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The Ethiopian News Agency

ICT said crucial for integrating Ethiopia's economy into global economy

Addis Ababa, February 26, 2007 (Addis Ababa) - State Minister of Trade and Industry said development of Information Communication Technology (ICT) is crucial for effectively integrating Ethiopia's predominantly subsistence agriculture economy and society into the global economy.

Tadesse Haile said the Ethiopian government has made the development of ICT one of its strategic priorities.

The State Minister was speaking at the opening here on Monday of a Round Table: "ICT, Trade and Economic Growth-Ethiopia."

Tadesse said ICTs are expanding the possibilities of developing economies to participate in international markets.

The digital economy is changing international trade, affecting business practices and introducing new business intermediaries, leading to what has come to be known as e-trade, he said.

The state minister said through the various efforts exerted by the ministry, increasing trends have been witnessed in the contribution of the private sector to the overall growth of the economy.

The investment climate has also improved in terms of the provision of macroeconomic stability, institutional and legal environment, efficient taxation system as well as maintaining peace in the country, he noted.

As far as ICTs are concerned, the government has taken major steps with regard to network expansion, including the mobile network, according to the state minister.

Tadesse said Ethiopia has made huge investment in basic multimedia infrastructure and is executing an optic fiber project.

Formulation of an e-trade policy framework would be one of the issues to be discussed, Director General of the Ethiopian ICT Development Agency, Debretsion Gebremichael said.

There is no policy so far formulated on electronics trade, he said.

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