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Voters in Addis Ababa City cast their votes in the election of members of woreda councils beginning from 6:00 a.m. local time Sunday. They voted at 1,524 polling stations set up in 116 woredas of the city. The voting process was launched in the presence of election executives and observers including representatives of civic societies, the public and political parties. Over 1.6 million voters, out of whom more than 523,000 are women, were expected to cast their votes in the election. Close to 60% the total 1.6 million eligible voters registered to cast votes in the election of woreda council members in Addis Ababa City cast their votes until 2:00 p.m., the city branch office of the National Electoral Board of Ethiopia said. The head of the office, Getahun Gebremedhin, said the election process is underway without any problem. Polling stations stay open until 6:00 p.m., he said (WIC , April 21).

The EPRDF has claimed to have won the April 14 Addis Ababa city council and local elections. Opposition political contestants have also claimed a few victories in some areas. Ato Ayele Chamiso of the Coalition for Unity and Democracy (CUD) said everything will be made clear following a formal announcement of election results by the Nationals Electoral Board of Ethiopia (NEBE). He complained that his party's observers were prevented entry into the voting places. Ato Teshale Sebros of Raey Party said his party did not succeed in the elections but expressed confidence that its participation is a step in the right direction (Addis Admas, April 20).

The number of charities and societies registered in Ethiopia after the coming into effect of the Charities and Societies Proclamation has reached 2,890. Ahmed Seid, senior communications expert at the Charities and Societies Agency (CSA), told that out of the total, 368 are Ethiopian societies and 113 are Ethiopian charities. According to the proclamation, the CSOs are formed "under the laws of Ethiopia, all of whose members are Ethiopians, and generate income from Ethiopia and are wholly controlled by Ethiopians". If they use not more than 10% of their funds, which is received from foreign country sources, they may also be deemed as Ethiopian charities and societies. The agency has registered 1,849 Ethiopian resident charities and 128 Ethiopian resident societies. These are charities or societies which consist of members who dwell in Ethiopia and who receive more than 10% of their funds from foreign country sources. Registered foreign charities number 322, Ahmed said. There are also about 52 registered consortiums of CSOs. In addition, 62 adoption centers were registered prior to the coming into effect of the CSO law, Ahmed said (WIC, April 19).

Japan has provided 6.9m USD in support of the UN Refugee Agency's work in Ethiopia in 2013, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) said. According to a statement, UNHCR said the money will go to enhancing UNHCR's delivery of critical services to refugees, including health and nutrition, education and shelter. Ethiopia currently hosts approximately 394,000 refugees in 17 refugee camps spanning the country. Somalis, Sudanese and Eritreans constitute the largest refugee groups in the country. In 2013, UNHCR requires over 192m USD to be able to cater for the protection and assistance needs of the growing refugee population in Ethiopia. To date, only 51m USD has been secured, the statement said (ENA, April 18).

The U.S. government laid a foundation stone for the construction of a new outpatient department (OPD) annex at Shashemene referral hospital in Oromia region, the U.S. Embassy in Ethiopia said. The OPD will be constructed in partnership with the Ethiopian Ministry of Health. The people of the United States, through the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), have committed 2.7m USD for the construction of the new health facility. CDC will provide technical assistance for the construction of the three-storey facility. The facility will have designated areas for ultrasound, waiting rooms, clinical rooms and maternity rooms. The labor and delivery services will also be integrated with family planning, voluntary counseling and testing, antiretroviral therapy and antenatal care for the prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV. The construction of this new facility is part of the U.S. government's long-term commitment to strengthen infrastructure for HIV/AIDS and health systems in Ethiopia. The construction of the new building is expected to be completed in May 2014 (ENA, April 15).

