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Dr. Kesetebirhan Admasu, Ethiopia's Minister of Health, announced that Ethiopia has established a modern laboratory centre to intensify the national Ebola prevention efforts. The modern laboratory, Biosafety Level 3 and 4 began operations on Oct. 13 for screening and testing purposes. It is staffed by well-trained Ethiopian professionals, he said. The Minister noted the country had also launched a new screening machine, a Thermo Scan Thermo Meter, with the capacity to test up to a thousand individuals per hour. The new machine and two other thermo-screening machines are presently operating at Addis Ababa Bole International Airport to test passengers (*EBC, Oct. 15*).

An Ethiopian editor is facing as many as 10 years in prison after being convicted of inciting the public against the government through his newspaper articles, his lawyer said. Temesgen Desalegn, the former editor of *Feteh*, a defunct weekly newspaper, was convicted on Oct. 13 by the Federal High Court on charges that also included defaming the government and distorting public opinion, after a case that lasted about two years, lawyer Ameha Mekonnen said. He will be sentenced on Oct. 27 (*Bloomberg News, Oct. 14*).

The violent skirmishes that occurred in Gambella State recently killing over 40 people have erupted again assuming even fiercer dimensions. Six more people were killed on October 13, 2014. The violence took place as the inhabitants of Agnuak and Mezenger tribes tried to displace the settlers from adjoining regions. A total of over 30 houses were burned down. Defense forces were deployed to the place beginning Tuesday. They seemed to have put things under control at first but the violence is now increasing (*Reporter, Oct. 12*).

Six people in Benishagul-Gumuz State have been brought to justice accused of coordinating and masterminding a conspiracy to blow up the Grand Renaissance Dam in collusion with hired terrorists trained in Eritrea. The six people appeared at the 19th Criminal Bench of the Federal High Court (*Sendek, Oct. 15*).

Gunmen killed three Ethiopian peacekeepers that were guarding a water hole in Sudan's strife-torn Darfur region on Thursday, their force said. Two of the soldiers died at the scene in Korma, north Darfur, and a third died later from his wounds in Khartoum, said the joint U.N./African Union UNAMID peacekeeping mission. The attackers stole the Ethiopians' patrol vehicle, it added (*Reuters, Oct. 17*).

The Ethiopian International Peacekeeping Training Center (EIPKTC) and the Japanese government have teamed up to organize a training course in conflict prevention for senior military officers from nine East African countries. The ten-day course began on Oct. 13 at the African Union's Addis Ababa headquarters, with the participation of high-ranking army officials from Burundi, Djibouti, Egypt, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan and Uganda, reported. Lieut. Colonel Norihisa Urakami of the Japanese military, who designed the course's curriculum, said the program had been developed in "a role-play format." "I developed a scenario where a very complex conflict is brewing in competing for resources, for right of water, the use of land. According to that scenario, participants are made to negotiate solutions," Urakami, who also serves as a consultant to EIPKTC, told. "That's a very effective way of training," he asserted (*World Bulletin, Oct. 14*).

A second round of talks between the Egyptian, Ethiopian and Sudanese irrigation ministers regarding the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam concluded on Friday, with a third round of talks scheduled a month from now. The irrigation ministers said they had agreed to receive offers from seven consultancy firms who will conduct more studies on the dam's possible effects. They will settle on one or two firms during their meeting next month. The seven selected firms include firms from Germany, Switzerland, France, Holland, and Australia, Sudan's irrigation minister Moatez Moussa told *MENA*. The best candidate, according to Moussa, will be chosen based on competence, reputation and cost. In addition, a British law firm was selected to handle all financial and administrative issues related to the consultancy (*MENA, Oct. 17*).

Ethiopia's year on year inflation has increased by 5.6% in Sep. 2014 as compared to the one observed in Sep. 2013, the statistics bureau said. The year on year food inflation increased by 3.6% in Sep. 2014 compared to Sep. 2013 (*APA, Oct. 16*).

Tullow Oil, the British oil company exploring for oil in the South Omo basin, decided to move its staff as well as equipments out of Ethiopia. During a consultative meeting organized by the Ethiopian Ministry of Mines and World Bank, Tullow's Country Manager, Nick Woodal-Mason, disclosed his company is taking its staff and mining equipment out of Ethiopia. Tullow has already released the well drilling rig. Woodal-Mason noted, After drilling four wild cat wells in the South Omo basin we found only clay. Geologically, the results are a nightmare (*The Reporter, Oct. 11*).

Ethiopia has achieved the MDG goal one, halving extreme poverty and hunger by 2015, the Ministry of Agriculture said. Ethiopia is among the 63 developing countries which have reached the MDG target. Ethiopia is also among the 25 countries that achieved the more ambitious World Food Summit (WFS) target of halving the number of undernourished people by 2015. The nation has managed to reduce an undernourished person to 35%, which, 20 years ago, was 75%, the Ministry said (*State media, Oct. 12*).

Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), partnered with Ethiopian government organizations to tackle environmental issues. One programme has been the Sustainable Land Management Programme (SLMP), launched in 2008. Northern Ethiopia suffered significant soil erosion and degradation - with farmers driven to cultivate the steepest slopes, suspending themselves by ropes - before attempts were made to counter ecological destruction. Since then approximately 250,000 ha of degraded land in Ethiopia's highland areas of Amhara, Oromia and Tigray has been restored to productivity. This has been achieved through promoting sustainable land management practices such as the use of terracing, crop rotation systems, and improvement of pastureland and permanent green cover, benefiting more than 100,000 households. "SLMP with its holistic approach increases water availability for agriculture and agricultural productivity and thus contributes directly and indirectly to an increased climate resilience of the rural population," Johannes Schoeneberger, head of GIZ's involvement, tells (*IPS, Oct. 16*).