

.No.25, August 19, 2013(*) Seven Days, Vol. 20

The Ethiopian federal police said on Friday that they have uncovered explosive devices planted inside Addis Ababa Bole International Airport averting a major tragedy. Two explosives were found around the departure terminal of the country's largest airport targeting the hundreds of passengers waiting to fly. The incident created panic among passengers and caused a delay in flights until bomb disposal experts were able to dismantle the devices, which are believed to have been home made, and cleared the rest of the area for other explosive devices. It is not clear how the attackers managed to pass the number of security check points at the airport. A police official told that the nature of the attack is under investigation and it is yet to be determined if the attempt was a terrorist attack (Sudan Tribune, Aug. 16)

The Addis Ababa Police has disclosed that it has set free most of the Muslims it had arrested recently. The released detainees were given strict warnings and advice by the police. They were released after admitting that they were in the wrong and after apologizing to the government. The police said that the arrested Muslims were engaged in shouting slogans, insults and in throwing stones on the day of their arrest (Reporter, Aug. 14)

The Unity for Democracy and Justice (UDJ) (Andinet) party, Dr. Negaso Gidada, said his party has been denied permission from the government to hold protest rallies in Mekele and Wolaita. Responding to this statement, Ato Shimeles Kemal, Minister of State in the office of Communication Affairs, said opposition political parties are shifting blame on the government whenever they fail to obtain finances from the people. Dr. Negaso said Andinet party had plans to hold protest rallies in 16 towns but that the government continued to put increasing pressure on it (Addis Admas, Aug.17.)

After 90 days in police custody over allegations of corruption, Melaku Fenta, the former director general of the Ethiopian Revenue and Customs Authority (ERCA), will face charges in the next 15 days. Melaku will be tried along with most of the 63 high and mid-level tax officials and businessmen detained with him (Fortune, Aug. 11).

.Heavy fighting between Pro-Government troops backed by Ethiopian forces and Al Shabaab militants flared up in the outskirts of Xudur in Bakool region, reports said. The fighting between allied forces and Al Shabaab erupted as Somali and Ethiopian forces were conducting security operation in the area. Government officials in Xudur region said that they have killed a number of Al Shabaab fighters during in the skirmishes. The exact figures of casualties on both warring sides are yet to be established. So far Al Shabaab officials have not made any comments on the attack (Shebelle Media Network, Aug. 15).

About 281m USD was earned from the manufacturing sector during the concluded fiscal year, the Ministry of Industry said. Corporate Communication Director with the Ministry, Melaku Taye, told that the income is 52% of the set target, which was to obtain 542.4m USD. He said the achievement is low due to low quality of products caused by capacity limitation, lack of sustainable market chain and shortage of skilled human power. Melaku said the revenue exceeded the previous year's by 1%, and was obtained from the export of textiles, leather and leather products, agro-processing, pharmaceuticals and chemicals. The ministry has set a target to secure one billion USD from the sector during the 2006 (E.C.) fiscal year, Melaku said (ENA, Aug. 12).

Ethiopia's government has signed a \$1.6bn deal with Chinese vendors ZTE and Huawei, in a bid to expand mobile phone infrastructure and introduce 4G broadband to the capital Addis Ababa. The deal will also see the rollout of a 3G service across the rest of the country. The project is split between ZTE and its domestic rival Huawei, with each contract worth \$800m according to news agency Reuters. Both firms will provide low interest vendor financing to Ethiopia. The country's only mobile operator, state-run Ethio Telecom, said the agreement would enable it to double mobile subscribers to more than 50 million (telecoms.com, Aug. 19).

Clothing retailer H&M Hennes & Mauritz AB is looking to Ethiopia as a new low-cost country in which it will produce clothing, as it races to keep shelves stocked at a growing number of stores around the globe, reported. The Swedish clothing retailer relies heavily on Bangladesh for clothes production and a move to Africa would expand its sourcing footprint, but not replace its commitment to

production in Asia. One supplier says H&M is looking to source one million garments a month from Ethiopia. A spokeswoman said the fashion company has placed test orders with Ethiopian suppliers and says large-scale production can begin as early as this fall. H&M is adding stores in a number of markets, a move needed to help offset stagnant same-store sales in some regions. H&M established its office in Ethiopia's capital about a year ago, and has been buying clothing from a number of manufacturers including Mr. Tadesse's Kebire manufacturing company (The Wall Street Journal, Aug. 15).