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The Ethiopian Human Rights Commission (EHRC) has promised to open prompt and thorough investigations into allegations of mistreatment in Ethiopian prisons. The allegations were brought by awardwinning, jailed journalist Woubshet Taye, who was denied treatment despite a health condition doctors have described as "severe." Ambassador Tiruneh Zena, EHRC Commissioner said that EHRC is aware of the issue and investigations are underway to fix the problem. Woubshet Taye, former deputy editor of Awramba Times was sentenced to 14 years in prison along with Eskinder Nega and Re'eyot Alemu under Ethiopia's trumpedup anti-terrorism law (Awramba Times, March 29).

The House of People's Representatives and the office of the Auditor-General have accused the Ethiopian Revenues and Customs Authority of working in a system where billions of birr are lost through corruption. This accusation was leveled following an extensive study made by the House Administration Affairs Standing Committee and the Auditor-General on the operation of the authority. The study also accused the authority of failing to collect the targeted amount of revenue during the 2004 fiscal year due to corruption (Reporter, March 23).

The Ministry of Water, Irrigation and Energy has accused Egyptian authorities of engaging in a 'smear campaign' against the construction of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD). Following a deadlock in tripartite talks which also included Sudan, Egyptian authorities resorted to a diplomatic campaign aimed at garnering support in their quest to have the construction of the 6000MW hydroelectric dam halted (WIC, March 24).

Police have arrested 39 undocumented immigrants and two human traffickers from Ethiopia near the frontier town of Merille in Kenya's Samburu County. "They will be charged by Wednesday for being in the country illegally," Samburu Police Chief Samuel Muthamia told. The Ethiopians, who are all believed to be in their 20s, were on their way to Nairobi when police intercepted them. According to police, they had no Ethiopian travel documents but spoke fluent Amharic, Ethiopia's national language. Most of them are believed to be immigrants seeking employment in Nairobi or in South Africa. Based on previous cases, the Ethiopians are likely to be fined no more than \$250 each or face a three-month jail term before being deported (Anadolu Agency).

An Egyptian company, Ascom Precious Metals Mining, has discovered what is said to be the largest gold ore reserve ever found in the history of gold exploration in Ethiopia. The discovery was made in the Benishangul Gumuz Regional State, in southwest Ethiopia. Ascom has been prospecting for gold and base metals in the Benishangul region since 2010. Two weeks ago, Ascom made a presentation to senior officials of the Ministry of Mines about the new discovery. Tolossa Shagi Moti, Minister of Mines, told that the ministry was happy with the discovery. According to Tolossa, Ascom Mining will conduct a feasibility study and will start developing the mine (WIC, March 23).

Gold has become Ethiopia's major foreign currency earner next to coffee. The country earns more than 600m \$ from mineral exports and gold contributes 90% of the earning. To date, MIDROC Gold is the only company engaged in large-scale mining. MIDROC annually exports four tons of gold, mainly to Switzerland. MIDROC Gold has discovered a new gold reserve in the Sakaro locality (WIC, March 23).

A new World Bank-supported business hub, the Ethiopia Climate Innovation Center (ECIC), was launched in Addis Ababa to support pioneering clean technology enterprises that address climate change while creating jobs and improving livelihoods. The first of its kind in the country, the center will help over 3.1 million Ethiopians increase resilience to climate change and is expected to create more than 12,000 jobs in the next ten years. Ethiopia's agriculture, which is highly sensitive to fluctuations in rainfall, represents the basis of the national economy. It accounts for approximately 46% of the GDP and 80% of the jobs of the working population. According to the World Bank report 'Economics of Adaptation to Climate Change,' without a proper green growth strategy, the total climate adaptation costs for Ethiopia could range from US\$1.22bio to \$5.84bio per year. To reduce climate adaptation costs and create opportunities of growth, the Ethiopia CIC will provide financing, mentorship, and advisory services to the growing number of local clean-tech entrepreneurs working in agribusiness, energy efficiency, renewable energy and bio fuels (WIC, March 27).

The HIV/AIDS prevalence rate has drastically dropped in Ethiopia in 2013, an Ethiopian official said. "Currently, 734,000 people are living with HIV in the country," Asfaw Degefu, the public relation chief of the federal HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control Office (HAPCO), told .Degefu said that HIV prevalence rate in Ethiopia dropped from 2.1% to 1.3% in 2013. "The fall in prevalence resulted from the governmentled multi-sectoral HIV/AIDS prevention activities," he said. Over 316,000 Ethiopians living with HIV benefit from anti-retroviral therapy (ART), which the government provides free of charge. The HAPCO official said that Ethiopia had the highest number of HIV/AIDS infection a decade ago. "But the rate of HIV infection among adults has been reduced by 90% between 2001 and 2011," he added. Degefu said that Voluntary Counseling and Testing (VCT) and ART services are expanding across the country. "There were only three ART centers in 2001 but the number has now increased to 838 and VCT rose to 2896 from 638," he added. Over 90 million condoms are sold annually across the Horn of Africa nation. A recent government document has found that comprehensive knowledge of AIDS is uncommon in Ethiopia. According to the document, some 90% of women and 32% of men have comprehensive knowledge of transmission and prevention methods of HIV. According to Degefu, Ethiopia employs over 38,000 health agents in rural areas to prevent HIV, Malaria and TB. "Harmful traditional practices, multiple sex partners, unsafe sex and mother- to- child HIV transmission are the main causes for the spread of HIV," he said. HIV was first reported in Ethiopia in 1984 ((Anadolu Agency, March 29). The Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA) has donated two fully-equipped ambulances to the Ethiopian town of Harar. Harari Regional State Deputy Chief Regasa Kefale s told that "as the ambulances are well equipped to provide medical care to patients, they will help save the lives of many people, in particular women" (Anadolu Agency (March 24).