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Two Somali nationals died when a bomb they were making detonated in their home in the Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa, as thousands gathered to watch a football match, officials said on Oct. 14. The ones who died were of Somali origin according to Ethiopia's Minister of Information Redwan Hussein. The two deceased were in Ethiopia illegally and had rented a house in a Somali neighborhood near the airport where the bomb exploded. It is unclear whether the men were plotting to target the crowds in Addis Ababa watching a World Cup qualifier match, Redwan said that investigations are underway (AFP, Oct. 15).

Human Rights Watch (HRW) has released a 70-page report accusing Ethiopia of using torture against political detainees to extract information and confessions. The international rights watchdog is urging the Ethiopian government to stop these alleged practices. The report focuses on Maekelawi, the main detention center in Ethiopia's capital, Addis Ababa. Researcher and author of the report Laetitia Bader claims unlawful methods are used in the detention center. "Some of these methods amount to torture or ill treatment, including regular and systematic beatings, slapping and kicking of detainees, particularly during interrogations. Some of the detainees that I spoke to said they were hung, handcuffed from the wall, for hours upon end, while being interrogated and beaten at the same time," said Bader. Thirty-five former detainees were interviewed for the report, most of who say they were denied access to their families and legal representation and were often forced to sign statements and confessions (VOA, Oct. 18).

Reporters Without Borders state it is alarmed by newspaper editor Melaku Desmisse's illegal arrest in Addis Ababa by police from the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Regional State (SNNPR) and his subsequent illegal transfer to Hawassa, the capital city of the SNNPR. The editor of the Amharic language version of the independent big-circulation weekly The Reporter, Desmisse was arrested for unclear reasons in his office on 9 Oct., taken to a police station in the Addis Ababa suburb of Bole, and from there was taken more than 250 km south of Addis Ababa to Hawassa. Reporters Without Borders said the SNNPR police have no jurisdiction in Addis Ababa and it is completely illegal for them to seize a journalist working there (press release, Oct. 11).

Ethiopia, Egypt and Sudan will hold discussions next week over the impact of a new \$4.3 bio hydropower plant along the river Nile, which Egypt fears will hurt water supply to its 84 million people. "The meeting is scheduled to take place on Oct. 22, 2013 between officials of the three countries," the Ethiopian foreign ministry said. The meeting will be the first since experts submitted their recommendations on the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam project more than three months ago (The Wall Street Journal, Oct. 16).

The Executive Board of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) concluded the Article IV consultation with the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. Recent macroeconomic developments are encouraging, with a significant deceleration in inflation and continued robust economic growth. Despite significant decline in coffee prices and supply bottlenecks, growth remains robust, supported by better agriculture output and the construction and other services activities. - Inflation declined from the peak of 40% in July 2011 to around 7% in June 2013. Fiscal policy at the general government level remains prudent, with cautious execution of the government budget. Reflecting the strong pro-poor focus, the ratio of poverty-reducing expenditure to GDP is being maintained and non-priority expenditure will likely be compressed in 2012/13. The government budget deficit, including grants, is estimated to be 2.8% of GDP. - The external of current account deficit widened slightly to US\$3 bio in 2012/13 from US\$2.8 bio in 2011/12, reflecting a weaker trade balance, although it improved as a ratio of GDP from 6.6% to 6.4%. Export performance suffered from a decline in prices and weak external demand conditions, growing only 3.2%, while continued infrastructure and industrial investment and higher fuel importation contributed to an increase in imports by 6.3%. - Transfers brought in a net inflow of around US\$5bio due to a surge in net private transfers that more than offset a decline in official transfers. Increased loan disbursements to the central government and public enterprises yielded a capital account surplus of US\$3.4bio (aigaforum. Sep. 18).