 t. The projection is 22% higher in value and 16% higher in volume compared to the 2013/2014 budget year. Livestock export comes fourth in amount of planned earning by the government. It is speculated Ethiopia will generate a total of U.S. \$ 222m from the export of 808,747 live animals. This also shows an increase compared to last year's performance of U.S. \$187m from 647,713 animals. The first GTP period which will be over in the current fiscal year, forecasted Ethiopia would earn 4.04bio from exporting coffee, oilseeds and pulses by the end of the period. The government also plans to generate foreign currency from cereals, natural gum, tea and spices. The Ministry's target for these products is to earn U.S. \$58m (*Capital*, Oct. 5).

According, a Chinese company known as Poly GCL Petroleum Investment said it would undertake gas and oil projects in Somalia State next year. This is in accordance with the agreement signed between the Ethiopian government and the Chinese company for the extraction of two natural gas deposits in the Ogaden Basin of Somali State. The agreement allows the exploration company to extract oil from 93,000 sq. km of land. The company's general manager, Mr. Lee Wei, told that all preparations have been finalized to build the gas extraction plants. He also disclosed that 800 km of gas transmission pipe will be stretched to transport the gas to Djibouti. Mr. Wei said that upon completion, the company will drill 3 billion m³ of natural gas in one year (*Reporter*, Oct. 5).

About 55% of the Sebeta-Dewale railway project, which is part of the bigger project that would connect Ethiopia with Djibouti, has been completed, according to Ethiopian Railways Corporation. Chief Officer of the Ethio-Djibouti Railway, Yehualashet Jemere, said the Sebeta-Mieso 317 km and Mieso- Dewale 339 km construction, including the bridges, anti-pulling test for bolt, static load test, and other civil works are well in progress. Activities are currently underway to complete the rest of the work in the next 18 months, Yehualashet added. Djibouti's head of railways, Mohammed Khaire, said 50% of the project on the Djiboutian side has also been completed (*ENA*, Oct. 7).

Credit Swisse bank has delayed the 1.4bio USD loan to Ethiopia for the building the railway between Awash and Woldiya. The bank was forced to suspend the loan since the Ethiopia Railways Corporation failed to meet the bank's requirements. The Corporation had planned to build a 447-km railway line to connect the northern region with the eastern region without having to pass through Addis Ababa. The project is expected to cost an estimated 1.7bio USD (*Reporter*, Oct. 5).

More than 160,000 Ethiopians working in Saudi Arabia were expelled last year and sent back home due to new stricter labor regulations in the kingdom. Those forcibly repatriated are doing their best to adjust, but are having difficulty making ends meet. Hundreds of thousands of Ethiopians are working in the Middle East in manual labor jobs. A domestic worker abroad makes up to \$400 a month, earning 10 times more than on a similar job in Ethiopia. So when Saudi Arabia

introduced stricter labor laws, tens of thousands of undocumented and illegal immigrants came back to Ethiopia, where they were given \$47 pocket money and sent to their home region where they could register for training and small loans. Konjit Debele, deputy head of the Addis Ababa Micro and Small Development Bureau, says a lot was done for the thousands that needed to be reintegrated: "So we gave them different trainings – regarding psychological development, and also business fields. For instance, in [the] manufacturing sector, in [the] construction sector, [the] agricultural sector, trade and service sectors," says Debele (VOA, Oct. 8).

The National Museum of Ethiopia will build a new museum dedicated totally to human evolution, skeleton and tools. Ethiopia, being home to Lucy and Ardi and the oldest stone tools, the museum will help to display the fossils and stones discovered within the territory of the country. The 10-story building will stand on 4,500 m³ plot and cost 260m Birr, the director of movable heritages of the museum, Mamitu Yilma, told. The museum, named Human Origin Museum, will be built in front of the National Museum (ENA, Oct. 7).

Ethiopia will get its first international standard stadium in two years. This was disclosed when the Federal Sports Commission and MHEngineering Pvt. Ltd. Co signed a design, construction supervision and contract administration agreement. Speaking at the event, Commissioner Abdisa Yadeta said upon completion, the stadium would not only host sport events, but would also play a significant role as the center of social, political and economic activities of the nation. According to the Commissioner, apart from creating job opportunities, the stadium will also introduce new technologies and infrastructures to the area. The stadium will be built according to Olympics and FIFA standards. The international standard stadium will accommodate 60,000 seats and its total cost of construction is estimated to be 2bio Birr (WIC, Oct. 8).

Ethiopia is awaiting the imminent arrival of a decades-old statue of renowned Russian Poet Alexander Pushkin – who allegedly had Ethiopian roots – from Russia, Ethiopia's Foreign Ministry said. Born in 1799 in Moscow, Pushkin, whose ancestry is claimed by both Ethiopia and Eritrea is considered the father of modern Russian literature. Foreign Ministry spokesman Dina Mufti told that the Pushkin statue would be transported to Addis Ababa Moscow "soon." "It's a gift to Addis Ababa from Moscow," he said, noting that the two governments were currently arranging the logistics of the move. The life-size, bronze statue has stood at the center Moscow's Pushkin Square since being inaugurated in 1880 by world-renowned Russian authors Ivan Turgenev and Fyodor Dostoyevsky. According to Mufti, Ethiopian and Russian officials discussed the process of transporting the statue during a recent visit to Ethiopia by Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov. Pushkin's grandfather, Abram Gannibal, is believed to have been born in Ethiopia in 1679. The son of an Ethiopian prince, Gannibal was kidnapped and taken to Russia at the age of eight as a slave of Russian Czar Peter the Great. In Russia, Abram climbed the ladder of Russian society, eventually becoming an aristocrat (Anadolu Agency, Oct. 8).