

No.29, September 15, 2014(*) **Seven Days**, Vol. 21

Egypt's irrigation minister, Hossam Moghazi, said that he will pay a visit to Ethiopia next week for the opening of the first meeting of a national committee which includes 12 water experts from Egypt, Ethiopia and Sudan. This National committee has been appointed to make studies on the Ethiopian Renaissance dam that is being constructed in Ethiopia. Moghazi will be accompanied by the Sudanese and the Ethiopian irrigation ministers during his three-day visit next week (*MENA*, Sep. 14).

Ethiopia's trade relations with neighboring countries have been growing during the past nine years, the Ministry of Trade said. The trade exchange of Ethiopia with neighboring countries like Sudan, Somalia, Kenya and Djibouti has increased significantly. The trade exchange between Ethiopia and Sudan reached 234m USD in 2013 from 4m USD in 2002. Ethiopia's export to Sudan was 138m USD in 2013 and its import 95m. To Somalia Ethiopia exported 319m USD worth commodities. The trade exchange with Kenya has also been growing gradually. The total sum has increased to 47m USD; out of this Ethiopia's export was 15m USD in 2013. Djibouti has also played an important role, the total trade exchange between the countries has increased to 76m USD. Export reached 75m USD (*ENA*, Sep 7).

The Central Statistics Agency (CSA) disclosed Ethiopia's inflation rate for the month August rose to 7.2%, which is a 0.3% increase. This is attributable to the increase in non-food items. Even if there is a slight increase in the figure, Ethiopia has managed to keep the inflation rate to a single digit. CSA's report shows food items inflation fell to 5.2%

from 5.7% while non food items rose by 1.2%.

The AfDB Board has approved a \$91.1m loan for Ethiopia's One Water, Sanitation and Hygiene National Programme (OWNP) to provide sustainable water supply and sanitation facilities throughout Ethiopia. Ultimately, the OWP is estimated to cost \$2.4bio. Other institutions funding the project include the UK Department for International Development, UNICEF, the World Bank and the Government of Ethiopia. Despite China's outstanding record of development assistance to Ethiopia, the Asian giant's investments in the African state lack volume, a senior Ethiopian Investment Agency official has said. China has invested \$836m in Ethiopia over the past ten years, Debela Habte, a senior public relations expert at the agency told *Anadolu Agency*. He added that, while Turkish investors had arrived later, they had since poured some \$1.2bio worth of investment into Ethiopia. Turkish investors are largely engaged in the textile industry, which, he said, required significant capital. Nevertheless, Habte said, China had managed to retain its leading position in terms of investment-related job creation. "Chinese companies have managed to generate over 75,500 jobs while Turkish companies have generated only 20,900 jobs," he said. Habte said that 296 Chinese projects – out of a total of 437 Chinese projects in the country – were located in the capital, while 55 out of 100 Turkish projects were located in Addis Ababa (*CFI International*, Sep. 10).

SUR Construction PLC teamed up with two giant Chinese companies to build a new hydroelectric dam in Illu Aba Bora and Jimma zones of Oromia region. Representatives of the contractors signed a 583m USD agreement with Ethiopian Electric Power (EEP) to build the Geba Dam, which will have 391 MW installed power generating capacity (*WIC*, Sep. 9).

The Government of Ethiopia has provided 100 ha in the Tigray region in Mekele city to Velocity Apparel Plc for the construction of a modern garment factory with an initial investment of US\$ 150m. The CEO of Velocity Apparel, Siharz Sinaha, said construction for the project will begin this month and it will take about five years to complete. Velocity Apparel has also received a loan from the Development Bank of Ethiopia for the establishment of the garment manufacturing factory. At present, Ethiopian textile and garment industry comprises 115 factories that together employ 40,000 people (*ENA*, Sep. 10).

An Ecuadorian investor said he has introduced a state-of-the-art technology to the Ethiopian floriculture sector which is suitable to the European flower market. The owner and General Manager of the Ecuador-based cut flower group, Bellaflor, Mauricio Castillo, said that besides its proximity to the European market, the lower transportation cost for flowers has made Ethiopia a preferred market. The investor, who came to Ethiopia last year to engage in floricultural sector, was granted 73 ha in Welmera Woreda of Oromia Regional State. Half of the total land will be used to grow cut flowers, Castillo said, adding that the project launched in May will create jobs for 1,000 people when it becomes fully operational. The investor further said he would allocate 18m USD in the coming three to four years to develop 32 types of roses and summer flowers. In terms of providing social services for the localities, Castillo said the company has built 3.2km long gravel road at a cost of 50,000 USD and would build a health center that particularly cares for newly borns and 6-year-old children (*State media*, Sep. 11).

There are more than 150 species of beetles in the genus *Calathus*, 17 of which have only been found in the mountains of the Ethiopian Highlands. Now scientists have found two new ones - *Calathus Juan* and *Calathus carballalae* - and have described them in *Annals of the Entomological Society of America*. *C. Juan* is named for Juan Novoa, the son of one of the authors. Adults are black and shiny, and are 9.5-11.5 mm long. It was found at almost 3,600 masl. *C. carballalae* is named for Regina Carballal, the wife of the first author. It was found under stones on barren soil nearly 4,150 masl (*Science News*, Sep. 12).