

Ethiopia, a centre of COMESA Leather Institute



Ethiopia is ranked first and tenth in number of livestock in Africa and the world respectively. It produces millions of cattle, sheep and goat hides every year. Indeed, Ethiopia's leather and leather products industry provides various items like belts, shoes, wallets and the like in the market apart from selling hides and skins. These products are also being sold all over the world in Italy, England, America, Canada, China and other Far East countries. It is true that Ethiopia's leather products have great demand in the aforementioned countries including some African countries like Nigeria and Uganda.

As many of Ethiopian shoes are made of real leather, they have great demand in the whole world. These shoes are brought to market through whole-sellers, retailers, import and export agencies or directly sold by shoe producers. There are also some shoemakers which make business deal with internationally renowned companies. These days Ethiopian made foot wears are becoming competitive in terms of quality and price in the global market. All nation's leather products are exported to other countries having fulfilled the standards of Ethiopia's Quality and Standardization Authority.

Ethiopia leather industry development institute has been working towards ensuring sustainable growth of the industry since its very existence. It as well has been exerting efforts in attracting investors. Moreover, the institute provides consultation services to investors who like to invest in leather industry. The vision of the institute is also to increase the current overall leather products by tenfold in 2023. so far the sector has been attracting a number multimillionaire companies . For-instance, a Chinese international footwear company, Huajjian is going to build industry zone

soon in Ethiopia by two billion Birr . It is believed that the zone will create job opportunities for 100,000 fellow citizens when it begins functioning. Therefore, the future is bright for Ethiopia leather and leather products.

Moreover, the building of such zone would further strengthen and facilitate the exchange of updated and timely information among footwear exporters and importers in the country.

To get the desired outcomes from the nation's leather industry, the government should encourage foreign investors to invest in such industry by cutting out the bureaucratic red tape in some state offices. It should also give training on how to take precautionary measures starting from slaughtering, selling, persevering hides and skins to the people who get involved in supplying and selling hides and skins of cattle, sheep, goat and the like.

Due to Ethiopia's big livestock potential and its large number of disciplined and hard working young labour force, Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) has selected the country to be the center of COMESA Leather Institute. The institute is now situated here in Ethiopia. This is a golden opportunity for those who engage to leather industry in this country as COMESA has several member states .



According to the website of COMESA , Common Market of Eastern and Southern Africa traces its genesis to the mid 1960s. The idea of regional economic co-operation received considerable impetus from the buoyant and optimistic mood that characterized the post-independence period in most of Africa. The mood then was one of pan-African solidarity and collective self-reliance

born of a shared destiny. It was under these circumstances that, in 1965, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) convened a ministerial meeting of the then newly independent states of Eastern and Southern Africa to consider proposals for the establishment of a mechanism for the promotion of sub-regional economic integration. The meeting, which was held in Lusaka, Zambia, recommended the creation of an Economic Community of Eastern and Central African states.

An Interim Council of Ministers, assisted by an Interim Economic Committee of officials, was subsequently set up to negotiate the treaty and initiate programs on economic co-operation, pending the completion of negotiations on the treaty.



In 1978, at a meeting of Ministers of Trade, Finance and Planning in Lusaka, the creation of a sub-regional economic community was recommended, beginning with a sub-regional preferential trade area which would be gradually upgraded over a ten-year period to a common market until the community had been established. To this end, the meeting adopted the "Lusaka Declaration of Intent and Commitment to the Establishment of a Preferential Trade Area for Eastern and Southern Africa" (PTA) and created an Inter-governmental Negotiating Team on the Treaty for the establishment of the PTA. The meeting also agreed on an indicative time-table for the work of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Team.

After the preparatory work had been completed a meeting of Heads of State and Government was convened in Lusaka on 21st December 1981 at which the Treaty establishing the PTA was

signed. The Treaty came into force on 30th September 1982 after it had been ratified by more than seven signatory states as provided for in Article 50 of the Treaty.

The PTA was established to take advantage of a larger market size, to share the region's common heritage and destiny and to allow greater social and economic co-operation, with the ultimate objective being to create an economic community. The PTA Treaty envisaged its transformation into a Common Market and, in conformity with this, the Treaty establishing the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa, COMESA, was signed on 5th November 1993 in Kampala, Uganda and was ratified a year later in Lilongwe, Malawi on 8th December 1994.

It is important to underline the fact that the establishment of PTA, and its transformation into COMESA, was in conformity with the objectives of the Lagos Plan of Action (LPA) and the Final Act of Lagos (FAL) of the Organization of African Unity (Organization of African unity). Both the LPA and the FAL envisaged an evolutionary process in the economic integration of the continent in which regional economic communities would constitute building blocks upon which the creation of an African Economic Community (AEC) would ultimately be erected.

In general speaking, working with such regional leather institute would bring about dramatic changes in our leather industry in very near future

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